

SELECTED FOR REVIEW

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Supporting the Learning Teacher: A Source Book for Teacher Centers. Marilyn Hapgood, editor. New York: Agathon Press, 1975. 302 pp.

—Reviewed by GEORGE T. GRAY, Visiting Scholar, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

This collection of 33 articles is not recommended as a first book on teachers centers. Readers unfamiliar with the British educational system will, in all likelihood, have difficulty in developing their own opinions of teachers centers from the papers presented. Most would be better served by Robert Thornbury's recent book *Teachers Centres* (Agathon Press, 1974), which combines a detailed historical perspective with a more coherent presentation.

While the newcomer to the subject should be wary of this book of readings, the educator who is looking for a reference work will not be disappointed. Most of the articles in Hapgood's book are directly concerned with teachers centers, although there is a sprinkling of open education and Piagetian psychology. The majority of the articles on teachers centers focus on some aspect of their development in Great Britain, a number of them having been written for a British audience. Accounts of teachers centers in Maryland, Philadelphia, and San Francisco are also included.

Many issues associated with teachers centers are explored in the book, ranging from finance and logistics to motivation for profes-

sional improvement and the type of leadership needed for the operation of a successful center. The 32 authors represented in the volume approach their subject from just about every conceivable angle.

The inclusion of a number of important papers not readily available in this country is an additional plus. Of particular interest are excerpts from Working Paper No. 10 of the Schools Council, the James Report, and three occasional pamphlets published by the Schools Council. All three pamphlets are now out of print. One of them "A Report on Three National Conferences, 1970," is a summary of the discussions which took place among 300 participants at conferences sponsored by the Council. The 27 pages which have been reproduced provide many insights into how British educators perceive the growth and development of teachers centers. □

Changing Schools: The Magic Feather Principle. Mary M. Bentzen and associates. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1974. 287 pp.

—Reviewed by BARBARA BREE FISCHER, Director, Campus School, and Lecturer, Department of Education and Child Study, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts.

Changing Schools is a collaborative analysis of the five-year change efforts of an

Review Coordinators: CHARLES W. BEEGLE, Associate Professor of Education, University of Virginia, Charlottesville; JAMES B. BOYER, Professor and Institute Director, Urban Education Institute, Kansas State University, Manhattan; WILMA S. LONGSTREET, Associate Professor of Education, University of Michigan, Flint; and EDNA MITCHELL, Head, Department of Teacher Education, Mills College, Oakland, California.

/I/D/E/A/ intervention group and 18 very different elementary schools. If the reader overlooks the Dumbo imagery and the SECSI (sexy) Staff in-group joke (Study of Educational Change and School Improvement) he or she will be fascinated by the step-by-step untangling of a remarkable experience which makes explicit the frustration, excitement, and hard headwork of changing schools.

This is not a description of a tough-minded, experimental study but an honest account of an exploratory work and must be viewed with the intellectual criteria appropriate to such an unorthodox approach. The authors were participants and observers in a complex change process that was continually examined and altered in light of the judgments and insights of the participants.

The attitudes which permeate the work are respect for and reliance on the staff of the single school as professionals. The basic premise seems to be that teachers and principals *can* and *should* make school-level decisions concerning organization, curriculum, and instruction. This is in marked contrast to many models proposed for school change which superimpose district or intervention team selected forms of organization, packaged curricula, or instructional skill development onto school personnel. The book also presents a carefully reasoned view that each school should reflect its unique set of characteristics even while belonging to a larger change project.

Significant findings from research on change are incorporated in the SECSI model. The application of knowledge about the school as a social system and as a part of a larger system is built into the organization of the 18 schools known as the League of Cooperating Schools. In the establishment of the League, the often avoided "halo effect" is used as a positive force for change and a support and expectation system is developed to encourage a sense of belonging, the sharing of information, and an openness to change. Accountability for school staff professional task orientation is found in the Project emphasis on the DDAE process, a problem-solving process (Dialogue, Decision making, Action, Evaluation). The fact that staffs who increased their skills in solving their own problems sometimes came up with decisions or innovations that the intervention group did not endorse gives credibility to the claim that trust was placed in indigenous school personnel. One can be uncomfortable with the knowledge that an effort to change schools yielded some undesirable consequences but still recognize that the underlying power of this intervention strategy is in the loosening up of the system, the establishment of an attitude of inquiry into whatever you, the teacher, or the

principal are doing, which, one can assume, will eventually result in better reasoned, more important, and effective changes.

For the practitioner the explanation of the DDAE process and several of the evaluation instruments could be used for guidance in the development of a program for improved teacher decision making.

Finally, *Changing Schools* relentlessly tackles the study of the change process itself. The questions and speculation about the data gathered could spawn dozens of studies about change. □

Women in Educational Leadership: An Open Letter to State Legislators. IEL Report No. 4. 19 pp.

Handbook on How To End Sexism in Your Schools. IEL Report No. 5. 40 pp.

Hierarchy, Power, and Women in Educational Policy Making. IEL Report No. 6. 25 pp.

All published by the Institute for Educational Leadership, George Washington University. Washington, D.C.: the Institute, 1975.

—Reviewed by GAIL T. MCLURE, *Research Psychologist, The American College Testing Program, Iowa City, Iowa.*

These three reports, released by George Washington University's Institute for Educational Leadership, were based on the Conference on Women in Educational Policy Making, held in Denver in January 1974. Acknowledging that there is a disproportionately small number of women in educational policy making positions, the first report, *Women in Educational Leadership: An Open Letter to State Legislators*, recommends several actions that state legislators could take to alleviate the problem.

In the area of certification, for example, the report recommends the development of performance and evaluation criteria for administrative certification, expansion of professional preparation requirements to include the study of racism and sexism, and provision for flexible residency requirements and equivalency experiences. Further, the report recommends that legislators support, enact, and monitor affirmative action programs and in-service training workshops for school personnel. The report also recommends the development of school curriculum standards affecting cultural, ethnic, and sexual stereotypes. Legislators are urged to support the appointment of women to policy-making bodies and to provide funds for a registry of qualified educators available for job vacancies.

The *Handbook on How To End Sexism in Your Schools* is designed for parents, educators, and concerned citizens who are already familiar

with the nature and extent of sex bias in education. It is a how-to-do-it manual which describes five basic steps: First, one must organize, preferably by working through an existing community organization or a coalition of several groups. Second, information must be collected to document sex discrimination. To collect evidence of sex bias, the text suggests asking questions about curriculum materials, course offerings, pregnant students, guidance and counseling, and teachers and staff. This step should also include a well documented, well publicized report with specific recommendations to the school system. Third, if legal noncompliance is found and if there is little or no evidence of corrective actions, complaints may be filed. Procedures for filing complaints are described as a means of bringing pressure against a local district, and also as a way of creating pressure for change at the state level. Though the documentation described in the previous step may be helpful at this stage, it is not absolutely necessary. Fourth, local districts or local action groups can submit recommendations to chief state school officers. The fifth step is a procedure that local districts use to request and obtain technical assistance for developing an affirmative action plan.

The third booklet discusses power for women—what it is, why women need it, where they can get it, and how they can use it. *Hierarchy, Power, and Women in Educational Policy Making* notes the trend to streamline managerial structures in education by replacing the "middle-aged, motherly principal" with the "slick, upwardly-mobile young man, who is eager to innovate, able to speak the language of the computer, and responsive to the demands of the power structure." The authors suggest ways for women to reverse this trend by designing and executing a new concept of power—power that works toward humane ends, power that nourishes talents, qualities, and lives of all people regardless of sex; power that does not dominate, control, or debilitate but rather that elicits liberating changes by example.

If women are to become educational policy makers in positions to exercise liberating power, they must prepare themselves. First, they must learn to understand and use power. Second, they must jump through the qualifying hoops set up by the educational establishment. Third, they must develop a scholarly command of the subject matter required of educational policy makers. Fourth, they must insist upon practical experiences and training in the art of politics in the several levels of the real school world.

Although designed for different audiences, the three reports all represent a significant effort toward eliminating sex discrimination in education. □

Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists. William Pinar, editor. Berkeley, California: McCutchan Publishing Corporation, 1975. 452 pp.

—Reviewed by PAUL R. KLOHR, Professor of Education, The Ohio State University, Columbus.

This is a significant book in a field glutted with books of readings, most of which contribute little either to more adequate curriculum theory or to improved practice.

Much of its significance lies in the conceptual framework its editor, William Pinar, created in selecting the headings and organizing them in the book. This framework and the several pieces he included of his own work in progress illustrate what Pinar calls the "reconceptualist" approach to curriculum theorizing. He derives this term from an analysis James Macdonald made in 1971 of the state of the field of curriculum theory.

In this essay, included in the collection, Macdonald identifies a small number of individuals who are interested in theorizing as a "creative intellectual task which they maintain should be neither used as a basis for prescription or as an empirically testable set of principles and relationships." In contrast, the conventional wisdom of the curriculum field tends to be derived from theory generated to give direction to improved practice. Macdonald and Pinar do not intend to deprecate praxiological theorizing, but they assert that a mature field ought to have several modes of inquiry.

A review of this size does not permit a discussion of the essays of Michael Apple, Maxine Greene, Dwayne Huebner, Philip Phenix, and others, all a part of the volume. These are good, solid works in every respect. A useful historical dimension is introduced in the pieces by Lawrence Cremin and Herbert Kliebard. Ross Mooney's classic essay on "The Researcher Himself" anticipates the current revival of interest in action research.

The philosophical position undergirding the writings of John Mann and William Pilder relates directly to Apple's concern for the political-social action aspect of curriculum theorizing. This position which emerges in Pinar's volume is clarified and extended in the 1975 ASCD Yearbook, *Schools in Search of Meaning*, which Macdonald co-edited and which also has chapters by Apple and Mann.

It is too early to know what will develop from the efforts of Pinar and others who are using a different mode of inquiry to generate curriculum theory. Clearly, there is no organized "movement." Yet, a loose network has been maintained from the Rochester University Conference in 1973 through the Xavier Univer-

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sity Conference in 1974 and the University of Virginia session in October 1975.

In the judgment of this reviewer, the Pinar volume and the curriculum theory conferences have the potential for breathing new life into what has been an atheoretical field which some have given up for dead. Further dialogue must be held concerning the issues which have emerged. The essays in this book give one important substantive base for such an effort. □

The Predecisional Process in Educational Administration: A Philosophical Analysis. *Ellis A. Joseph.* Homewood, Illinois: ETC Publications, 1975. 108 pp.

—Reviewed by J. JOHN HARRIS III, Assistant Professor and Urban Curriculum Specialist, and WARREN R. BENTZEN, Doctoral Candidate; both at Pennsylvania State University, University Park.

The expressed purpose of this book was to make more understandable the inseparableness of applying the philosophical concept of con-naturalness to educational administration. More specifically, it was intended to address the issue of "the person" in the administrative system; his or her characteristics and "virtue" rather than the system and the rules governing the administrative process.

A review indicated the paucity of literature on this aspect of educational administration but does this suffice as an explanation for the book's being replete with pre-1960 references? Joseph has done a good job of piecing together quotations and references from scholars in the field. However, the average school administrator (not trained in philosophy) would find the book eminently unreadable.

Some very crucial points, brought out about the development of the administrator as a "good" and efficient human being *qua* administrator, were lost in a mire of quotations and ideas abstracted from numerous sources. The author would have made his work much more readable and appealing by giving more definitive ideas of his own (in essence updating). This in turn would give a balance between philosophical theorists such as Maritain, Aristotle, and others and educational practitioners like Guba, Campbell, and others. The practicing educational administrator seldom takes up the notion of "mode of inclination," nor intuitively understands such phrases as "knowledge by intellectual connaturalness is a result of the *habitus* proper to the speculative man" (p. 39). Therefore, an administrator may experience difficulty incorporating such notions into a workaday world.

In the final analysis, the book does provoke thoughtful introspection for those administra-

tors who are inclined to be philosophical about school management. The book also could serve as a supplementary text for graduate courses in educational foundations. □

Learning Centers: Opening the Classroom.
John I. Thomas. Boston: Holbrook Press, 1975.
 320 pp.

—Reviewed by DARRELL S. WILLEY, Associate Director, Educational Research Center, and SHARON WOODEN, Associate Professor of Education; both at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces.

Deliberate focus on learning centers as the "opening wedge" or "foot-in-the-door" mechanism for change has permitted a terse, disciplined, yet in-depth prescription for classroom reform in *Learning Centers: Opening Up the Classroom*.

Thomas' command of the literature of educational reform is extensive and versatile. Relevant literature is creatively used with the proper contributions wrung from it. However, Lord Russell's *Education of Character*, a foundational British educational reform document, was conspicuously absent. Inclusion would have balanced an otherwise definitive state-of-the-art concerning open education.

A systematic plan as set forth by Thomas points up entry levels for all teachers, regardless of teaching strategy and personality. The cautious teacher will find ways of proceeding step-by-step. Those wishing to progress at a more rapid pace will gain a supportive structure in achieving their particular style. Thomas' approach reflects his personal background including membership in the original Harvard-

Lexington Team Teaching Project plus years of involvement in aiding students as they move through the threatening and often laborious process of changing to an open teaching environment. Coupled with this is a pervasive feeling of challenge and success in working through the learning center concept, thus truly "Opening Up the Classroom."

The writing style employed throughout the book is buoyant and informal with the most telling points made in a disarming fashion. Chapter seven, "Approaches to Implementation of Learning Centers," is perhaps the most deliberate and powerful segment. Earlier information is well integrated with any prior dangling concepts nailed down. The implementation message is straightforward and devoid of ambiguity. His treatment of the management of time within the classroom is insightful as to a teacher's problems and physical plant limitations.

In summary, educational reform can be accomplished in diverse ways. In contemporary educational perspective, Thomas' chose learning centers as his strategy of attack. Flow of time will probably show that his thrust was advisable. Pleas for openness have saturated the literature for approximately ten years. An international array of theorists have made the case for an open school environment. Few of those theorists have mustered the utilitarian means for bringing the change about. The writer has presented a functional, innovative, and inexpensive approach via learning centers. Those desirous of bringing about quiet and wholesome classroom change would do well to acquire, read, and apply the contents. This is a book with value as a class text or for individual professional reading. □

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