

ON MY BOOKSHELF

Gretchen Brion-Meisels, Ed.M.'11, Ed.D.'13, lecturer

CURRENTLY READING: Tonight, I read *Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters* to my son, Julian.

THE THING THAT DREW YOU TO IT: These days, the majority of books that I read are children's books. When I looked at my son's bookshelf tonight, I realized that I'd never read this one, and I needed a little Obama in my evening.

FAVORITE BOOK FROM CHILDHOOD AND WHY YOU LOVED IT: In high school, my favorite book was *Beloved*. (Does that count as childhood?) I have always been drawn to books about the history of racism in the United States because of my own positionality. Also, the last three pages of *Beloved* are some of the most beautiful and poignant writing I've ever come across.

IF YOU WERE TO GIVE A BOOK AS A GIFT TO SOMEONE, WHAT WOULD IT BE, WHO WOULD IT BE FOR, AND WHY? I just bought the book *Love*, by Matt de la Peña, for my daughter, Izzy. My friend Carla, who always has the best book suggestions, suggested it. Carla's book, *Troublemakers: Lessons in Freedom from Young Children in School*, is also amazing; I would gift that to anyone working in schools.

BOOK YOU RECOMMEND TO PARENTS TO HELP THEM BETTER UNDERSTAND THEIR KIDS: If parents are trying to understand their kids, I recommend that they take them out for a meal or go on a long drive and just listen. When I'm trying to understand my own kids, I read the *Honest Toddler* blog.

LAST BOOK YOU READ THAT SURPRISED YOU AND WHY: *What Makes a Baby*. It is an amazing children's book that describes conception and childbirth without using any gender pronouns. Reading it with my own children was a gift.

YOUR READING RITUALS: I am easily distracted, so I read best while walking! Given the dangers of this approach, I try to listen to books on tape whenever possible.

FAVORITE SPOT TO CURL UP WITH A GOOD BOOK: The couch.

NEXT UP: *Just Research in Contentious Times: Widening the Methodological Imagination* by Michelle Fine. I know, surprising that it's not a children's book! LH

TECHNOLOGY AND ENGAGEMENT

Mandy Savitz-Romer, Heather Rowan-Kenyan,
and Ana Martinez Aleman

Based on a four-year study of how first-generation college students use social media, *Technology and Engagement*, co-written by Senior Lecturer Mandy Savitz-Romer, looks at the importance of social media sites in helping first-gen students keep up important ties with family and friends from home, and stay on top of academic programs and social offerings at their schools. The aim in writing the book, the authors note, is to help faculty and college administrators consider ways that technology can help these students, who often have a difficult time transitioning from high school to college.

HOLISTIC EDUCATION AND EMBODIED LEARNING

John Miller and Kelli Nigh

This collection of essays, writes Kelli Nigh and **JOHN MILLER, M.A.T.'67**, a professor at the University of Toronto and the author of 18 books on holistic learning, "is about what it means to teach the entire body." If learning stays only in the head, "there is the danger that it will not be integrated." Chapters include essays on reclaiming teacher wellbeing, practices at Waldorf schools, teaching with compassion, what holistic education means, and a portrait of the Equinox Holistic Alternative School in Toronto.

FOR A FULL LIST OF BOOKS FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE: GSE.HARVARD.EDU/ED. IF YOU'RE PART OF THE ED SCHOOL COMMUNITY AND YOU'VE RECENTLY PUBLISHED A BOOK, LET US KNOW: BOOKNOTES@GSE.HARVARD.EDU



INSIDE PREK CLASSROOMS

Catherine Marchant and Judith Schickedanz

Using real-life stories based on their personal experiences in preK settings, CATHERINE MARCHANT, ED.D.'88, and Judith Schickedanz place readers inside classrooms with teachers and preschoolers and then analyze the situations described. For each chapter, they offer insights and make concrete suggestions. These mini case studies focus on ways that educators can think through their instruction, such as which skills are best taught in large versus small groups or when one-on-one interactions make the most sense. They also examine relevant research and historical shifts in thinking.



SLOW LOOKING

Shari Tishman

In her latest book, SHARI TISHMAN, ED.D.'91, senior research associate at Project Zero, explores slow looking — taking time to carefully observe more than meets the eye at first glance — as a mode of learning. Slow looking, she writes, is “a way of gaining knowledge about the world,” and while almost anyone at any age can learn to slow down, slow looking involves a set of specific skills that need to be developed and encouraged, she writes. In addition, time needs to be carved out, in schools or out in the world, to let it happen.

SHARECROP

Claudia Stack and Kathryn Wall

In this user-friendly companion guide to her new film with the same title, filmmaker CLAUDIA STACK, ED.M.'92, provides classroom lesson plans (for grades five through college) and historical background about “a significant but marginalized chapter in American history,” as she writes. The companion guide also includes photos and personal stories from sharecroppers, referred to as “forgotten farmers.” Each chapter offers teachers and other educators a list of discussion questions, potential homework and out-of-class assignments, and in-class activities grouped by age.

