

EDITORIAL

Making Time for Scholarly Reading and Writing

Although this issue of *JRCE* is printed and mailed in April, I have to send all of manuscripts that this issue comprises to the publisher during the first week of January. Thus, while I am writing this editorial, discussions on the New Year and New Year's resolutions surround me. I hear them in the popular media and the workplace. Even though you will not be reading this during the first week of January, I am going to encourage you to try to develop or strengthen two scholarly habits beginning in the summer months. As some of us have reduced teaching loads during the summer term, it can also be a good time for beginning or strengthening new habits. The habits I would encourage you to focus on are scholarly reading and scholarly writing.

From my conversations with many of you, I know that my experience is not unique. The daily grind of administrative responsibilities, teaching preparation, grading, committee meetings, and the thousand other details that fill a teacher's or a professor's time seem to conspire against us in accomplishing scholarly reading and writing. I would like to suggest a strategy that I think could help us in both of these areas. I learned this technique from Ken Badley while attending one of his scholarly writing workshops.

After spending most of the morning with us, Ken sent us out for the lunch break with a simple instruction. He told us to choose one of our incomplete writing projects and focus on it for 45 minutes during the 75 minutes we had for lunch. To begin the afternoon session, Ken had each of us report on our 45-minute writing experience. Without exception, each of us was amazed at how much we had accomplished during such a relatively short time. Ken used this experience to try to help us dispel the myth that we always need large blocks of time to accomplish anything related to research and scholarly writing. He then went on to encourage us to include 45-minute writing blocks in our work schedules as often as possible.

Ken Badley's approach of 45-minute blocks can help us address both the issue of inadequate time for scholarly reading and inadequate time for scholarly writing. I encourage you to try this approach. By scheduling 45 minutes per day for scholarly reading and 45 minutes per day for scholarly writing, I am sure you will be amazed at how your productivity can soar. Of course, you may not be able to start with 45 minutes per day for both of these activities. If that is your situation, then try alternating between reading and writing on different days.

Let me suggest that you focus your first scholarly reading activities on this issue of *JRCE*. Then expand your reading to the literature that will best help you in your writing and in your teaching. Depending on what types of scholarly writing you have been doing, you have several options for strengthening your writing habit. If you have not written anything lately, try writing a book review or a scholarly essay. Write an article based on any analyzed (or unanalyzed) data that you have “lying around.” If you have a newly minted research degree, focus on publishing an article or a second article from your research project. Whatever you decide to do, commit yourself to including at least one 45-minute block per week to work on your scholarly reading or writing. After experiencing the joy of what you accomplish during your first few 45-minute sessions, I am sure you will try to find ways to add more sessions to your weekly calendar.

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