# Preface

## TARGET AUDIENCE

This book builds on the book entitled *Methods and Paradigms in Education Research* as an enhanced version, adding scholarship more broadly to the range of discussions involved in its chapters. In addition to dealing with research within the broad area of the scholarship of discovery, as in the first book, a focus on other forms of scholarship, including the scholarship of teaching and learning, has been added. The book is designed for researchers and academics, research and postgraduate students, and leaders, managers and policy makers in higher education, as well as academics engaged in scholarship of all kinds. This book will be valuable for regulation bodies in higher education as they develop guidelines for the practice and assessment of scholarship within universities. Journal editors and editorial boards will find the concept of paradigms valuable when assessing submissions for publication in journals and books.

## SCHOLARSHIP TODAY

Scholarship, in its broadest sense, is currently undergoing a renaissance in higher education, based largely on Boyer's (1990) seminal work *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*; a work that has informed the concept of scholarship since the time of its publication. In this book Boyer outlined four areas of scholarship for academics in higher education to pursue. These were, the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of application, the scholarship of integration, and the scholarship of teaching. Later, in 1996, Boyer added a further scholarship – the scholarship of engagement (Boyer, 1996). Boyer's scholarships have resurfaced over the last few years, as university leaders and managers, as well as academics themselves, try to come to terms with what it is to be an academic in this current era; an era that we have chosen to refer to as supercomplex, drawing on Barnett's (1990) term "supercomplexity". For many leaders and managers of universities, grappling with what the place and work of the university is in the current era, the concept of scholarship, as articulated by Boyer (1990), has become a basis for the design of policies concerning academic promotion, appraisal, and work allocation; making an understanding of scholarship essential to academics for professional pursuits and for advancement. A further imperative to engage with scholarship arises from regulating bodies, such as the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) in Australia, which has provided guidelines (2018) on what scholarship encompasses. Policy guidelines for scholarship are still emergent, as those responsible for university policies seek ways to provide evidence for the pursuit and satisfaction of all areas of scholarship by their academic body. Thus, a book containing diverse examples of scholarship

that explain, expand on, and reimagine the concept of scholarship in a supercomplex era, is timely. In our first book, *Methods and Paradigms in Education Research* (2017), we outlined the value of engaging with paradigms in the design, conduct and evaluation of research. Chapters in that book included examples of education research undertaken across a range of paradigms. In addressing research in that volume, we focused on one of the areas of scholarship – the scholarship of discovery. In this book we have broadened the focus to include all the areas of scholarship as outlined by Boyer (1990, 1996).

## THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

All academics are required to engage in "scholarship", yet it is not a well understood concept; there are multiple interpretations of what constitutes scholarship. This book is designed to assist academics by explicating the areas of scholarship as defined by Boyer, and their contemporary relationship to academic work. Contributors to the book explore the way the concept of scholarship relates to elements of education research and practice presented in their chapters. In light of the scholarship renaissance, where policies in universities, as well as those that govern universities, are requiring that academics demonstrate and evidence the various areas of scholarship in which they are engaged, and meet the criteria associated with each, this book makes a novel and apposite contribution.

*Emerging Methods and Paradigms in Scholarship and Education Research* maintains the focus on research paradigms presented in *Methods and Paradigms in Education Research* (2017) and extends the value and applicability of paradigms to broader notions of scholarship than that pertaining only to research.

As for the first book, one purpose in the current version is to confront traditional approaches to education research that are based on methodology and particularly the "quantitative verses qualitative" distinction. A consideration of research paradigms broadens the focus. This focus involves demands that five key aspects of research are addressed: the understanding of the nature or reality or truth (ontology); the intent and values of the researcher (axiology); the understanding of the nature of knowledge (epistemology); the way information is obtained and analysed (methodology); and the nature of the associated research outcome, and hence the conclusions, that may be reached. In both the first book and this enhanced version, five broad labels are used to describe paradigms - positivist/neopositivist, interpretive, transformative, pragmatic and supercomplexity. It is the paradigm, or in some cases paradigms, within which the research is undertaken that allows the researcher to decide on the purpose of the research, for whom it is likely to be beneficial, how it may be conducted, from whom or what to obtain data, how the data may be best gathered and analysed, the rhetoric or discourse appropriate throughout the research study, and the action verbs that will describe what it is that the researcher is actually doing (e.g. exploring, inquiring, testing, measuring, confronting, disturbing, uncovering). The claim is made here that none of these decisions should be finalized until the researcher clearly articulates where the research project sits in relation to available research paradigms.

Just as paradigms apply to research endeavours undertaken within the scholarship of discovery, we demonstrate in this enhanced book, that the same paradigms and the elements associated with them, can be applied across all areas of scholarship – discovery, teaching, application, integration and engagement. The employment of these paradigms across all areas of scholarship will allow scholars to describe, locate and compare alternative approaches to scholarship. Knowledge and understanding of the paradigms will also assist students in articulating and focusing their own research interests and in the design of research proposals, in data gathering and analysis, and in interpretation of findings. Using the paradigms as a

framework can also provide academics, students, editors and editorial boards of journals with a clear and comprehensive basis for reading and critiquing research publications and papers.

## COMPONENTS

The first section of the book, "Methods and Paradigms in Scholarship and Education Research", includes the conceptual base for the publication in Chapters 1 and 2. In Chapter 1 by Peter Ling and Lorraine Ling, scholarship is defined and the concept of research paradigms and the typology employed is introduced. Lorraine Ling, in Chapter 2, goes on to elaborate a framework for the design, implementation and interpretation of scholarship, based on research paradigms. She discusses elements of paradigms in detail and concludes with possibilities for the relationship of various forms of scholarship to the paradigm structure employed. In Chapter 3, Peter Ling, explores the relationship between scholarship of teaching and learning and education research, a matter of consequence in giving academics credit for research where engaging in the scholarship of teaching and learning is conducted in an appropriate form. Section I of the book includes a chapter by Kym Fraser and Ekaterina Pechenkina (Chapter 3), reflecting on the research paradigms employed in articles in two education development research journals, and exploring their relationship to scholarship. The neo-positivist paradigm in the inductive mode emerged as the dominant paradigm in both journals hinting at the possibility that, where Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) is engaged with, a neo-positivist paradigm is often seen as the most appropriate one, as there are discernible patterns to be discovered.

The following sections of the book provide reflections on paradigms, scholarship, research methods and the application of paradigms in a variety of education projects or specialist areas. The sections relate to the paradigm typology employed in the book.

Section 2, "Constants and Patterns", includes instances of scholarship and research, based on an understanding of patterns and consistencies in areas of educational practice. Marcia Devlin, in Chapter 5, points to nine underlying elements of the scholarship of discovery that can also be related to the scholarship of teaching. She reviews a case study, informed by the neo-positivist research paradigm, involving an approach to improving teaching in higher education. Again, the predominance of neo-positivist approaches in SoTL is reflected in this chapter. In Chapter 6, Calvin Smith reflects on the use of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) for the exploration of the impact of aspects of curriculum design on student learning and satisfaction. He also reflects on the academic requirement to engage in a broad range of areas of scholarship. Beena Giridharan in Chapter 7 applies the concept of scholarship to a context of intercultural education as it pertains to second language learners and their acquisition of skills and understanding. She reflects on the forms of scholarship applicable to the project and notes a paradigm shift as the study progressed through various stages.

Reflections on instances of interpretivist and transformative research are reported in Section 3, "Interpretations and Transformations". Mary Kelly, in Chapter 8, reviews her work on teachers' ontological and epistemological beliefs and the impact of those beliefs on approaches to teaching. She also notes the tendency for scholars within specific disciplines, or publishing in specific discipline-based journals, to fixate on a particular paradigm that then becomes the "traditional" one utilised within that discipline. Mark Vicars, in Chapter 9, provides a research analysis that can be seen as relating to the transformative research paradigm, crossing into the supercomplexity paradigm. He reviews "queerly" located inquiry and declares it "a code of our own." The chapter constitutes a reflection on queerly operationalized re-

search projects that involved investigation of same-sex sexualities, sexuality-related diversity, equality and inclusion in educational domains. Mark Rose, in Chapter 10, identifies five categories of contribution by the Indigenous "Black Academy" in Australian higher education today, some of which are at odds with Boyer's understandings of scholarship and calls for a separate classification, which he styles the "scholarship of preservation".

Section 4 is entitled "Pragmatics and Paradigm Shifts". In Chapter 11, Kay Livingston focuses on undertaking scholarship, especially in the area of discovery, for external bodies. Commissioned scholarship brings with it a set of issues that almost invariably require a scholar to adopt a pragmatic approach or to adopt the approach prescribed by the commissioning body, as reaching an end result valued by the commissioning agency, is the purpose of the research. Catherine Lang in Chapter 12, traces her own journey as a scholar, especially in the area of research. She demonstrates how her understandings and insights emerged and deepened over the course of a series of research projects. She also became painfully aware of the fact that particular discipline areas and university schools and faculties, become locked in to specific paradigms. She found that to stray from those paradigms, can bring about a disappointing result for a researcher who dares to be different.

Section 5 is entitled "Education Research and Scholarship in an Era of Supercomplexity". In Chapter 13, Ronald Barnett expands on his own concept of supercomplexity as it pertains to the university and academics trying to determine what it is to *be* a university and an academic in an era of supercomplexity. He focuses especially on the kinds of scholarship that may be seen to emerge within a supercomplex era and posits six new scholarships: A scholarship-as-excavation (or un-covery); a scholarship of educational ideas; a scholarship-in-time-and-space; a scholarship-as-practical envisaging; a scholarship-as-conceptual-eavesdropping; and a scholarship-of-feasible-utopias. This chapter is especially pertinent to scholars and their managers and leaders as they attempt to reimagine what scholarship means and looks like in a supercomplex era. Mark Selkrig and Kim Keamy in Chapter 14 not only face head-on the issues for academics, of living and working in a supercomplex era, but also employ a method of data collection and interpretation that is supercomplex in its intent and application. The methods employed are reflective of supercomplexity, as they allow the researchers to "play" with ideas and engage in new approaches to inquiry. The authors describe themselves as rhizome researchers with many conceptual tools and practices available to open new types of inquiry. They demonstrate the way their own journeys as academics have always seen them as in a state of *becoming* as distinct from *being*. Kerri-Lee Krause in Chapter 15 makes a timely contribution, through her discussion of implications for university policy makers, regarding the concept and application of scholarship in supercomplex times. She demonstrates graphically, the way that the renaissance of scholarship, as a theme and device for designing and implementing higher education policy, requires university leaders and managers to reflect deeply and act on ways to assess, evidence, support and foster scholarship across all academic roles. She stresses that there is a growing specialization in academic roles such that there is an increasing number of teaching-focused, or research-focused academic roles, as well as those higher education workers that fit the space between academe and administration, variously called third space workers or para-academics.

Section 6 is the "Conclusion" to this book. In Chapter 16, "Denouement: Untying the Knot", the various chapters are reflected upon and some conclusions are drawn as to what the totality of the work in this book means for universities and academics. The concept of a denouement derives from the French *dénouer* meaning to untie. This book is seen as an attempt to untie some of the knots that apparently lock academics in to specific paradigms within particular disciplines, or which are seen as being "traditionally" associated with particular areas of scholarship. Some challenges are issued for academics and

university leaders and managers, as well as for those external bodies and agencies that influence, and in some cases, dictate the paradigms within which scholarship occurs, and specify what constitutes success as a scholar in supercomplex times. These challenges pertain to freeing up some of the perceived or supposed constraints that tie scholars in to set paradigms or approaches and to encourage scholars to dare to be different and to move outside their comfort zones and explore new paradigms and new approaches. It is suggested that the supercomplexity paradigm affords such freedom in the guise of imagination, experimentation with different methods of data collection, looking for unknowns and uncertainties and uncovering strange and awkward spaces and places.

## USING THE BOOK

Readers are encouraged to start with Chapter 1, which involves an introduction to the research paradigm framework used in the book, and its implications for the design and critique of education research, and then to engage with the more detailed definition of research paradigms provided in Chapter 2. From there you may wish to peruse chapters where the particular research paradigm, the subject of the research or the form of scholarship involved is especially pertinent to you. Chapters portray practical experience in working through research method, research paradigm and scholarship issues. It needs to be acknowledged that applying research paradigms is not all plain sailing in the practical situation, as some of the authors attest. Nevertheless, the hope here is that reflection on matters addressed in the following chapters will assist in providing a sound platform for the pursuit of scholarship, and for both critique of education research and ensuring coherence in research design.

*Lorraine Ling*
*La Trobe University, Australia*

*Peter Ling*
*Swinburne University of Technology, Australia*

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