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Editorial Introduction

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Editorial Introduction

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An On-line Journal
for Teacher Research

Editorial Introduction

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While much attention has been paid to action research conducted by in-service teachers, there appears to be an absence in the practitioner literature examining pre-service teacher's relationship with action research. This type of work encourages pre-service candidates to continue action research as in-service teachers, and contribute fostering teacher-based research (Kitchen & Stevens, 2008). Action research has the potential to impact school culture and increase student success because of 'the potential of teacher research to help in the reform of schooling' (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990, p. 2).

Our belief is, like their in-service counterparts, pre-service teachers should be active, engaged participants in education, not bystanders waiting for the "pedagogical others" to pronounce so-called "best practices." In their "classrooms" pre-service teacher educators work constantly at reflective junctures that lead to keen insights into the strengths and opportunities present in schools, at times presenting fresh and new perspectives on educating in the 21st century. This special edition derives from an unwavering belief on the part of the guest editors that many of the keys to change in the current educational landscape rest with engaging pre-service teachers as scholars who engage in research, and whose work can contribute to the larger dialogue on education.

This special edition seeks to challenge the perspective of research surrounding pre-service teachers, shifting from a focus on pre-service teachers to a focus on the work in which pre-service teachers are themselves engaged.

As guest editors of this special edition, we work with pre-service teachers in a variety of institutional contexts and configurations ranging from traditional undergraduate pre-service teachers to accelerated graduate student pre-service teacher candidates, and from a small liberal-arts to large research intensive institutions.

Our own scholarly trajectories have placed each of us in intimate contact with pre-service teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and students in the classrooms where praxis exists. In our experiences, a significant emphasis in the literature, particularly post No Child Left Behind, has been on pre-service teachers themselves, including studying their efficacy, studying their challenges, as well as pondering promising practices to engage candidates within teacher preparation. Given the scope of *Networks* as a scholarly source for the practice and praxis of teaching, we were excited to craft a special edition that brings to light the sometimes edifying, sometimes disconcerting, but always complex work that pre-service teachers engage with as they hone their praxis and transition into professional status. In thinking about a call for such a special issue we were considerate as to how pre-service teachers may be defined. We settled on a range inclusive of early childhood educators through Ph.D. candidates working toward becoming teacher educators. This special edition, consequently, strives to create a new dialogic space for pre-service teachers to be a significant part of not only the discourse on education, but on how educators come to know, understand, and engage in the practice of teaching.

In proposing this special edition we expected to receive 10-20 submissions. To our surprise we received 41 thoughtful, interesting, and most often well-written manuscripts. Like all editions of *Networks* these manuscripts were sent out to over 24 peer reviewers using a double-blinded review process. Based on the reviewers' initial feedback and editorial review, 13 authors were invited to move forward with their manuscripts to address reviewer responses. After revisions were made by authors based on the initial feedback, each manuscript was then further edited by the guest editors. In the end we moved forward with nine articles as well as a book review in this special edition of *Networks*. As guest editors, after reading the manuscripts and engaging with the authors and reviewers, it has become clear that more spaces and venues are needed for pre-service teachers to be able to publish their work. The manuscripts selected for publication are a balanced representation of the range of ideas represented in teacher education that we hope will spark dialogue, discussion, and debate within the educational community.

The special edition includes the following articles and book review:

In "Drawings as a Component of Triangulated Assessment," Otto et. al analyze how drawings, implemented as part of an action research framework, were used to connect multiple forms of assessment to gain a better understanding of student knowledge in science.

Jennifer M. Conner-Zachocki & Danielle Dias, in "Colliding Theories and Power Differentials: A Cautionary Tale of Conducting Action Research While Student Teaching" examine the tensions that arise during student teaching when a pre-service teacher's theory of teaching collide with a supervising teacher thus inhibiting and disabling a student teacher as an action researcher. Their piece explores the power positions that can influence the kinds of action research students may want to explore. while student teaching and the power differential that characterizes student teacher/supervising teacher relationships.

Nicholas A. Clegorne & Roland W. Mitchell use

narrative inquiry to add a unique perspective to the debate concerning the relationship between theory and practice in educational setting in their article "Student-Centered Empowerment of Teacher-centered Practices: An Action Research Project". Acting as participant observers they posit that peer viewpoints did not hold the same value as the opinions and perspectives of professors.

Paul Mencke examines the use of Participatory Action Research (PAR) in a secondary education course for undergraduate pre-service teachers in his article "Pre-Service Teachers and Participatory Action Research: Students, Community, and Action". His study involves engaging students in a PAR project and findings indicate pre-service teachers' enjoyment but mostly their desire to use PAR in future teacher experiences.

Using quantitative methods, Jefferey Peleaux & Jason Endacott explore the effects of ReQuest reading comprehension through a world history Secondary History Classroom. Pealeaux and Endacott ultimately advocated for teachers to engage in thoughtful and purpose driven approaches to teaching just as teachers hope for students to be thoughtful and purpose driven in their approach to learning.

Rachel Velluto & Joanna Barbousas seek to add complexity and criticism to the issue of gender imbalance as it relates to silent reading tasks in their article "Silencing reading, silencing the boys: Using action research to investigate sustained silent reading programs and its effects on boy's literacy skills." Their work specifically targets boys' underperformance by asking if boys engaged in sustained silent reading (SSR) tasks really understood what they were reading or if they were struggling with the vocabulary of the text. The authors speculate about what kind of literacy skills students were unconsciously practicing in their minds in order to sustain such a silent facade.

Ronald Beebe & Diane Corrigan turned the lens inward as they scrutinize the impact of collaboration in teacher preparation at their institution. In their article, "University-Based Collaborative Pre-service-Mentor Teacher Teams: A Model for Classroom-Based Inquiry"

Beebe & Corrigan suggest that a university supported model employing a reflective practitioner approach enhances collaboration and promotes positive results for both pre-service and in-service teachers.

In “Analysis of Misconceptions in High School Mathematics” Lauren Schnepfer & Leah McCoy investigate how formative assessment informs pedagogical instruction of a student-teacher researcher by analyzing and re-teaching categorical errors.

In “Linking Action Research to Response to Intervention,” David Hoppey illustrates through course examples how action research and Response to Intervention (RTI) came together for pre-service teachers, showcasing how classroom students’ needs were enhanced through pre-service teachers’ engagement with

action research.

Nicholas Hartlep provides a thorough overview of Sargant’s *Voices from the Classroom*, offering insight into the book’s strengths and potential areas for expansion drawing on his former experiences as a pre-service teacher and current teacher educator.

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