

## **Editorial**

With great pleasure we welcome all who are involved in improving teaching and teacher education to the first issue of *Studying Teacher Education: A Journal of Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices*. The journal emerges primarily from the work of the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices special interest group within the American Educational Research Association. *Studying Teacher Education* marks the arrival of this field on the international education scene as part of the growing recognition of the importance and complexity of research on teaching and teacher education practices.

Following on the recently published *International Handbook of Self-study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices* (Kluwer, 2004), the journal offers an ongoing and regular touchstone for the scholarship of self-study and constitutes an invitation to all concerned to develop and extend this field. This first issue offers a range of examples of self-study in order to provide readers with several different perspectives for understanding the nature of self-study of teaching and teacher education practices.

Loughran introduces this issue with a paper that offers readers a brief historical and theoretical position on the world of self-study; its origins, its concerns, and its possibilities for a future research agenda. In this paper, the issue of the development of the nature of the learning from self-study is important and ties in with the growing push within the field to pay particular attention to the need to develop the pedagogy of teacher education.

Kitchen follows next with a paper that examines his learning about becoming a teacher educator. He offers interesting insights into aspects of the particular knowledge, skills and perspectives that drive the work of teacher educators, and he highlights how growth in the role is not something that should be taken for granted or viewed as simple. Importantly, Kitchen offers the reader new ways of understanding how careful consideration of issues, concerns and practices in teaching and learning about teaching matter in shaping the ways in

which the work of teacher education is conceptualized. By drawing on an extensive data source through a longitudinal study, Kitchen illustrates an approach to self-study that is thoughtful, rigorous and dynamic in response to the thoughts and actions of the teacher educators and student teachers involved in teaching and learning about teaching.

Schulte examines the assumptions and misconceptions that influence the way in which we who are teacher educators view our practice and our students' learning. Through this honest and forthright examination of her approach to teaching about teaching, Schulte leaves little doubt that displaying vulnerability by confronting the realities of one's own beliefs and practices is an inevitable aspect of self-study. Schulte is concerned to make her own learning about her assumptions improve her teacher education practices and, in so doing, began to develop approaches to teaching that she hoped would help her students similarly learn about their own assumptions and misconceptions. Through her compelling account of a very personal self-study, Schulte helps to shed light on the importance of modelling in teacher education and how integral it is to teaching and learning about teaching.

Senese, like Kitchen and Schulte, draws on an extensive data set for his self-study. He uses a self-study methodology to investigate his learning about his own teaching of high school English and, as such, offers the reader a window into the work of a very accomplished teacher-researcher. A significant feature of Senese's study is the context in which it occurs (a high school). Although self-study reports come primarily from those involved in teacher education, self-study does not and should not exclude practitioners in other fields. Self-studies of teaching display important parallels to self-studies of teacher education and can offer important insights for teacher education. Senese illustrates the value of revisiting understandings of research findings as he questions the way in which he has shaped his learning through self-study and the importance of continuing to push to capture alternative perspectives on taken-for-granted assumptions.

Pinnegar, Lay, Bigham and Dulude examine the relationship between mothering and teaching as they collaborate in a self-study that is quite different from those that precede it in this issue of *Studying Teacher Education*. Through their narrative account of their understanding of their own personal experiences, the authors develop a number of themes that begin to highlight how their understanding of teaching and mothering are linked and influence one another. Their themes include the angst of inadequacy, the vulnerability of a teacher to a student's willingness to learn, the bread and butter of relationship-building, and the way that softening our hearts leads to change. The narrative cycles used to portray and analyse their data also offer interesting ways of approaching shared adventures in self-study.

Pereira, as an experienced mathematics teacher educator, offers a self-study driven by his concern that mathematics teachers need to pay more attention to the emotional dimensions of their teaching. His paper focuses on ways in which he has come to understand the value and importance of his student teachers reconstructing themselves as learners of mathematics in order to construct themselves as teachers of mathematics. In this work he uses autobiographies, encouraging his students to keep journals in which they discuss and reflect upon their feelings as they learn. However, because he expects his students to engage in such writing, he feels compelled to do so himself. In this paper, his own experiences as both teacher and learner and his analysis of how those experiences guide his teaching of mathematics become the data source for his own learning about practice. The subsequent themes that capture the tensions of those experiences offer important perspectives on the nature of teaching and learning about mathematics teaching.

Hamilton's paper brings this first issue to a close. "Researcher as teacher: Lessons modeled by a well-remembered scholar" is a personal response to the work of Jeff Northfield, who passed away in April 2004 after a brief battle with cancer. The nature of his work in self-study, the manner in which he worked with others and the insights emerging from his

scholarship clearly had a lasting impression on Hamilton. She draws on a range of examples of his work to illustrate features of self-study that have been important to her. As she reviews this work, she highlights the centrality of the researcher's own learning as a result of doing the research and how that learning is driven by a commitment to teacher education. Through this examination of Northfield's contributions to self-study, Hamilton offers not only a tribute to his work but also a reminder of the importance of self-study as a powerful way of influencing teaching and learning in teacher education.

Just as Hamilton is drawn to reflect on the work of Northfield, so too the field of self-study has been fortunate to be touched by other scholars who, like Jeff, are no longer with us. Fortunately, their work lives on and will continue to offer opportunities for others to learn from their work. As a community we also remember and are grateful for the contributions made to self-study by Diane Holt-Reynolds, Judy Johnston and John Bradley.

Finally, as new editors of a new journal, we acknowledge the invaluable support and encouragement of Graham Hobbs, Editorial Director, Journals (Education, Arts & Humanities) and Ian White, Publisher, Journals (Education) at Taylor and Francis.

*John Loughran and Tom Russell*