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From the Book Review Editor's Desk

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From the Book Review Editor's Desk

By Jim Bowman

This issue's keywords essay and reviews illustrate how, on the one hand, community literacy theories and practices are evolving to adapt to shifting cultural dynamics, especially on the level of administration and program design. Jennifer deWinter's discussion of the online community manager directs scholars of literacy to examine more closely the sophisticated language practices of gaming communities. Jessica Restaino and Laurie J.C. Cella's edited collection *Unsustainable: Re-Imagining Community Literacy, Public Writing, Service-Learning and the University*, reviewed by Jody Briones, offers a window into how experienced practitioners and theorists of community literacy have begun adjusting expectations, assessment practices, and everyday metaphors in order to effect meaningful change in communities long term—even, if necessary, at the expense of short-term gains. Swing big, goes the thinking. Realize, too, that programs that look and feel like failure, if they prioritize relationships with community partners, may eventually lead to something truly meaningful. Briones's review and deWinter's essay offer promising leads for scholars and administrators of community literacy to pursue—new ways to approach community, new communities to investigate.

The latter cluster of three books reviewed—*Cultural Practices of Literacy* by Victoria Purcell-Gates, *Local Literacies* by David Barton and Mary Hamilton and *Literacy in the Digital Age* by R.W. Burniske—serve as important resources for scholars and teachers interested in more enduring conceptual understandings of cultural literacy, whether that be for purposes of ethnographic research, general literacy education, or teaching with technology. Our reviewers set out to assess the continuing relevance of such texts and have determined, for the most part, that they provide scholars and literacy educators with enduring, even essential frameworks. *Local Literacies*, for example, was re-released in 2012 and deemed a Routledge Linguistics Classic, a status that reviewer Charlotte Brammer and many others over the past two decades have found to be well-deserved. As new pathways in community literacy continue to emerge, it behooves us to continue building on the work of previous scholars, in an effort to remain conscious of the complicated dynamics at play among cultural literacies of home, work, school.