

Becoming a SoTL Scholar

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SECTION 4

BECOMING A SOTL SCHOLAR

The final section of *Becoming a SoTL Scholar* focuses on the never-ending processes of identity exploration and boundary crossing in SoTL. Both chapters are written by groups of experienced SoTL scholars who've also worked and written together for years. Each chapter reminds readers that, even when they are accustomed to "being a SoTL scholar," they're still becoming in many ways. The first chapter features six SoTL scholars who describe their ongoing scholarship as "working against the grain" of their institutions, and the next chronicles three long-time SoTL colleagues of varied disciplinary backgrounds who were surprised to still encounter difficulties, miscommunications, and misunderstandings when writing together on their latest project.

In the opening chapter in this section and the penultimate chapter of the book, "**The Importance of Autonomy and Community for SoTL Engagement**," Andrea Webb, Barbara Kensington-Miller, Ann Gansemer-Topf, Heather Lewis, Geneviève Maheux-Pelletier, and Analise Hofmann explore SoTL identity development among the members of their long-term, international SoTL writing group. Using the methodology of narrative inquiry, they examine their different roles as "third space professionals" and the dispositions, transitions, and tensions they have experienced as SoTL scholars and as collaborators.

Finally, in the reflective essay entitled "**Navigating Boundary Experiences in SoTL: Pinch Points, Paradigms, and Perspectives**," Janice Miller-Young, Michelle Yeo, and Karen Manarin share some of the challenges they experienced working together on an interdisciplinary SoTL research methods book. Despite years of



collaborating with each other, they characterize the definitional work of writing the book as a “boundary experience,” an extended period of deep engagement, negotiation, and even compromise with each other, requiring open-mindedness, trust, and a shared vision for success.

Ultimately, this final section reinforces the previous chapters’ revelations that embracing openness, challenging the status quo, tolerating ambiguity, practicing empathy, engaging intellectually, and continually evolving one’s identity are all essential qualities for being a SoTL scholar, regardless of where one stands in their career trajectory. Collectively, the authors in this book demonstrate the dynamic nature of identity, an ongoing process informed by extended exposure to a variety of influences, followed by deliberate reflection. The groups of authors of this section emphasize this by chronicling their enduring collaborations with colleagues with whom they have close and trusting relationships—relationships that are qualitatively different than those described in section 3. These collaborative relationships keep these scholars in a perpetual state of becoming, learning, and self-examination as individuals and as groups. For them, identity change has become the norm rather than a liminal state, even though this occasionally still surprises them.