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Both the Journal and Handbook of Research on Urban Mathematics Teaching and Learning

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EDITORIAL

Both the Journal *and* Handbook of Research on Urban Mathematics Teaching and Learning

David W. Stinson
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Over the past three decades or so there has been a proliferation of the edited *Handbook* within the social sciences generally and education social science specifically (peruse your bookshelves). Disregarding the anthropomorphism, we could say that (some of) these handbooks certainly have taken on a life all their own. Rightly or not, the status and prestige awarded to (some of) these handbooks and their editor(s) and contributing authors are unmatched. These researchers and scholars are designated as "The" experts on a particular subject as "The Handbook" often becomes the "go to" resource—or more aptly, the régime of truth (Foucault, 1977/1980)—within its respective field.

The growing influence of The Handbook within the social sciences should not be underestimated; its "power" to produce and re-produce knowledge is substantial. Within the science of mathematics education, a Google Scholar search of the 29 chapters of the *Handbook of Research on Mathematics Teaching and Learning* (Growns, 1992)—a National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) project—returns nearly 12,000 scholarly references and the wider Google web search returns about 114,000 hits. As a single resource, only the NCTM 1989 *Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics* (about 156,000 hits) and 2000 *Principles and Standards for School Mathematics* (about 101,000 hits) rival this web presence.[1] But for many, the latter two lack "scientific" rigor, leaving the Growns 1992 *Handbook* as the most referenced (therefore the most influential?) single resource book of research on mathematics teaching and learning. From a Foucauldian (cf. 1969/1972) perspective, The Handbook as a discursive formation is readily apparent; it determines (too often?) what discourses and in turn what discursive practices are both possible and impossible within a particular field of science in a particular moment of time (to subvert the impossible is always possible, however).

[1] Google Scholar and Google web searches were conducted in December 2011; clearly, Internet searches are not an exact science, only approximations of web presence.

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Nevertheless, although dangerous,[2] I like handbooks. Handbooks have had and continue to have a significant influence on my development as a mathematics education researcher and teacher educator.[3] Handbooks in part determine how I conduct my science and what readings I assign to my students. That is to say, as a readily accessible, single resource my published articles and course syllabi nearly always contain references and readings pulled from handbooks. To speak more generally, as previously shown, the Growns 1992 *Handbook* has been undeniably influential in producing—and dangerously, re-producing—how the science of mathematics education and the teaching and learning of mathematics might be theorized and practiced. And the more recent *Second Handbook of Research on Mathematics Teaching and Learning* (Lester, 2007), also a NCTM project, appears to be destined to have a similar long-term impact on the field—taking on a life all its own (e.g., Google web hits about 1,220).

But who breathes life into The Handbook? Who "gives" it power? Well, *we* do! I was taught several years ago, and have been reminded continuously ever since, that the multiple decisions we make concerning whose research and scholarship we reference and which readings we assign are not neutral, apolitical acts (E. A. St. Pierre, personal communication, June 2001). But rather, acts of power (conscious or not) that hold uncertain possibilities for our own empowerment (or not) as well as the *self*-empowerment (or not) of our readers and students. Yes, I know, it's most tempting here to deny our own power, to say that power is actually held in the surveilling gazes of academia, the disciplinary processes of peer review, or the asymmetrical decisions of professional organizations. But to do so, although tempting and perhaps somewhat warranted, leaves us powerless—which, we, indisputably, are not! Our scholarly and pedagogical decisions can be, if we so choose, powerful acts of *scholarly activism* (G. Ladson-Billings, personal communication, June 2010).

So with the concept of scholarly activism in mind, I purpose a re-envisioning of the research and pedagogical possibilities of the *Journal of Urban Mathematics Education* (*JUME*). Might we envision *JUME* not only as "a peer-reviewed, open-access, academic journal published twice a year" (description found on the *JUME* homepage) but also as a bi-annually updated and revised *Handbook of Research on Urban Mathematics Teaching and Learning*? This re-

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[2] "My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to hyper- and pessimistic activism" (Foucault, 1983/1997, p. 256).

[3] For example, the first two editions of the *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, 2000), the *Handbook of Research on Mathematics Teaching and Learning* (Grouws, 1992), and the *Second International Handbook of Mathematics Education* (Bishop, Clements, Keitel, Kilpatrick, & Leung, 2003).

envisioning certainly is not intended to suggest that the peer-reviewed journal somehow plays a lesser role to the handbook in producing and re-producing knowledge in a particular field. Clearly, The Journal is king. But rather, the intent here is to somehow seize the collective power of both The Journal and The Handbook by envisioning *JUME* as a both-and rather than an either-or research and pedagogical resource: the *Journal of Urban Mathematics Education* is **both** a peer-reviewed journal **and** a *Handbook of Research on Urban Mathematics Teaching and Learning*. To use *JUME* as a peer-reviewed journal, simply search its archives. And to assist you in using *JUME* as a handbook, below is the Table of Contents of the most current "edition." Just remember, rather than waiting 5, 10, or even 15 years for an updated, revised edition, this handbook is updated and revised twice a year. Enjoy and *use* (at no cost to you or your students) this new resource!

NOTE: All "chapters" are hyperlinked.

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