



Classics and Contemporaries: The “Top Ten” Books Recommended by Some of the Finest in the Education Academy

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Abstract

In this study, researchers surveyed scholars affiliated with the National Academy of Education (NAE), NAE's International Affiliates, and Past Presidents of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), to solicit their “Top Ten” lists of books in education. Researchers conducted this study to help pre-service, new, and veteran educators; educational scholars; and the like (re)discover the “great books” recommended by some of the best in the academy, as these books are at least one set of those that educators should read, have read, or in vernacular terms, “have on their bookshelves.” Researchers present the “Top Ten” list, discuss other salient findings, and also reflect on the utility of this as a scholarly resource and exercise.

Keywords: *foundations of education; higher education; teacher education; teacher education curriculum; reading lists*

Introduction

“Top Ten” lists may be arbitrary, ephemeral, and reductionist, but they continue to captivate audiences and provoke thought, discussion, and sometimes potential action. Every year is punctuated by a myriad of “Top Ten” lists presumably listing the best (or worst) pop artists, cocktails, movies, etc., and distinguishing them from the others. Although these lists may be arbitrary, they are undeniably popular because they provide an abridged, and therefore convenient and easy-to-understand format for inciting humor, transmitting ideas, cataloguing mindsets, and the like.

In the same regard, this “Top Ten” list is intended to register and help teacher educators expand upon ideas, provoke thought, and possibly even provide fodder for their students and others. More specifically, researchers constructed this “Top Ten” list to help others, including not only current but also future educators and educational scholars, (re)discover the books some of the best scholars in the education academy believe they should read, have read, or in more vernacular terms, “have on their bookshelves.”

Researchers’ intentions in conducting this study are captured by Poetter’s (2013) reflections in his edited volume, *Curriculum Windows: What Curriculum Theorists of the 1960s Can Teach Us About Schools and Society Today*. After receiving a large collection of more than 100 books from his doctoral advisor and close friend, Norman V. Overly, upon his retirement, Poetter

(2013) recalled that he “couldn’t believe [his] eyes. There were copies of famous texts, some of which [he] had read, but many [he] had only read ‘about’” (p. xxv). Poetter (2013) continued to describe not only his excitement as “the books represented a vibrant history of knowledge and action in the curriculum field” but also some melancholy “knowing that this moment marked a ‘passing of the torch,’ that is, that Norm was finished with the books and passing them on to the next generation of scholars” (p. xxvi). Poetter (2013) added that he “felt a responsibility for making the books available, for honoring his legacy and contributions to the field, and for making sure, in some way, that many of the books that [he] had not read on that shelf found their way onto [his] own reading list” (p. xxvi). In the same regard, researchers intended findings from this study to prompt, at least to some extent, the current and next generations of educational scholars and practitioners to reflect on what is on (or might be added to) their bookshelves.

Educational Foundations

Although the contribution of social foundations coursework to the preparation of highly qualified teachers has gone largely unrecognized, especially among those who will or do serve in high-needs schools and districts, prospective and current educators still value space to express their beliefs about diversity, define their roles in the profession, and assume responsibility as the change agents they are meant to be (Carter, 2008, p. 242). That said, the primary purpose of this survey research study was to generate a list of works that would exemplify foundational texts that have influenced generations of scholars and could therefore serve as a foundation for future and current educators and educational scholars.

It is important to note, of course, that the practice of generating book lists is not new, and studying “great books” as a model for a general or liberal arts education is also well established (Casement, 2002). The notion that great books can (and should) “expose students to the best that has been thought and written in various disciplines, without specializing in one or another of them” (Casement, 2002, p. 36) became the foundation for a movement in early and mid-twentieth century colleges and universities. In fact, John Erskine taught the first seminar course in what is now widely recognized as the great books educational program at Columbia University in 1921 (Adler, 1990). Inspired by Erskine’s approach, his student, Mortimer Adler (1990), also taught great books seminars first at Columbia and then the University of Chicago as well as in small adult reading groups (Great Books Foundation, 2017).

Adler and his colleagues (Mark Van Doren, Robert Hutchins, Stringfellow Bar, Scott Buchanan, and others) modeled a philosophical framework emphasizing the dialectical style of reading and teaching the great books that many colleges and universities across the nation adopted over the next half century (Adler, 1990). Perhaps unsurprisingly, higher education faculty have since debated what constitutes a great book, how great books should be studied, and who should study them (Casement, 2002). These lingering questions are only intensified by new technologies that are not only expanding access to books but also extending the debate about whether books “matter most” and what might matter more than books.

With these questions in mind, this study has implications for foundational courses in the humanities and social sciences, specifically those at the graduate level which are, according to Marshall (2011), “infamous for [their] focus on reading lots of books and articles, listening to lectures and (to a lesser extent) having discussions, and producing a final paper for the instructor” (pp. viii-ix). Furthermore, Marshall (2011) argued that

writing for an audience beyond the instructor is atypical, and “writing for publication” is rare, since doing so requires students to synthesize formal course content within the context of a journey told to others: What is the journey? Where and why did I take it? What did I learn that might be of relevance to the reader? (pp. viii-ix)

Ideally, this study provided survey respondents an opportunity to ponder these questions, at least in a preliminary way, and will serve as a foundation for other educational scholars, practitioners, students, and the like seeking to do the same.

In an effort to remedy the, arguably, typical aforementioned course experience, Poetter (2011) also engaged his students in an exercise, not unlike that of this study, in which they identified and engaged with ten “great” curricula. Using the moniker “great” in this context, Poetter (2011) intended “to provoke students to question more deeply and inquire in a scholarly way into existing curricula in schools and in the world that could be called ‘great’” (p. xvii), ultimately asking whether the curricula

had a significantly positive impact on individuals and of many more people in terms of reach, magnitude? Does the curriculum in practice and the lived experience of it by students stand as clear examples of the progressive in action? And have those experiencing the curriculum on multiple levels been changed for the “better?” (p. xix)

Researchers in this study solicited a “Top Ten” list from distinguished educational scholars in hopes that the books identified might provide a starting point to effectively engage students in education preparation programs in answering these questions as well.

In an effort to clearly articulate the importance of foundational courses in the humanities and social sciences in educator preparation (e.g., initial certification, in-service professional development, non-foundations and joint graduate degrees and programs) and to redress inadequacies in accreditation criteria used to evaluate such programs, the American Educational Studies Association’s (AESA) Committee on Academic Standards and Accreditation first presented standards for social foundations of education in 1977-1978 (revised in 1996 by the Council of Learned Societies in Education [CLSE; now the Council for Social Foundations of Education]). AESA’s third edition of the *Standards for Academic and Professional Instruction in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies* marks the most current effort to map this set of social foundations of education (Tutwiler et al., 2013). Herein, AESA authors outline their self-ascribed responsibilities as social foundations faculty to provide educators (e.g., pre-service teachers, school personnel, administrators) with “the conceptual and practical tools to advocate for their own students and communities, and assist them in understanding how their work is influenced by social and structural forces, school and community contexts, and their own histories and belief systems,” while reiterating the importance of incorporating a diverse set of views and disciplines into any cartogram on the social foundations of education (Tutwiler et al., 2013, p. 108).

Emphasizing the value of such opportunities for educators and the importance for reshaping the political and social debates about school and teacher quality, therefore, reminds us of the value of social foundations (Lewis, 2013). Accordingly, arguing that social foundations scholars must use contemporary language to garner an audience in current policy debates, Butin (2005) suggests that they demonstrate the “value-added” of social foundations study in preparing high-quality educators. By explicitly linking educators’ engagement with critical diversity and equity issues, scholars in the social foundations field can reassert influence in education and the curricula

surrounding the preparation of educational practitioners (Butin, 2005). The Tutwiler et al. (2013) report, therefore, endorses this view by offering a plethora of ways to reach professional educators, administrators, faculty in schools of education, and teachers in training that do not forsake educators simply because they have passed through the halls of colleges of education.

The “Top Ten” Books

In this study, researchers invited 165 of the most accomplished scholars in the academy of education, namely members of the National Academy of Education (NAE), NAE's International Affiliates, and the Past Presidents of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) to respond to an online survey soliciting these scholars’ “Top Ten” lists of suggested books in education. Although not all of these scholars may be in the Foundations, their perspectives on the books that have been influential in their own personal and professional lives might inform others seeking to engage with foundational texts.

Of the sample of participants, approximately 25% (n=41/165) responded to the survey. Of these 41 respondents, 33 (80%) provided book lists, and eight (20%) responded not with lists, but with reasons why they chose not to participate in the study in that context. While this response rate may appear low, it is within the typical range for such web-based, survey-research studies (e.g., Hardigan, Succas, & Fleisher, 2012; Sinclair & O’Toole, 2012). Although this response rate also does not permit any type of generalization, it was not the goal of this study (see discussion forthcoming). Rather, researchers sought to raise the question about what books every educator should have on his/her bookshelf, by asking this question of some of the most accomplished educational scholars. Although multiple lists could be created (e.g., the “Top Ten” methods books, journal articles, book chapters, and/or scholars of all time) (see, for example, Poetter, 2011, 2013), researchers decided to start here to also create a potential blueprint for similar inquiry.

Hence, the “Top Ten” list below arguably reflects a current vision surrounding the social foundations of education. Based on survey responses, the most frequently reported book was (1) Dewey’s (1916) *Democracy and Education*. This was followed by (2) Bruner’s (1960) *The Process of Education* and (3) Cremin’s (1961) *The Transformation of the School*. The other seven books in the “Top Ten” included: (4) Bowles and Gintis’s (1976) *Schooling in Capitalist America: Education Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*, (5) Dewey’s (1938) *Experience and Education*, (6) Rousseau’s (1763) *Emile, or On Education*, (7)Sizer’s (1984) *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School*, (8) Whitehead’s (1929) *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*, (9) Tyack and Cuban’s (1995) *Tinkering Toward Utopia: A Century of Public School Reform*, and (10) Bransford et al.’s (1999) *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School*. See this final “Top Ten” list in descending order along with each book’s full citation in Appendix A.

Generating the “Top Ten”

Survey Approach

Researchers employed an online survey research approach to simultaneously collect similar data from multiple participants dispersed over a wide geographic area (Babbie, 1990; Goddard & Villanova, 2006; Shannon, Johnson, Searcy, & Lott, 2002). Each potential participant received an email invitation (see Appendix B) with a link to the survey instrument in SurveyMonkey (see

Appendix C). The survey instrument included four total questions. Researchers included questions to, first, solicit participants' "Top Ten" books in ten free-response spaces and provided directions so that participants would list only the titles of the books and the author(s) if or as needed, in no specific order. Researchers assured respondents that they would do the rest of the work for them (i.e., find the books' full citations). They also noted that participants could provide fewer than ten books, and books from outside of the field of education were welcome, if participants felt so inclined. The only caveat to participating set forth by the researchers stipulated that participants refrain from listing their own books in their own "Top Ten" lists.

Second, and ancillary to the first item, researchers invited participants to share any additional thoughts they might have had about their selected books. This space was provided to allow participants to, for example, insert clarifying remarks about the books they listed. Third, participants who opted out and chose not to construct or provide a "Top Ten" list were invited to explain their considerations as to why or why not. Fourth, researchers invited participants to add any additional thoughts they might have about the study in general.

Participant Sample

In total, researchers identified 169 potential participants, 165 for whom email addresses were obtained or found online. As stated previously, of the sample of participants, approximately 25% ($n=41/165$) responded. Of these 41 respondents, 33 (80%) provided book lists, and eight (20%) responded via private email not with lists, but with reasons why they chose not to participate in that way. These eight participants gave explicit permission for their responses to be included in the aggregate data.

Of the 41 scholars who participated in some form (either by providing lists or reasons for not participating in that context), 11 were female (27%) and 30 were male (63%), 18 were Professors Emeriti (44%), three were Past Presidents of the NAE (7%), and 11 were Past Presidents of the AERA (27%). To help determine whether this sample represented the greater population ($n=169$), not for the purposes of generalization but to contextualize respondents' recommendations, researchers compared the sample to the population in terms of demographics for which they had data. They found that the greater population ($n=169$) from which this sample ($n=41$) came included 55 females (33%) and 114 males (67%); 44 Professors Emeriti (26%), seven Past Presidents of the NAE (4%), and 31 Past Presidents of the AERA (18%).

While the sample-to-population statistics appear similar based on casual observation, researchers conducted chi-square tests to determine sample representativeness on a few key (yet incomplete) demographic indicators (Wilkson & Task Force on Statistical Inference, 1999; see also Thompson, 2000). Again, researchers did not use these statistics to make unwarranted generalizations, or rather claims that participants' responses generalized to or represented what non-respondents might have offered to study results had they participated. This study was conducted so that readers might make more naturalistic generalizations from the findings (Stake & Trumbull, 1982) and at the very least, have a list of some worthy recommended readings.

That said, researchers found that the samples did not differ in any statistically significant way on gender (i.e., by "female") or Past Presidential statuses, but the sample did significantly differ from the population in terms of the number of Professors Emeriti who participated in this study ($X^2(1, N=169) = 8.974, p=.003$). Whereas 44% of those who participated in the study were Professors Emeriti ($n=18/41$), as compared to 26% who were in the population ($n=44/169$), this indicates that the responses of Professors Emeriti are over-represented in the forthcoming findings

(see Table 1 for all chi-square statistics). Readers should, accordingly, keep this in mind as they read through and contemplate the findings presented.

Table 1

Chi-Square Statistics on Background Characteristics of the Sample versus the Population

Demographic	Sample (n=41)	Population (n=169)	Chi-Square Test Statistics
Female (v. Male)	27.3%	72.7%	.526
Professor Emeritus	40.9%	59.1%	.003
Past NAE President	42.9%	57.1%	.241
Past AERA President	32.3%	67.7%	.250

Note: The percentage of emeritus faculty who responded versus those who did not differed significantly, $X^2(1, N=169) = 8.974, p=.003$. No other significant differences were found.

Data Analyses

Again, of the 41 who participated in this study in some form, 33 respondents submitted lists, collectively generating a list of 205 books. Of these, 45 books were reported more than once. Researchers analyzed all of the books submitted to generate frequencies and identify the “Top Ten” list, as well as to highlight anomalies and generate descriptive statistics (e.g., the authors most often named, the range of years of publication, subject areas). Researchers also read and reviewed participants’ responses to the two open-ended questions (items #2 and #4 in the survey instrument; see Appendix C) and then developed codes in order of frequency to ultimately generate themes, mainly in terms of respondents’ assurances and misgivings about this and perhaps other “Top Ten” lists in general (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

Findings

The “Top Ten” Books

Researchers found that the 205 total books offered spanned centuries, ranging in time from 380 B.C. with Plato’s *The Republic* to 2014 A.D. with three books including: Mayo’s *LGBTQ Youth and Education: Policies and Practices*; Miles, Huberman, and Saldana’s *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*; and Schunk, Meece, and Pintrich’s *Motivation in Education: Theory, Research, and Applications*. As well, they spanned the globe from pre-revolutionary France with Rousseau’s (1763) *Emile, or On Education* to contemporary Finland with Sahlberg’s (2011) *Finnish Lessons: What Can the World Learn from Educational Change in Finland?*

All of the books in the “Top Ten” were published prior to 2000, eight were published prior to 1980, and six prior to 1965. One book in the “Top Ten” was published prior to 1900 (i.e., Rousseau’s [1763] *Emile, or On Education*). Of the total 205 books, 131 (64%) were published prior to 2000, 71 (35%) prior to 1980, and 37 (18%) prior to 1965. Accordingly, slightly more than one-third of the books (n=74/205, 36%) were published in 2000 or later, and interestingly, 28 (14%) were published within the previous five years (as of the survey administration). While each of the books published in the new millennium was identified only once, the frequency with which

respondents listed relatively recent books among their “Top Ten” may also have implications for the purpose of this study (see discussion forthcoming). To see the comprehensive list of the 205 books, listed alphabetically with full citations, click [here](#) for a document containing all references.

The “Top Cited” Authors

Researchers found that the most frequently cited author was Lawrence Cremin (n=7/236, 3.0%). Rounding out the top five most cited authors were (2) Ann Lieberman (n=5/236, 2.1%), (3) Jerome Bruner (n=4/236, 1.7%), (4) John Dewey (n=4/236, 1.7%), and (5) Diane Ravitch (n=4/236, 1.7%). As expected, there was some overlap here with the most frequently cited book titles, but several new authors such as Ann Lieberman (n=5/236, 2.1%), Jonathan Kozol (n=3/236, 1.3%), and Marcia Linn (n=3/236, 1.3%) also made the “Top Ten” authors, illustrating that by examining the data from this angle, other interesting findings also emerged.

Issues with the “Top Ten”

The survey instrument also allowed respondents two opportunities to further share their thoughts on this exercise. Here, participants who responded either added to their lists while commenting on their reasons behind their selections, or participants who chose not to submit lists shared their reasons for declining.

Those who submitted lists expressed general enthusiasm given the study topic and their appreciation for having been given the opportunity to share their ideas on books. Some of these participants also appreciated the exclusive focus on books. For example, one respondent reflected that he/she “was glad [to be] asked about ‘books’ as opposed to the top ten ‘articles,’ in terms of the unit of thought and level of intellectual engagement.” Another respondent shared this sentiment:

If only, if only, young people today would read extended texts! The brainwork is needed for these matters in so many ways, and yet so many faculty have given in to using articles, chapters, and few “classics.” There is nothing like coming to know a “body of work” of a particular author...or a line of works debating a particular phenomenon (such as the “death of the author”).

Other respondents added that felt they had been more influenced by books outside of education. One explained that these are the books that “will stand the test of time...[as] all interface human development and psychology, and some focus on cultural, social, even political contexts in which the individual's learning and development is influenced by education.” The multi-disciplinary list of books that resulted from this study, which covers topics in philosophy, history, curriculum, and economics among others, reflects this respondent’s sentiment as well as the interdisciplinary nature of educational research and scholarship. Related, some respondents noted that of the books that had influenced them the most, few to none of them came from the discipline of education. Authors of these books included, for example, Karl Popper, Daniel Dennett, Paul Thagard, Piaget (on epistemology, not cognitive development), E. O. Wilson, and Ikujiro Nonaka.

Elsewhere, respondents simply added caveats to their lists, noting, for example, the challenges of advising students in this regard. One respondent “was struck by how many of the books that came to mind as having been essential to [his/her] education are simply not ‘education books’

[and] would not feel right saying that these other books ‘should’ be read by students in a doctoral program in education.” Another noted he/she “tried to choose books of enduring value” but would advise his/her own students to read more contemporary books in order to be familiar with current issues in their own field, adding that “this is more like an ideal sabbatical reading list.” The classics, or “oldies while goodies,” might not be as relevant as those more current, in these participants’ minds, although this view diverged from overall findings where the majority of books submitted were written during or prior to the 20th century.

Otherwise, those who responded but provided caveats to their lists most often expressed concerns about the parameters of the study, namely those associated with limiting the list to only ten books. For example, one respondent “wished [he/she] could have named more [books],” explaining that there are at least five or ten more influential books that he/she could have added to the list. Also alluding to the challenge of listing only ten books, another respondent suggested that soliciting lists of books separately by major subfield would help ensure that the “Top Ten” list broadly reflects the field of education. A third respondent suggested that actually narrowing the parameters of the study to include only books published in the last two years would be useful and also that articles published may be equally or more current. Another respondent noted concerns about asking participants to generate a list of ten books from memory, explaining that “the method of having respondents draw purely from memory is also flawed. The availability of a memory is as fraught with error as eye witness testimony in a legal trial.”

Some who responded but provided caveats cited other study parameters, noting, for example, that other types of works are equally or perhaps more important than books. One respondent noted that “there are articles and chapters that are more important than these books” and suggested that those who participated in this study might also like to provide a list of other types of works. Another respondent shared this sentiment, suggesting that “most of the important works are not books; they are more likely articles or even speeches. Limiting the survey to books will lead to a distortion of what is important historically in the field.” Although these respondents chose to submit lists, they highlighted study limitations that certainly merit consideration.

Those who responded but chose not to provide lists most often noted other concerns. The most surprising reason expressed by respondents who opted not to provide lists related to their self-identified and professed “lack of expertise” or inability to make what they believed to be useful recommendations. This was certainly an unexpected response considering all who were invited to participate are widely recognized for their scholarly contributions to the education field. Stranger yet was that a few of the scholars who opted out due to their own professed lack of expertise were among those who made the final “Top Ten” or larger list of 205 as having written books externally cited as seminal, or foundational, by their colleagues. These findings prompt additional questions about what constitutes a worthy book in education and other fields as well as how one might otherwise engage others in this discussion.

Elsewhere, another set of respondents noted that they declined to provide a list because they reportedly felt too estranged from the larger field of education to respond. Related, another set of respondents expressed that they were simply unable to find books in education worth recommending. One of these respondents explicitly indicated, for example, that the field of education did not have ten books worth reading. Another set of respondents found the task too challenging, whereas there were too many to list or, related, the diversity of such works in education was too difficult to capture in such a reductionistic list.

As mentioned, the concerns of participants were as much a part of this study as were participants’ “Top Ten” lists of books. As expected, the free responses solicited from the participants

were equally, if not more interesting (depending on the reader's stance). The responses of this latter group of individuals might, then, be best characterized as "active" rather than passive declines given those who did not respond to the survey at all, especially as these participants felt that they had something that needed to be said and heard.

Conclusions

The social foundations of education and its diversity of views have often been given short shrift (Butin, 2005), especially when required as part of educator preparation programs, given that foundations courses often arguably lack intellectual rigor or are ideologically skewed (Steiner, 2003, 2004). In response to the latter critique, analyses of electronically available social foundations course syllabi from 85 different institutions in the United States suggest that pre-service teachers are exposed to both philosophical and historical perspectives on education as well as contemporary policy debates, albeit predominantly via textbooks rather than through primary sources (Butin, 2004). In this sense, Butin (2004) concluded that social foundations courses that rely on textbooks as a means of accessing primary sources are a disservice to prospective teachers, and by extension, educators studying education as a discipline in some programs beyond those meant to educate future teachers (e.g., master's degree programs). Without emphasizing inquiry, debate, and reflection through direct access to primary sources, social foundations courses too often render many educators ill-prepared for the critical and very real educational challenges that await (Butin, 2004).

Further marginalized in favor of technocratic approaches to increasing test scores (Butin, 2005), social foundations content and perspectives (critical, normative, and interpretative as defined in the AESA Standards) are also largely ignored in the discourse surrounding education and educational policy as per the foundational documents related to education and embedded in educational courses and discourses (Neumann, 2010). While this "Top Ten" list is not necessarily intended to usurp current efforts to provide students in educator preparation programs with meaningful social foundations courses, faculty who teach pre- and in-service teachers might find this list useful to engage students in a dialogue about what "matters most" or prompt students to generate their own lists (see, for example, Poetter, 2011).

Although the racial, gender, and age characteristics of this study's respondents arguably moderate the diversity of the responses, the responses themselves encompass all six of the purposes of the social foundations of education as defined in the Tutwiler et al. (2013) report. The books integrate many critical perspectives from the humanities and social sciences, resulting in a body of knowledge that questions the role of citizens and educators in creating (and denying) diversity in our schools and other democratic institutions. The moral and philosophical foundations with which all educators, faculty, activists, and scholars need to grapple, surrounding, for example, issues of school governance, leadership, education in general and its role in a democratic society, are also well represented in the books chosen by respondents, again with decades of experience and expertise in education.

While the books presented herein reflect works from across time, several countries, and various disciplines, undoubtedly many educators could produce their own lists of what they perceived to be the "Top Ten" books in education, for all sorts of educators within the education profession (e.g., pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, veteran educators, graduate students, educational scholars). Accordingly, this list might inspire others to try to construct such a list, even if for just their own college of education courses or coursework, all the while noting, as evidenced

herein, that this can and perhaps should be a highly individualized and personal endeavor. While most respondents in this study submitted what they viewed as the most seminal works in the field of education, and many went beyond education in response, others did not submit their lists for equally interesting and thought-provoking reasons.

These reasons included, as mentioned, concerns about the quality of the books or types of books that deserved recognition within education, as well as this scholarly exercise in general. For example, while the proportion of books identified by respondents in this study that are based on K-12 education cannot be denied, the books that were ultimately reported by study participants did indeed go far beyond education into other disciplines including philosophy, epistemology, history, economics, psychometrics, multiculturalism, sociology, anthropology, and cosmology. In addition, although the books reflect a variety of disciplines, the list does not include references to as many texts that focus on issues of diversity, or texts written by socially and culturally diverse scholars as might have been expected. This, too, warrants special consideration.

Likewise, these reasons also captured a surprising sense of humility on part of the scholars who responded but declined to participate, but whose scholarly books also made others' "Top Ten" lists. This poses an interesting philosophical question in and of itself, as do some of the other philosophical queries that unexpectedly emerged, for example, about whether books matter most and what else might matter more than books, especially in this day and age with new and innovative technologies pushing the what "matters most" boundaries (see, for example, Furlough, 2010; Green, 2000; Shulenburg, 2005; Willinsky, 2005). Consider, for example, the relative age of the books listed by respondents in this study. Although all of the books in the "Top Ten" list were published prior to 2000, it is important to note that at least one of three books in the comprehensive list of 205 was published in the new millennium, and at least one of 10 books was published in the previous five years. While these more recently published books might arguably reflect the most recently read books in some cases (perhaps, reflecting limitations associated with asking participants to respond from memory without more specific parameters), the frequency with which respondents listed relatively new books suggests that the what "matters most" boundaries may soon be (or more likely already are) changing.

While findings in this study suggest that books do matter, whether books matter most and what else might matter more certainly merit consideration. Ideally, this study contributes to these ongoing discussions not only in terms of its findings but also in implications for future research. This study may not have widely captured respondents' rationale for listing each book (although they were invited to comment on their selections as well as the exercise in general) or other types of works than books. Nonetheless, encouraging pre- and in-service educators, graduate students, emerging and veteran educational scholars, and the like to value primary sources; to engage with long form writing; to improve their methodological skills; to read books from philosophy, anthropology, mathematics, etc. as they pertain to education; and to generally broaden their critical and diverse perspectives about education are things from which all should seemingly benefit. Hence, this study while situated in time and space is also, in some respects, timeless and borderless given the more global implications to be drawn. All of these books, for the time being, however, might simply prompt us to visit our proverbial book shelves, use great books as we can in our coursework, or (re)read these and other seminal works in the field of education, as inspired by some of our profession's best.

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Appendix A
The “Top Ten” Books, Listed in Ascending Order, with Full Citations

1. Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. New York, NY: Macmillan Company.
2. Bruner, J. (1960). *The process of education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
3. Cremin, L. A. (1961). *The transformation of the school: Progressivism in American education: 1876-1957*. New York, NY: Knopf Publishing Group.
4. Bowles, S., & Gintis, H. (1976). *Schooling in capitalist America: Education reform and the contradictions of economic life*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
5. Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York, NY: Macmillan Company.
6. Rousseau, J. J. (1763). *Emile, or on education*. New York, NY: E.P. Dutton & Co.
7. Sizer, T. R. (1984). *Horace's compromise: The dilemma of the American high school*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin
8. Whitehead, A. N. (1929). *The aims of education and other essays*. New York, NY: The Macmillan Company.
9. Tyack, D., & Cuban, L. (1995). *Tinkering toward utopia: A century of public school reform*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
10. Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., & Cocking, R. R. (Eds). (1999). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Appendix B

Email Invitation

Dear Dr. [Last Name],

My name is [name], and I am [title and institution]. I am also the host of [name of project] during which I/we capture the personal lives and professional achievements of some of education's most exemplary scholars.

While hosting this show for the past four years, viewers, pre- and in-service practitioners, and other educational audiences have often asked what books they should have on their bookshelves, as recommended by the most accomplished scholars in the academy of education.

As you all represent the best of the best in education, being members of the National Academy of Education (NAE), NAE's International Affiliates, and Past Presidents of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), I am writing to solicit and disseminate your best, "Top 10" recommendations regarding these books. While multiple lists could be created (e.g., the best methods books, the best articles of all time), we decided to start here to see how it goes.

Participating in this survey research study should take you *no longer than five minutes*, although it might be a good idea to collect some thoughts beforehand should you so choose. To make it as easy as possible on you, we only ask that you list the titles of the books, and list the author(s) only as needed. We will do the rest of the work for you. Feel free to list books from outside education as well. The only rule, really, is to please refrain from listing your own books. Also, there is no need to rank order the books in terms of preference. We will analyze all of the data to generate frequencies and highlight anomalies.

Please note that this survey will be closed on Monday, November 18 [although the survey close date was extended to December 31st and extended once again to early January as a few respondents still needed extensions] at midnight, four weeks from today. Until that time, if by chance you want to go back and change your answers, you may do so until the survey closes. At that time, all submissions will be considered final.

We also understand that some of you might be generally opposed to such lists. If this is the case, we would still appreciate your response, not in terms of your "Top Ten" list, but rather in terms of why you believe such a list isn't such a good idea.

Are you interested in participating? We certainly hope so. If so, please click here to begin: [link].

Thank you very much in advance for your participation!

Sincerely,

[name, title, and institutional affiliation of primary investigator]

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Information:

This research has been reviewed and approved by the [university name]'s Institutional Review Board (IRB) -- Study #00000064. If you would like to contact [the university's] IRB directly about this study and your rights as a participant, please contact them by phone at [phone number] or by email at [email]. Results of this survey research study may be used for presentation, publication, and other web-based dissemination purposes (e.g., on the [project] website). If you have any questions about your participation in this study, please contact [names, titles, and institutional affiliations of the investigators].

For more information about [this project], please view [the project's] website that will automatically load after your responses are submitted.

If you do not wish to receive any further emails, please [click here](#).

Appendix C

Survey Instrument

The purpose of this study is to solicit what the members of the National Academy of Education (NAE), NAE's International Affiliates, and Past Presidents of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), believe are the general and foundational educational books every educator (e.g., pre-service and in-service) and educational scholar (e.g., graduate student, teacher-scholar, researcher) in the education profession should have on their bookshelves.

1. Please list your "Top Ten" books in the ten spaces provided below. Please note: You do not have to use all ten spaces, there is no need to rank order the books in terms of preference, and we ask that at a minimum, you write the titles of the books and list the author(s) only as needed. We will do the rest of the work for you.
2. Is there anything else you would like to add in addition to or about the books listed above? If so, please do so here.
3. If you would rather opt out and not provide a "Top Ten" list, please explain your reasons or considerations here.
4. If there is anything else you would like to add in general or as specific to this study, please do so here.

Thank you very much, again, for your participation!

Click here to submit your answers: [\[Link\]](#)