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EDITORIAL

Articulating the "How," the "For What," the "For Whom," and the "With Whom" in Concert: A Call to Broaden the Benchmarks of our Scholarship

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Cognition and Instruction has developed a well-deserved reputation for publishing empirically grounded scholarship that makes rich theoretical contributions to what it means to "think, learn, know, and teach" (Enyedy & Hall, 2017, p. 2). As described in our *Aims & Scope*, the commitment to theory building in this journal "preferentially attends to the 'how' of learning." From the establishment of the journal in 1984, prioritizing the *how* has been an intellectual endeavor to push back on frameworks that diminish the complexity and contextuality of learning. At least implicitly, if not explicitly, this journal's emphasis has been a political stance that strives to influence and redesign the environments in which people learn. As editors, we hope to build on this rich tradition of *Cognition and Instruction*. We call on those of us who intend to publish in this journal to more clearly attend to the ways in which the *for what, for whom*, and *with whom* of teaching and learning are necessarily intertwined with the *how* of learning—an effort that asks us to carefully examine and address the cultural and political contexts and consequences of our scholarship. We also hope to unequivocally broaden this journal's usage of teaching and learning to include and appeal to scholars whose work on culture and politics may fall outside traditional notions of cognition and instruction.

Our invitation is meant to enrich and not diminish the theoretically and methodologically rich contributions to teaching and learning for which *Cognition and Instruction* has become known. As a scholarly community, we continue to develop a wide array of theoretical, methodological, and analytical lenses and tools to attend to cognition and its social and interactional nature. We have also become more responsive to moves across the social and behavioral sciences to attend to the diversity of human cognition and development beyond participants, methods, and purposes that are rooted in the epistemologies and values of dominant groups in Western, industrialized nations (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010; Bang et al., 2016; Medin, Ojalehto, Marin, & Bang, 2017; Smith, 1999). We are asking this scholarly community to join the effort in the broader fields of the social and behavioral sciences to expand what we know about human possibilities. Indeed, we are already headed in that direction. A growing body of research published in this journal has started to make headway on how power, race, and culture intersect with cognition, learning, and teaching (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016; Jurow et al, 2016; Philip, 2011; Philip, Olivares-Pasillas, & Rocha, 2016; Rubel et al., 2016; Vakil, Royston, Nasir, & Kirshner, 2016; Zavala, 2016). These perspectives emphasize that socially and locally meaningful forms of power differentially shape opportunities to learn, as well as the values and consequences of what is learned (Gutiérrez & Jurow, 2016). They elucidate how power, itself, is partially constituted and contested through learning. These collective advances in our scholarly community highlight new possibilities for bringing the *for what, for whom*, and *with whom* to bear on studies of the *how* of cognition and instruction. The unique opportunity that this journal presents—to generate scholarship in which these four dimensions of teaching and learning are fundamentally tethered—is what we find most promising in contributing to foundational knowledge and learning contexts that matter for young people, their families, and communities.

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Our effort to collectively stress the *for what* reflects a similar push in fields from information technology to medicine to consider the social impact of research (e.g., Bornmann, 2013; Smith, 2001): educational research that exclusively focuses on extending theory and methods can fall into the trap of having little to no influence on people's educational and life opportunities and outcomes. That said, prioritizing social impact absent of attention to power relations can reinscribe historical inequities (Hall & Jurow, 2015). For example, conventional measures of impact and logics of intervention often privilege dominant forms of content and ways of knowing (Gutiérrez & Penuel, 2014). These seemingly neutral criteria have, at best, overlooked cultural ways of knowing and doing in non-dominant communities; at worst, they have been complicit in forms of linguistic and cultural genocide (Calabrese Barton & Tan, 2009; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Heath, 1989; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Spring, 2004). Our scholarly community is poised to expand these prevailing standards when we account for how people "learn to navigate and resist disempowering social systems" and "create communities of resilience in the face of challenge" (Lee, 2017, p. x). Such forms of agency are not external influences but processes that co-constitute cognition and instruction (Polman, 2006; Wortham, 2004, 2006). Given the limitations of social impact, our use of *for what* signifies a broader engagement with the political contexts and consequences of teaching and learning to ensure we are contributing to education that arcs toward more just worlds. This approach asks us to wrestle with the purposes of teaching and learning with the hope and courage to reimagine and re-envision future societies while simultaneously working toward learning environments today that "prefigure" the "forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience" to which we aspire (Boggs, 1977, p. 100).

Our hope that scholarship in this journal will emphasis the *for whom* is an attempt to counter the tendency toward "interest convergence" (Bell, 1980) in educational reform and research, whereby the interests of non-dominant groups are only advanced in so far as they converge with the goals of dominant groups. For instance, much of the rhetoric around broadening participation in STEM learning is premised on, and constrained by, systems and discourses that center the economic and military dominance of the United States, rather than the democratic and justice-oriented purposes of racialized peoples (Philip & Azevedo, 2017; Vossoughi & Vakil, forthcoming). *For whom* prompts us to dialogue about the competing contexts and consequences of teaching and learning. It encourages us to collectively struggle with questions such as "What is our notion of justice when broadening participation in STEM within an economic system focused on production at the lowest possible cost contributes to environmental degradation that disproportionately affects Indigenous communities and communities of color?"

For whom also reminds us that colorblind and assimilationist efforts to teach all students tend to reproduce deep-seated societal inequalities; they do not attend to the cultural heterogeneity in students' sense-making and participation (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Lee, 2008; Rosebery, Ogonowski, DiSchino, & Warren, 2010), nor the historical and systemic violence and barriers experienced by students from non-dominant groups (Martin, 2009). To be clear, *for whom* is not about the Other—an approach that would contribute to the invisibility and normalization of Whiteness. Instead, it is meant to also open up questions of how research in predominantly White and middle-class communities works to explicitly name and address, or reify, racism, classism, and other forms of oppression. Contending directly with this question forces us to grapple with the intricate ways in which learning, teaching, culture, race, and other forms of power co-construct each other and how these relationships address or neglect the strengths, struggles, and aspirations of students from non-dominant groups and communities.

With whom is an invitation for us to take seriously and to set right the limitations of our knowledge base about the diversity of human learning and development. Although there is growing interest in large-scale initiatives in our field (McKenney, 2017), conventional notions of scaling continue to constrict our conceptualization of teaching and learning and to perpetuate normative assimilative politics by leaving families and communities out. Such scaled implementations have restricted non-dominant students' and communities' meaningful participation and roles in decision making. Indeed, across disciplines, scholars are exploring models of participation of heterogeneous peoples and the ways in which participatory processes increase effectiveness and "impact" in areas like problem solving (e.g., Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Philips, 2014), deliberation and decision-making (e.g., Sommers, 2006, Irvin & Stansbury, 2004), leadership and innovation (e.g., Eagley & Chin, 2010), budgeting (e.g., Ebdon & Franklin, 2006), natural

resource management (e.g., Von Korff, Daniell, Moellenkamp, Bots, & Bijlsma, 2012), and the creation of adaptive systems (e.g., Page, 2008; 2010; Berkes, Colding, & Folke, 2003). Further, the socio-ecological demands of the 21st century are profound and will require the reimagining of economies, infrastructure, and relations between and amongst nation states, cultural communities, and racialized peoples (IPCC, 2014). Indeed, other fields are beginning to consider the ways in which learning and codesign strategies may be important for creating adaptive communities and socio-ecological change (e.g., Suškevičs, Hahn, Rodela, Macura, & Pahl-Wostl, 2017). Creating systems of education that prepare young people to productively inherit the emerging challenges of the 21st century is still largely understudied. Efforts to scale, without attention to culture and politics, will continue to proliferate forms of education that are insufficient in comparison to the emergent complexities of life.

Given the demographics of teachers, administrators, and researchers in the field of education, the potential for replicating systemic and implicit bias and preference and ideological blind spots and willful 'ignore-ances' is significant. Indeed, other fields, like health, are recognizing the ways in which dominant partial perspectives shape the foundational science of the field and its policies and practices (e.g., Chapman, Kaatz, & Carnes, 2013). Creating more effective and impactful policy and systemic change in education will require rigorous efforts to resist bias in the study, implementation, and scaling of teaching and learning beyond settled structures of schooling and policy making that have historically contributed to unjust and inequitable outcomes. *With whom* is an invitation to take seriously previous research across fields that has demonstrated the power of participatory and heterogenous groups in solution development (see Hong & Page, 2004). Importantly, however, scholars across fields are demonstrating that not all forms of *with whom* are transformative; for example, token participation in leadership will not suffice (e.g., Rhode & Packel, 2014), nor will processes that do not deliberately address power differentials (Munoz, Paredes, & Thorp, 2007; Sikor & Nguyen, 2007). Engaging with the question *with whom*, and considering how relationships of power and knowledge are structured and negotiated between researchers, communities, and participants are first steps toward participatory processes that increase transformative possibilities towards justice.

The interdisciplinarity of scholarship published in this journal is an asset that will allow us all to enrich and make more robust our theories of teaching and learning by considering how "differential access to power structures the organization of learning in particular settings" (Lee, 2017, p. viii). But to do so, we need to make explicit our own understandings of power and our visions for equity and justice. The careful articulation of these constructs prompt us to consider the processes, purposes, and participants entailed in teaching and learning as political, cultural, and coconstituted (Bang et al, 2012; Gutiérrez & Jaramillo, 2006). Thin usages of equity and justice, however, can obscure the profoundly different understandings of society, and understandings of learning and education, reflected in our research. For instance, our research practices would be strikingly distinct if we considered contemporary forms of racism as exceptional acts of individual prejudice in a progressively fair and colorblind society or if we examined racism in terms of changing relationships of power rooted in settler colonialism, anti-Blackness, and the exploitation and appropriation of the bodies and labor of racialized people. *For what, for whom*, and *with whom* press us to specify the theories of equity and justice that explicitly and implicitly undergird our research, from the steps leading to design to our continued commitments after the publication of our findings (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016). They call on us to explicate how our scholarship seeks to understand and address hierarchical relationships of power in research settings, informal learning environments, classrooms, schools, communities, and/or society. The political contexts and consequences of our research will certainly look different across the range of scholarship represented in this journal, but these dynamics certainly exist in any context and we need to grapple with them explicitly (Esmonde & Booker, 2016).

Change is a hallmark of a vibrant scholarly community. As Enyedy and Hall (2017, p. 1) put it, "The research communities served by this journal, the fields within which we do our research, and the worlds this research seeks to understand and to affect are all changing." The rising tide of neoliberalism over the last 3 decades has resulted in monumental shifts in the educational, economic, political, social, and cultural landscapes across the globe (Harvey, 2005; Hursh, 2005; Lipman, 2011). This last year has brought tensions, antagonisms, and solidarities in the United States and other nations to the fore in

ways that highlight the politics of teaching, learning, and research (Feminist Scholars, 2017; Politics of Learning Writing Collective, 2017). With these consequential shifts, it becomes even more important for us to articulate, in concert, the contextually and historically situated processes, purposes, and participants entailed in teaching and learning. Importantly, our collective scholarship is not meant to move toward a single vision. Instead, we invite scholarship in this journal to engage the contributions of scholars across the world and to take seriously differences in cultural and political contexts so that our community might better understand and address how power and inequity under neoliberal and colonial forces are global phenomena that manifest in locally specific ways.

Theoretical and methodological diversity has become the defining asset of *Cognition and Instruction*; our call recognizes that a strength of our community will be the multiplicity of ways in which we deliberately link the processes of teaching and learning with their cultural and political contexts and consequences. Over the last 3 decades, *Cognition and Instruction* has consistently pushed research boundaries. We hope that our call for research that studies the inseparability of the *how*, the *for what*, the *for whom*, and the *with whom* of teaching and learning will continue to spur the growth of new scholarly communities and research enterprises that matter for learners and the worlds they co-construct.

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