I have been teaching for nearly 25 years—wow, that seems like a long time. Yet I remember quite clearly my first day here at Valdosta State in 1987, the first exam I gave (students walked out in protest!), and the nervous energy I feel before the start of each new term. And by my side every step of the way, as I have grown as a teacher-scholar, has always been the journal *Teaching Sociology* (*TS*). It was my touchstone for cutting-edge ideas in pedagogy and it was my lifeline when I felt lost about how to teach a concept to students or when I was assigned a new course to teach. It is the only journal I read, from cover to cover, the very day I receive it. I have been challenged by the ideas of authors who have been published in these pages, sometimes I have mentally argued with them, but always, I have learned from them. And although they may not always know it, my students have benefited, for I am a better teacher because of this journal and the intellectual journey on which it has taken me.

So it is with both excitement and more than a little trepidation that I begin my tenure as editor of *TS*. The journal’s reputation is well established, so my responsibility is to maintain and build on it. One of the challenges of editing *TS* is to find the right balance between manuscripts about the scholarship of teaching and learning and more purely pedagogical articles. Recent editors have moved the journal more toward the former category, and for the most part, I agree with that decision. However, I never want to forget those faculty members, either new to teaching or “seasoned,” who use the journal as I have, as the basis for improving teaching and learning new teaching techniques. Trying to find that right mix of articles will constantly be front and center as I do my job as editor.

Of course, editors can only select from articles that are submitted for review. So I see part of my responsibility as editor to be a cheerleader, for those taking the chance on submitting their work for peer review, for the journal and the quality of its reviewers, and for the importance of the scholarship of teaching and learning in making a difference in what happens inside college classrooms. To that end, I promise to reach out to scholars who have presented on teaching issues at regional and national meetings, inviting them to submit to *TS*. And I ask for your help in this task: As readers of this journal, you know what you want to read, and you know quality scholarship. So if you are at a meeting and hear a paper that would be a good fit for the journal, please talk to the presenter about *TS* and drop me a line so that I can follow up. I also intend to mine the *TS* Listserv for possible authors and reviewers, so if you post there frequently, do not be surprised if you hear from me!

I know that it is difficult to submit one’s work to a journal for review. I have felt the sting of receiving an unfair review, the despair of long waits for the editor to make a decision, and so on. So I pledge to write decision letters within a few days of receiving the last reviewer’s comments. Reviewers who do not return reviews in a timely manner will not be asked to review again. I will make decisions on the basis of the comments received as quickly as possible, so that authors can know the outcomes of their submissions. And I vow not to use form letters; each letter from me will be crafted as a conversation with you, the author, about your manuscript. And especially for those manuscripts that receive “revise and resubmit” reviews, I promise to give detailed suggestions to the authors. I will not give a manuscript a “revise and resubmit” if I do not believe it has a good chance of eventually being published in *TS*. To me, these are “no-brainer” aspects of my editorial philosophy; they speak to the respect I have for authors and for you, the readers of this journal.

Although the journal will continue to publish quality work on the scholarship of teaching and learning, there are some changes that will be implemented in the next few months. First, by the time that you receive this issue of *TS*, the submission process likely will have gone completely electronic, thanks to SAGE’s being the American Sociological Association’s (ASA) new publishing partner. This means the entire submission process, from creating an account, uploading a manuscript, and paying the processing fee to following the manuscript through the review process and receiving the editor’s decision, will be online.
In 2008, when I was thinking about applying for this position, I attended many of the ASA sessions sponsored by the Teaching and Learning Section and asked everyone I knew—and many perfect strangers as well—about what they thought the journal’s strengths were and how it could help them as teachers. Many graduate students and individuals new to teaching said they wanted the journal to help them sort through the myriad book options that are available for courses. So beginning soon, each edition will feature a review essay about books and monographs available for some of the central classes common to most sociology programs. My deputy editor, Glenn Muschert, has planned a rotation of the classes and will be inviting one or two people to write these reviews. If anyone wants to volunteer to write such a review essay, please contact Glenn (he can be reached at teachingsociology@muohio.edu).

Another of my editorial goals is to build TS’s online presence. We will be consolidating our two journal Web sites into one (http://www.asanet.org/cs/journals/ts) in the next few months. More than that, though, I want to develop online content that gives authors a place to expand on their ideas. In particular, additional online content will allow authors of pedagogical pieces to share more of the specifics of their teaching techniques. And I want to encourage authors and readers to share more by using the TS Forum page (http://members.asanet.org/Forums/view_forum.php?id=68) for further conversations. In fact, the “Conversation” pieces by Richard Machalek and Michael Martin, Chad Hanson, and Betsy Lucal in this edition provide a great opportunity for TS readers to engage with each other online. So don’t forget to check out TS in cyberspace.

Editors of Contexts and the American Sociological Review (ASR) and I have begun conversations about establishing some collaborative ventures. Although our plans are not yet finalized, we hope to work together, both in the print editions and on the journals’ Web sites, to share ideas and have an impact on the teaching of sociology. The new editors of the ASR included their wish to have a strong working relationship with TS in their application (which can be found at http://www.asanet.org/galleries/default-file/VanderbiltASRProposal.pdf), which I find exciting. Their plan to have an “Undergraduate Corner” on the ASR Web site is just one of many ideas that show that concerns about pedagogy are alive and well in many places in our discipline.

I have many people to thank for their support of this new adventure I am on, but some deserve special recognition. First, my husband, Dr. Frank Flaherty. He has always been supportive of my professional interests and my career. Three weeks before this first edition was due to SAGE, both my home and school computers “died” within 48 hours of each other. His calmness, patience, and technological skills had a new computer up and running, with all of my files restored, just 8 hours later. He is my rock, my personal technology guru.

Second, I want to thank the administration at Valdosta State University for their support of my editorship. I remember pitching the idea of applying for this position to my new dean, Dr. Connie Richards, in her first two weeks on the job. She listened to my ideas and my enthusiasm and promised me that she would support a changed workload, should I be selected by the ASA. Upper administration agreed, despite these tough economic times.

Thanks also to Susan Nebel, my managing editor. A graduate student in Valdosta State’s sociology program, she has balanced journal duties with a full load of graduate classes. We’ve learned two software systems, figured out how to set up the office, coped with computer woes, and through it all, Susan has been professional and excited to learn new things.

Then there is the team at SAGE: Eric Moran, Allison Leung, Kristen Marchetti, and Scott Springer. They have patiently answered my questions and eased the double transition of a new editor working with a new publisher. I appreciate all their support and patience.

Thanks also to my deputy editor, Glenn Muschert. Barely a year ago, we met for coffee at the Boston ASA meeting to talk about doing this together, and now here we are with our first edition out. Glenn’s advice and support have been wonderful, and I know that book and film reviews and Web content, when we start to develop that more, will be in good hands with Glenn at the helm.

I need to thank the ASA staff, especially Karen Edwards, for their help and support during the transition. Thanks also go to Christine Williams, chair of the ASA Publication Committee, for her guidance and support in getting this first edition “put to bed,” as they say.

But most of all, I wish to thank Dr. Liz Grauerholz, the outgoing editor of TS. She has answered all my questions, helped me to think through transition issues, and been a wonderful
colleague and mentor. I cannot express enough my gratitude to Liz, and to her editorial staff, Pauline Pavlokos and Deborah Barr. Words fail me; they have helped so much these past few months. What I can promise them is that I will ‘’pay it forward’’ when it is time for the next transition in editors.

I welcome hearing from you, the readers of *Teaching Sociology*. Thank you for this opportunity to work for and with you, and for the ASA.

Kathleen S. Lowney
*Editor*