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Book Review: Into the Classroom: Developing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning by Thomas Hatch (Jossey-Bass, 2005)

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Abstract

Excerpt: The scholarship of teaching and learning is not for the faint of heart. Neither is it for the casual passer-by. Thomas Hatch welcomes a broad audience, including the tenuous and the curious, into the conversation by inviting us *Into the Classroom*. Describing the history of formal education as that which has traditionally “taken place behind closed doors,” Hatch has partnered with scholar educators and the Carnegie Foundation to swing wide the classroom door with an invitation to demystify teaching and learning through its systematic investigation. A former senior scholar with the Foundation, Hatch – along with contributing authors Melissa Eiler White, Jason Raley, Kimberlee Austin, Sarah Capitelli, and Deborah Faigenbaum also of the Carnegie Foundation – brings to this text his leadership and experience within the program in which K-12 teacher scholars partnered as fellows with the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. An Associate Professor of Education, he now co-directs the [Center for Restructuring Education, Schools and Teaching](#) at Teaching College, Columbia University.

Keywords

Thomas Hatch, Scholarship of teaching and learning, History of formal education

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Book Review

Into the Classroom: Developing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

Thomas Hatch (Jossey-Bass, 2006)

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The scholarship of teaching and learning is not for the faint of heart. Neither is it for the casual passer-by. Thomas Hatch welcomes a broad audience, including the tenuous and the curious, into the conversation by inviting us *Into the Classroom*. Describing the history of formal education as that which has traditionally “taken place behind closed doors,” Hatch has partnered with scholar educators and the Carnegie Foundation to swing wide the classroom door with an invitation to demystify teaching and learning through its systematic investigation. A former senior scholar with the Foundation, Hatch – along with contributing authors Melissa Eiler White, Jason Raley, Kimberlee Austin, Sarah Capitelli, and Deborah Faigenbaum also of the Carnegie Foundation – brings to this text his leadership and experience within the program in which K-12 teacher scholars partnered as fellows with the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. An Associate Professor of Education, he now co-directs the [Center for Restructuring Education, Schools and Teaching](#) at Teaching College, Columbia University.

The primary thrust of Hatch’s text is to inform and equip educators to “recognize the intellectual history of their work and ideas” and, thus, to approach the investigation of teaching and learning as a scholarship which can be built upon. Of particular focus here is the K-12 educational system laced with the inherent culture that distinguishes it from higher education. Hatch establishes a framework for this discussion by first providing a brief but solid history of the scholarship of teaching and learning. This history represents not only the contributions of the Carnegie Foundation to the development of this field of scholarship through its [Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning](#) (CASTL), but also the foundations provided by John Dewey. Hatch then portrays the richness of this scholarship by capturing the vividly detailed stories of four K-12 educators who embarked into systematic, meaningful, and engaging scholarship of their own practices and classrooms as fellows for the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) program.

By weaving in the experiences, inquiries, and voices of the four K-12 Carnegie fellows, Hatch not only adds multiple perspectives to the dialogue but reifies its importance. The fellows note, for instance, that higher education often provides greater support for this kind of scholarship, venues for dissemination, and subtle but real prestige for scholars. Moreover, the fellows’ narratives paint a picture of a delicate dance among teacher scholars, who, contrary to their counterparts in other

fields of scholarship, discover that the “notoriety, status, and rewards they may gain can create perceived and real inequities and alienate them from school colleagues.”

Thus, these scholars can find themselves moving in double constraint – trying to carve out time and space for critical inquiry and reflection, while avoiding the appearance of “showing off” during their successes or while seeking opportunities to share what they have learned.

Whether addressing educators who focus on teaching, administration, or policy making, Hatch argues that the educational system must move past traditional “surface indicators” that artificially validate or invalidate teaching and learning and move towards systematic critique and dissemination. To move in this direction is to encourage educators to recognize that the problems they address and what they learn are “connected and contributing to ongoing lines of inquiry pursued by others in both research and practice.” To move in this direction is to swing wide the classroom door for the advancement of effective teaching and learning.