



From the Book Review Editor

Book reviews used to strike me as a very limited, prescribed genre. There's a book, and it's reviewed. They're tucked away at the back of journals and exist mostly out of convention. We might glance at book reviews and occasionally identify a new text we want to read, but rarely are book reviews discussed, returned to, memorable.

We hope *WCJ* book reviews will change that. As the new book review editor, I think book reviews have a great deal of untapped potential. There's room in reviews for individual voices and for disrupting the usual summary/judgment framework. Both summary and judgment are useful aspects of a review, but they don't have to become so formulaic that we stop paying attention. Like the articles that fill the majority of journal space, reviews can create their own meaning. By asking questions of a book and by synthesizing ideas, reviewers extend the value of the book beyond the book itself.

In *WCJ* reviews, we still want reviewers to provide an overview and details about the book (or books, in review essays). But rather than simply summarizing, we're asking reviewers to place the book within a broader disciplinary conversation, noting other important books the writing center community should be aware of and how the book under review adds to, or doesn't add to, the conversation. We hope these efforts expand overall awareness of scholarship and encourage us to build on our existing research. We're also stressing that reviewers consider the value of the book for the writing center community, asking them to be candid about which parts will be most useful and how and whether, given the

limited budgets many of our centers face, the book is worth purchasing. And, we're encouraging reviewers to explore the formal conventions of the book-review genre—to play with voice and style and how content is presented. We believe some intellectual risk taking can push the boundaries of book reviews and make them as much a journal destination as the articles themselves.

When we're able, you'll find the book reviews share a theme, such as how the four reviews in this issue are each of a book nominated for the 2018 International Writing Centers Association Outstanding Book Award; or, reviews might complement the articles in a particular issue. Our main concern, though, is that the book-review section bring important texts to the writing center community's attention. Books with a writing center focus will of course be considered and included, but we're also interested in casting a wide net beyond writing centers, and you'll occasionally find books from composition, education, and other disciplines, with the reviewers working to show the relevance and connections to writing center practice.

Bottom line: we want the *WCJ* book-review section to be another space in the journal that informs and makes readers think, that raises ideas for future research, and that promotes the making of meaning in writing center studies. We hope you'll not only read these reviews but also follow up with the books themselves and incorporate them into your own thinking and work.

