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Associate Editor's Introduction

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In *Professing and Pedagogy: Learning the Teaching of English*, which we take up in this issue, Shari Stenberg insists on a definition of pedagogy that is more than the practice of teaching or the theory that informs it. “Pedagogy,” Stenberg writes, “is a knowledge-making activity that involves the interplay of visions and practices, both of which require reflection . . . is dependent on learners and is remade with every encounter, as the students and the teacher change . . . [and] cannot be finished; we cannot ‘finally’ learn to teach” (xviii). And yet, how many of us, pulled away from this process of remaking ourselves as teachers, fall back on the routine and repetition of classroom practices? How many of us rely on theories of teaching without working to refine and develop those theories as learning-oriented practitioners?

Joining *Pedagogy* as the associate editor of the Reviews section has reaffirmed my conviction that pedagogy is a knowledge-making activity. The effort to improve teaching and the status of teaching can be successful only insofar as conceptions of the discipline of English studies and professional identity are reexamined—in our own careers and departments as well as in the profession at large. Without this ongoing work, the obligations and legitimacies of “research” will assure that teaching remains the by-product of the “real work” of the profession. We should be especially concerned with how the accelerated critical and curricular transformations we associate with postmodernism, pluralism, and multiculturalism—the putative “progress” from the “limits” of formalist methods to the “opportunities” of cultural critique—continue to be underwritten by disciplinary and institutional incentives that reinforce the existing scholarly realm.

This issue of the journal reflects two principles that will guide my editorial work: I will seek out voices from the wide range of institutional types

that make up the profession of English; and I will offer *Pedagogy's* readers multiple voices and institutional positions—graduate students, adjunct and tenure-stream faculty, and senior members of the profession. In addition to the roundtable on *Professing and Pedagogy*, this issue features a discussion of a text that challenges assumptions about interpretive difficulty, Mariolina Rizzi Salvatori and Patricia Donahue's *The Elements (and Pleasures) of Difficulty*, and an assessment by two graduate students of Jay Parini's *The Art of Teaching*. The section concludes with two stand-alone reviews on books that challenge the status quo in developed critiques of the politics of institutional transformation, David R. Smit's *The End of Composition Studies* and Henry Giroux and Susan Searls Giroux's *Take Back Higher Education: Race, Youth, and the Crisis of Democracy in the Post-Civil Rights Era*. Finally, the Selected List of Books Received—intended to suggest further opportunities for reading and opportunities for subsequent reviews—will become a regular feature.

The opportunity to join *Pedagogy* is especially rewarding for me, as it marks a return to a formative collaboration with two graduate school colleagues, Jennifer Holberg and Marcy Taylor, whose vision in founding this journal has created a profession-wide conversation about teaching we did not have as graduate students. I'd also like to acknowledge the work of Christine Chaney and George Drake, who served as Reviews editors for earlier volumes of the journal. Let me conclude by renewing our standing invitation for contributions in the forms of review that we run: the "Forum," in which the author reflects on the text (or texts) that have been the most useful in a life of teaching; the "Roundtable," in which two or more scholars respond to and comment on the same text; and the more traditional stand-alone review, in which one scholar assesses a new text. What books (and other texts) will contribute to the theory and practice of teaching in higher education? Whether you are an author, a reader, or a publisher, I look forward to your guidance on what books we should be discussing in these pages.