

The Transformative Power of Reviewing

by Beth Graue

Peer review is one of the most pervasive tasks in research. It shapes opportunities and the knowledge available for practice, and it strongly influences careers. Although researchers spend much time in the review process, it is rarely formally taught in our professional preparation. This article explores the roles served by the peer review process. Using the metaphor of publishing as a playground, I argue that peer review is at its most powerful when it merges the gatekeeping and developmental functions and reflectively considers the social practices represented by peer review.

Education researchers have diverse interests, methods of inquiry, and roles, but we are joined by a system of communication through which we share our work. In fact, the process of inquiry is completed only through an exchange of ideas that ultimately results in publication (Graue, 2006). The peer review process shapes our communication,¹ which controls the flow and nature of written interaction, selects the voices featured in journals, and mediates the types of studies and, ultimately, the knowledge presented to the community.

Across our careers, researchers take up different roles in this complex process—sometimes we submit our work for potential publication and sometimes we work as reviewers, editors, or members of editorial boards. A snapshot of practice brings alive

the pervasiveness of this activity. If we look *only* at 1 year in the life of American Educational Research Association (AERA) journals—six high-quality outlets for scholarship—there are more than 1,400 reviews of new manuscripts. Expand this by the number of journals that address educational issues, and you have a practice that touches many research lives. Reviewing is central to our scholarship, and yet few are taught to engage in this important practice (Kumashiro et al., 2005; Natriello, 2000; Sternberg, 2002; Tesser & Martin, 2006).

What is the role of peer review in education research? Does it serve to control the quality of our collective research conversation? Is it a formative process to improve scholarship? Or is it something more? In this article I explore these ideas, arguing that although we typically focus on the two specified purposes, there may be a third function that is most important. I make the case that reviewing is at its most powerful when it works to transform education and research, and that it can only do that by transforming the actors.

To help myself in this task, I will employ a metaphor that might seem out of place in a subject as serious as peer review, and has such influence on people's careers. I need a tool that acknowledges the deep import that peer review has on research practice but that keeps it located in social, political, and cultural practices. For that reason, I go back to my intellectual home, early childhood education, and place reviewing in a very serious context—on the playground. I want to be clear that I use this metaphor strategically. It is not to demean the review process or to infantilize its participants. Instead, I hope to use the familiarity of the playground to draw attention to the social practices of peer review and to help readers imagine new modes of interaction. Like earlier examinations that have explored publishing as a collective game (Wellington & Nixon, 2005), I suggest that review-

ing is a rule-bound social activity of inclusion and exclusion. From this perspective, we should carefully examine *how* the rules and practices shape who can win, who must lose, and the outcomes of the game for our collective knowledge and relationships. And to complicate matters, reviewing is not just about those who contribute to the knowledge base as scholars. The ultimate measure of the review process is its effects on the practice of education, in all its complexity.

Who are the players in the game of peer review? What are the boundaries of the playground discussed here? To understand the participants, it helps to acknowledge that peer review is a complex process involving numerous stakeholders. Encompassing more than the act of rendering an evaluation of a manuscript, peer review extends from the initial submission through the publication of a manuscript. It therefore includes the author who submits a manuscript, the editor, and the reviewers. Mapping those actors on to the playground metaphor is not a simple matter. Because the playground is a loosely organized set of players and participants, the roles and relationships shift depending on who is playing, what rules they enact, and the power relations negotiated. If the playground is the place where publishing is played, we might see editors as the playground supervisors and the reviewers as umpires/referees in the case of organized games or the power players who get to say who is in and who is out in less structured activities. The authors are trying to get in to play, whether it is structured and organized in games like football or more informal gatherings of players hanging out by the swings. Mirroring the diversity of publication practice, the playground is governed

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by formal and informal rules, it is shaped by trends in preferred play, and there are always complaints that someone is not playing fairly.

Reviewing Reviewing

Scholars from areas as varied as psychology, medicine, economics, and education have taken up the challenge of critically examining the practice of reviewing. Most discussions focus to some degree on concerns about fairness but approach the issue in very different ways. In this section, I explore three different themes in discussions of the review process: technical concerns related to reviewing, peer review and epistemology, and unprofessional behavior in reviewing.

Rules and the Playground

For many scholars, the main concern about fairness is technical. A recent example is provided by Tesser and Martin (2006, p. 3):

Science is a social activity. It depends on the checks and balances provided by fellow scientists with expertise in the area. Such expert review cannot guarantee the legitimacy of the raw data nor even can it assure the heuristics value of the paper. However, it does increase our confidence that the results are appropriately framed in the work that has come before, that the procedures allow for an adequate test or exploration of the constructs, that the data have been appropriately analyzed, and that the implications derived by the author or authors are plausible.

A technical view of fairness focuses on the ability of peer review to be unbiased and unperturbed by outside pressure. It examines whether the rules on the playground are applied fairly and how those rules affect the quality of the game. Medical researchers explore the impact of industry funding on researcher conclusions, the relative quality of masked versus open review (Guterman, 2005), and potential bias in favor of statistically significant findings or methodological quality (Giles, 2006). Social scientists have expended a fair amount of energy identifying the critical attributes of quality reviews and describing the skills set necessary to undertake reviewing practice (Sternberg, 2006).

Synthetic analyses of peer review across disciplines (Armstrong, 1997; Campanario, 1998) have focused on quality, fairness, and the relation between the two. Signifi-

cant among these synthetic reviews is Hackett and Chubin's analysis (2003) for the National Research Council (NRC). Part of the NRC's initiative on scientifically based education research, this report was the foundation for an NRC statement on peer review in federal agencies (National Research Council, 2004). Hackett and Chubin describe peer review as a *boundary process* spanning several social worlds (science, policy, the academy, government, research, and practice). They suggest that in addition to its evaluative role, it has diverse functions in the research community. Peer review serves as a source of expert advice, a flywheel that lends stability between originality and tradition, a communication channel, an entry point for adding value beyond quality, and an assertion of professional authority. I will return to these functions later in the article, but Hackett and Chubin's main point is that peer review is a complex set of processes that hold divergent meanings among its many stakeholders.

In these discussions of peer review, there is an implicit faith in the rules on the playground—what we need to do is to apply the rules judiciously so that play is fair. The goal of reviewing is to reduce uncertainty about quality by using valid and reliable tools so that we allocate the limited resources of journal space. As a result, we ensure that what is shared in scholarly journals has been adequately vetted and that it represents the best that science, using objective and unbiased criteria, has to offer. The assumption, from this technical perspective on fairness, is that fairness comes out of clear standards applied equally to all potential participants.

Epistemology and the Playground

A second type of discussion takes an epistemological look at fairness. Although one might think that epistemology is an unlikely playground toy, it illuminates the ways that reviewing can rig the game so that only certain players can participate. A set of papers written by Kevin Kumashiro and recent journal editors (2005, p. 285) highlight concern about systemic bias in the review process.

[C]ertain voices are being kept out of the conversation, especially voices that traditionally have been marginalized in and by the field of educational research. The peer-review process often functions as a gatekeeper, weeding out groups that have yet

to learn or refuse to conform to prevailing assumptions about what makes research "high quality," as well as groups that critique the mainstream—or, more precisely, that indirectly critique the perspectives and practices of the reviewer.

Epistemological tension is also at the heart of appraisals of high profile statements of what constitutes scientific research in education (Lather & Moss, 2005; National Research Council, 2002), which directly bear on the ability of scholars to have their work published.

In this work, authors make two distinct but related arguments. The first is that the process of publication is essentially conservative, working to confirm what we already know (Armstrong, 1997; Eisenhart, 2002). "Peer review favors unadventurous nibbling at the margin of truth rather than quantum leaps" (Lock, cited in Campanario, 1998, p. 199). This confirmatory bias occurs because inquiry is a social phenomenon that is *preinterpreted* by researchers (Moss, 2005). Using their considerable expertise, reviewers evaluate others' work in ways that fit their own understandings. Some attribute this to ego involvement (Tesser & Martin, 2006), others to careful maintenance of the game of publishing (Wellington & Nixon, 2005), still others to a bias toward "significant" findings (Campanario, 1998). Regardless of the mechanisms suggested, we find ourselves in a situation where a resource is simultaneously a constraint—we rely on reviewers because of their knowledge and expertise, but it is this very knowledge and expertise that limit innovation and new ideas, methods, and theories in scholarly discussions.

The second argument is rooted in concern about social justice. From this perspective, articulated by Kumashiro (2005), the issue is who is allowed into the game. Research communities are gated communities, and so are their playgrounds. Although the community is slowly being integrated, the reliance on particular rules in judging scholarship and, therefore, scholars, limits who can play. Indigenous scholars, scholars of color, women, gay and lesbian researchers, among others, have argued that the mainstream assumptions underlying the criteria used to evaluate research precludes diversity in perspectives (Siddle Walker, 2005; Smith, 2005). The drive to open the research community is based on the recognition that

as a social practice, research reflects the values and characteristics of its social actors and, therefore, the power relations in which they are embedded:

Research is not just a highly moral and civilized search for knowledge; it is a set of very human activities that reproduce particular social relations of power. Decolonizing research, then, is not simply about challenging or making refinements to qualitative research. It is a much broader but still purposeful agenda for transforming the institution of research, the deep structures and taken-for-granted ways of organizing, conducting, and disseminating research and knowledge. (Smith, 2005, p. 88)

Going back to the playground, it seems that the arbiters of reviewing have to work against a cycle of confirmatory near-sightedness. In evaluating others' work, we tend to play the game that best reflects our interests—in terms of our intellectual history and turf, of epistemological values, and resulting methodological tools (Eisenhart, 2002). This may be because our standards for judging scholarship reflect our identity. *What I see depends on how I see and how I see depends on my vantage point on the discussion. Standards for judging quality come from our core values, “reflecting our privileges and purposes in ways that can be as confounding and reinscribing as they are empowering and liberating”* (Kumashiro et al., 2005, p. 269).

An example might illustrate the operation of bias in publication. Journals are incredibly diverse in their intended readership and content. Some journals are broad-based, general readership sources (*Educational Researcher*, for example), while other journals are constructed more narrowly to serve subgroups of researchers. Sometimes the focus is content oriented (*Journal of Teacher Education*), and other times it is methodological (*Qualitative Inquiry*). In recent history, new journals have been created to ensure that the full range of perspectives, methods, and theories would find a space in scholarly discussion. In each case, the process of reviewing and publishing involves setting boundaries, sometimes articulating the parameters of an established field and in others staking out new territory for inquiry. Even the most cutting-edge venues make quality judgments that place some inside and some outside. Are you Foucauldian enough? Did you cite the right ancestors?

Human decisions reflect knowledge and personal interest. Although it may seem that gatekeeping goes awry more in mainstream, broad readership journals, boutique journals also exclude work that does not fit a particular vision of quality. For those outside that vision, it feels like bias.

If this bias only affected today's players and today's playground games, that would be bad enough. If the reviewing process systematically excludes certain perspectives, methods, and approaches, it limits what we can *know*, ultimately shaping both research and practice of education. When the research process only tells us what we already know, it is difficult to learn, change, and, therefore, improve. And we still need a bit of improvement in this business.

Bullies on the Playground

Playgrounds have many characters, but the only one consistently described in the literature on peer review is the bully. Sternberg (2006: p. ix–x) provides this description of the experience:

What I do know is that more than once in my career, I have been stunned by the savagery with which my own work, and the work of others, has been attacked, usually under the cloak of anonymity. I have been surprised that the reviewers wrote what they wrote and that the editors (or heads of granting panels) sent back the reviews in such form.

Just like on the playground, the bully picks on someone less powerful using the invitation to provide feedback as an opening for name-calling, insults, and general abuse. Though you would expect intellectually rich and mature discussions about research, too many reviewers offer something very similar to the parody of the peer review process in the *Onion* (2005) that depicted 5th-graders' reactions to their classmate's report on otters:

“When Mike said, ‘Otters,’ I almost puked,” said 11-year-old peer examiner Lacey Swain, taking the lettuce out of her sandwich. “Why would you want to spend a whole page talking about otters?”

“It's probably only the dumbest topic in the history of the entire world,” 10-year-old Duane LaMott added . . . “Otters are so boring, I fell asleep for a thousand years and woke up with a long beard covered in ice,” LaMott said. “I had to defrost myself.”

Moreover, as Sternberg points out, the bully acts under the watchful eye of the playground supervisor: the editor. What can we understand from such behavior?

The first thing is that research, rather than being dispassionate and neutral, is a flashpoint for emotion precisely because it is bound up with who we are and what we know. When we do not see ourselves reflected in the knowledge and practices of our peers, we can either stamp our feet and say, “You big fat dummy, you don't know anything!” or we could stand back and say, “What can I learn from someone else's perspective on research?” Unfortunately, there is a fair amount of evidence that our scholar/friends resort to the former rather than the latter.

A number of people have talked about the role of anonymity in the review process, as a tool to level the playing field for authors, to make more comfortable the space for critique for reviewers, and as a context for the field to ensure that research is published on its merits rather than politics and reputations (Natriello, 1996). All of these advantages are premised on the professional actions of all participants, something compromised when bullies use the protection of anonymous review to give their “feedback.” The distance provided through anonymous review is a double-edged sword—on the one hand, it allows reviewers to candidly provide feedback so that authors can improve their work. On the other hand, it provides a level of comfort that some people cannot seem to use responsibly. Their secret desire to be stealth ninjas comes out, and POW! We get a nasty review.

This is where editors come in. In their role as supervisors, many editors do not intervene in these power plays. Natriello (1996) noted that some editors felt authors had a right to uncensored reviewer comments. Others felt that filtering out the nastiness was reasonable if it left feedback unaltered about manuscript flaws. He asserts that there is not one right approach to bullies on the playground; in fact, authors can use reviews as a barometer of reader reaction to their work. I have to wonder, however, what educative role an anonymous sucker punch has in the review process? Are we really so desperate for expertise that we will take it in any form, even the most toxic? Maybe it is the kindergarten teacher in me,

but shouldn't there be some rules on the playground that are grounded in notions of respect for others and ethical behavior?

I recognize the logic behind anonymity—protection of participants in fields where repercussions can be serious in a context of critique. I wonder, though, if the benefits always outweigh the costs. My concerns go beyond the abusive behavior evidenced by some colleagues. Evaluations are always situated. Reviews are responses that do not come out of a neutral black box of “good research”—they are rendered by researchers who have particular histories, agendas, and needs. They reflect both the reviewer and the manuscript reviewed. It is therefore much easier to “read” them, to understand their meaning, if you have some sense of their origin. The options for situating reviews are diverse—identification could be required or voluntary; they could include generic markers of role and status (e.g., senior scholar cited in this article, graduate student, etc.); they could provide the option for reviewer-author contact at some later point. As in any process, it is worth considering the cost-benefit ratio to see if it would improve communication.

Roles and Goals of the Players

This discussion would be incomplete and sadly lopsided if it appeared that peer review involved primarily the reviewers reacting to the products of authors' work. A pivotal player in the game is the editor, whose reach is felt in all corners of the playground. The editor “sets the stage” for play in their announcement of the new editorial team's term, their statement of purpose, and their call for new manuscript submissions. The subtle imprint of editors is seen in how they take the stated purposes of the journal and shape them to reflect their own personal and professional goals. The will of editors is enacted in general ways in the procedures used (e.g., placing students on an editorial board, screening low-quality manuscripts out rather than sending all manuscripts for review, or providing the role and degree of developmental editing or mentoring). Further, it plays out in particular ways in the decisions made in choices of reviewers and the weighting of judgments offered by reviewers. For example, an editor can choose reviewers with expertise and positioning to match the author's or a group might be recruited to represent

diverse epistemological perspectives on a topic. Each approach represents a different view of peer review and most typically results in different types of evaluations of quality. Finally, editors have a final say in how the suggestions of reviewers are taken up by authors. Some editors are vote counters who limit their suggestions to “Read the reviews.” Other editors weigh the reviewer advice and point authors in very particular directions. Their actions depend very much on how they conceptualize their roles in the process. These roles have been the subject of discussion among authors describing the review process, and I explore these in this section.

Life on the playground is governed by formal and informal rules and roles, responsibilities and relationships. Editors and reviewers are often described as gatekeepers or teachers (Eagly, 2006; Kumashiro et al., 2005; Natriello, 1996; Tesser & Martin, 2006; Wellington & Nixon, 2005). The gatekeeper is the guardian of research quality, working to limit play to those who use the rules as designed and who conform to the expectations of other players. Those who see themselves as gatekeepers view their role as keeping “bad” research out of the collective conversation space of the research community. They might just be superheroes on the playground, protecting truth, justice, and the American way. Like superheroes, they see their role as protecting us from the bad guys, those people who seek to foist *faux* science on the community of scholars. The teaching function is more formative, focused on improvement of scholarship that has the basic technical pieces intact but that needs basic support in telling the story. The teacher is a coach or facilitator who sees talent on the playground and works to develop it. For some, this is a matter of developmental editing, helping an individual manuscript through the process; for others, it is targeted toward a larger goal of mentoring those with less expertise through the process.

In the models of the gatekeeper and the teacher, editors and reviewers are experts who evaluate a submission in relation to their considerable knowledge of the field. Both are reflections of the faith the research community has in the ability of scholars to responsibly evaluate the research of peers, using personal and professional and knowledge as guides. Although this knowledge is

the best tool we have for supporting growth in our knowledge, I would like to suggest a different way of wielding it. Perhaps if our goals changed, so would our roles.

It is clear that we need to pay more attention to the process of peer review. The process is too important to the research, policy, and practice of education to leave it in its current state. We are making progress using new technology, and there are endless improvements in procedures for managing the review process, but I am not convinced that we have substantively improved the quality of either the product or the experience. Peer review is a conundrum—seemingly one thing, but yet another. Peer review is foundational to the process of research. Everyone is doing it, but no one teaches us how. It is a process that should link individuals from diverse perspectives; instead, it often seems to segregate people by method and worldview. Peer review should facilitate opportunities within the scholarly community, but seems singularly focused on the power of exclusion. And given the faith in the scientific community and its merit-based evaluations of scholarship, peer review should be a place where individuals can share their work and feel comfortable that it will be judged on its potential contribution to research and practice. Instead, with alarming frequency, there are reviewers who use the review context to act with aggression and disrespect, and there are editors who let them get away with it. If I were out on a playground, I would be thinking about an intervention of some kind because the playground is not what it might be.

Toward a Dialogic Peer Review Process

I would like to suggest perspectives on the review process that might help us get around some of these problems. I recognize the difficulty of this task. Reviewing is a social and cultural practice that reflects the histories and values of its participants. It has heavy traditions behind it to protect its activities. I will build on that history using Hackett and Chubin's (2003) purposes of peer review, suggesting some new twists that might open up the practice to new contributors, new audiences, and new knowledge.

As noted earlier, Hackett and Chubin (2003) outline the following purposes for

peer review: a source of expert advice, a flywheel that works to balance tradition and originality, a communication channel, an entry point to add value beyond quality, and an assertion of professional authority. Hackett and Chubin (2003) primarily focus their attention on authors. They receive expert advice; their work is evaluated for its contribution relative to extant literature and to potential innovation; it provides a way for authors to prepare the ground for the official communication of their work in the literature; it allows evaluators of research to consider qualities of researchers in their judgments; and it sets aside a protected space for peer review that is unperturbed by politics.

All of these purposes are incredibly important, and collectively they encompass a broad set of concerns. But I wonder how our work might change if we made each of them more dialogic. How would things change if these purposes reflected back on reviewers and editors as much as they did on authors? What if we considered how the peer review process teaches the teachers, experts, and learners? I will consider each of them in turn and imagine how the playground develops in this new set of scenarios.

The role of expert is a privileged one. It confers all kinds of authority and implies a certain responsibility. Expertise is never complete, so we typically need multiple experts to help us understand the broad parameters of a problem. Further, expertise presented by authors, reviewers, and editors is always situated. This implies that we need to consider *how* experts use their knowledge in relation to others.

Peer review's contribution to balancing recognition of tradition and new ideas reminds me of Bakhtin's notion of the two-faced Janus (Bakhtin, 1993), simultaneously looking to the past and into the future. In a dialogic system, reviewers and editors are prompted to consider the complex relations among a submission, their own scholarly work, and the community's knowledge and practice. It would open up questions of self-interest, the relative merit of confirming existing knowledge versus looking at the world in new ways or bringing new voices to the conversation. There are risks and benefits in each, and across the process there should at least be a balance between respectful and rigorous nods to the past and to new knowledge and perspectives.

The communication channel served by peer review is multidirectional. It allows authors to send a test message about their new ideas to important listeners who can then respond from their position of expertise. This dialogue provides opportunities to fine-tune a message so that eventually an author enters the scholarly conversation of the literature. It also speaks to editors and reviewers about the field, one storyteller's version of research events and how it fit into the broader discourse of inquiry.

The notion of adding value beyond quality is one of the most hopeful dimensions suggested by Hackett and Chubin (2003). It recognizes that quality of a submission, as defined by adherence to established standards of inquiry, is but one component of the qualities to be examined in a broad process of peer review. It opens consideration to histories of exclusion in research and how we might be more informed by listening to diverse perspectives. It provides an opportunity for editors and reviewers to reflect about how they are operating from a position of privilege and how they might use that privilege to open doors for others. This requires a shift from considering how to keep inferior research out to imagining how we might benefit from letting new researchers into the conversations about education issues.

Finally, peer review's assertion of professional authority can be narrow or more broad based. The narrowly constructed authority asks, "Is this paper good enough?" Implying the gatekeeper function, it allows distance and objectivity, the protection of expertise, and the history of science as a barrier for personal investment. But more broadly conceived, the questions and actions are more complex. It could actually turn the question on its head, asking, "What would we lose by not hearing this perspective?" or "What guidance can I provide to bring these ideas to a broader community?" I have to think that changing the role slightly would make the playground a less dangerous place and might just help bullies find a new way to interact with their peers.

I am not proposing that there is a place for every manuscript in the literature or that we lower standards for publication. To the contrary, I think this approach represents a much higher standard of practice. It positions everyone in the system as responsible learners who recognize that the best

teachers are those who are open to learning themselves, who take it upon themselves to loosen the yolk of expertise so that they can cede authority to someone else, at least temporarily, to learn something new. It makes us all responsible for scaffolding individuals and their intellectual work.

What would such an orientation to peer review entail? It would require repositioning ourselves on the playground, rethinking our roles and relationships among our peers. A first step would be to remind ourselves of the joy we can have on the playground. Being a reviewer or editor should be undertaken with all the *joie de vivre* felt by 3rd-graders playing four square or kindergartners flying high on a swing set. How would reviewing be different if we sat at our desks itching to get out on the playground just so we could read our colleagues' manuscripts? A bit of a stretch, I admit, but it is an interesting corrective to the "oh woe is me" attitude that many people seem to bring to contributing to the activity of reviewing.

This repositioning also suggests that we have to take more seriously our responsibility as leaders on the playground. We are asked to review or edit because people respect our professional knowledge. Shouldn't they also respect our professional actions on behalf of our peers and the broader research community? Being a leader is more than asserting expertise. It involves helping people do their best, responding to their ideas in constructive ways, and knowing the limits of our own skills, experience, and knowledge. It is ironic that we spend our entire career situating ourselves as experts, but we might be most helpful when we take up the idea that, "The mark of a moderate man [sic] is freedom from his own ideas" (Mitchell, 2000).

Fairness is a central value of peer review—this is a foundational thread in the meritocratic view of scientific practice and its communication in publication. That fairness should encompass the procedures of reviewing, with clear statements of criteria for evaluation² to all stakeholders, respectful and timely feedback, and adequate transparency in the process of decision-making. Those elements are easy to write in a policy handbook, but difficult to enact in a world where researchers read policies with one eye while they are doing something else. However, fairness should also

include the concepts of reviewing—the big picture questions of paradigm and praxis, and potential for change.

As we approach the task of peer review, we might ask ourselves how our intellectual maps serve to bring new voices and ideas into the scholarly conversations in the literature. Do we keep going back to play the same games, with the same playmates, effectively limiting others and ourselves? How do our conceptions of “good play” serve to benefit ourselves and disadvantage others? What could we learn if we invited some new players? What skills could I develop if I tried to play someone else’s game, or at least watched carefully as they played? What could I add to the game if I respectfully shared my skills with others? Our work in reviewing can be more effective, in multiple directions, if we are more reflective about our position in the process. In the sprint-to-the-next-meeting world of a researcher, reflection is rarely built into the process. Reviewing, by its nature, is a process of judgment that could be enriched by taking a breath and considering how our actions shape the field.

Peer review should and can be the best place in the research community. It should be a space of respectful, intelligent exchange of ideas where passion for learning is high. It can be a sneak peak into the field’s newest work and a place where you can contribute by careful listening and supportive pedagogy. It is a lot of work, but in the big scheme of things it is a pretty important investment. Surprisingly, the investment is not just in others or in the field. It might just be in you. What a great playground!

NOTES

¹Peer review in education research includes reviewing various types of manuscripts for publication, proposals for conference presentations, books, and funding. In this article, I will focus primarily on peer review for publication in scholarly journals but recognize that many of the issues and suggestions could be applied across these contexts. For an excellent overview of peer reviewing in a specific discipline, I suggest *Reviewing Scientific Works in Psychology*, edited by Robert J. Sternberg.

²AERA in June 2006 published its Standards for the Reporting of Research Methods in empirical research. This document articulates shared reporting expectations to authors, reviewers, and editors to ensure that reports of empirical research are both warranted and transparent to all readers. Given the diversity of research in education, this set of standards is designed to be both broadly constructed and specific enough to guide practice.

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