

Reviews

The Educational Imagination. Elliot W. Eisner. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1979. —Reviewed by Louise M. Berman, Professor and Associate Dean, College of Education, University of Maryland, College Park.

The Educational Imagination is one of the most penetrating, fresh, and useful books in the curriculum field today. If the insights that Eisner shares with the reader were internalized and practiced by educators, curriculum practice would be far more sensitive, imaginative, and contextually-relevant than is ordinarily seen. With one foot firmly planted in the history, traditions, ways of thinking, and mores of the curriculum field and the other equally well planted in the arts, Eisner knows and synthesizes insights from each of the fields. The fresh concepts that emerge are shared with the reader in such a way that consciousness is raised so that readers find themselves wrestling with, playing with, thinking about, and toying with ideas of significance to themselves rather than feeling subordinate to the ideas and concepts of others. *The Educational Imagination* is indeed a book that gives freedom from constricting and reductionistic thinking and invites use of the full range of human powers in planning for individuals and schooling.

While the work is on the one hand a creative treatment of curricular issues; on the other hand, it is a call for more profound educational thinking and practice than current behavioristic theories necessitate. Eisner says, "We are 'condemned' to a life of exciting uncertainty in which the flexible use of intelligence is our most potent tool" (p. 48). Intelligence as used in the book includes educated feelings and intuition as well as logical thought.

Chapters in *The Educational Imagination* include, but are not limited to: "The Curriculum Field Today: Where We Are, Where We Were, Where We Are Going"; "Some Concepts, Distinctions and Definitions"; "On the Art of Teaching"; "The Forms and Functions of Evaluation"; and "The Forms and Functions



of Educational Connoisseurship and Educational Criticism." Examples of actual situations are plentiful, allowing the reader to see the implementation of Eisner's ideas with their possible difficulties. The treatment of evaluation and educational connoisseurship is exquisite. Chapters on those topics bear thoughtful reflection and implementation.

Those persons who have followed the brilliant work of Eisner will find many ideas treated in his previous publications meshed with new concepts and useful linkages. Those individuals unfamiliar with Eisner's contributions to the curriculum field will find the work stimulating and refreshing. The book tickles the imagination. It invites all serious curriculum practitioners and theorists to start with some fresh premises about teachers, students, activities, objectives, and evaluation, and to build programs more in tune with the uncertainties and complexities of the time. If curriculum workers were to give serious consideration to Eisner's thinking, the practice of educating would be far different than is commonly found. The book is a must for any thoughtful educator.

Bilingual Schooling in the United States: A Sourcebook for Educational Personnel. Francesco Cordasco, editor. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976. —Reviewed by Leonard A. Valverde, Associate Professor of Educational Administration and Director of the Instructional Supervision Program, The University of Texas at Austin.

Bilingual Schooling in the United States: A Sourcebook for Educational Personnel is, in essence, little more than an extension and update of a 1970 book with the same title (minus the subtitle) by Theodore Andersson and Mildred Boyer (revised in 1978). While Cordasco's version is organized differently from Andersson and Boyer's, much of the focus and some of the content are the same. In fact, Part I, Historical Background, and Part II, Typology and Definition, open with two reprints from Andersson and Boyer. The advantage of this effort by Cordasco is that he has selected some writings that reflect the latest advanced thinking on bilingual education. Unfortunately for the believer in bilingual education, the majority of articles only justify the need for bilingual education in U.S. schools. While most educators may still need to be convinced that bilingual education is necessary, the greater need is to provide bilingual teachers, supervisors, and administrators with helpful information and guidelines that will assist them to design programs, practice relevant teaching, and develop instructional materials. For example, in Part III, Linguistic Perspective, only one article (by Susan Phillips) concentrates on sharing useful information with the practitioner of bilingual education. This is not to say that the rest of the book does not have content that is

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important. On the contrary, most of the writings in Parts I, II, and III—especially those by Andersson and Boyer, Fishman, Gaarder, and Troike—treat crucial issues and concepts, but from a scholarly and theoretical perspective rather than from a practical and empirical base.

Part IV, Programs, Practices and Staff Development, is under-developed

both in quantity and quality. Here substantive information based on systematic thought or research is lacking. Newness of program, lack of experimentation, little research on programmatic aspects, inadequate documentation and dissemination, lack of funds, and political resistance are but a few reasons restricting program development. Hence, the contributing

authors of Part IV were hard-pressed to write practical and concrete information; in turn, editor Cordasco was equally pressed to select significant papers for inclusion.

However, because this last section is anemic and the others skewed toward advocacy, Cordasco misleads the reader in his preface when he states, "*Bilingual Schooling in the U.S.* is intended as a basic sourcebook for training the educational personnel needed in bilingual education. Comprehensive in coverage, it is the first clearly designed text addressed at training required in this critical area" (p. xii). On three counts, he is suspect. One, it is not the first text dealing with training. While Andersson and Boyer's two volumes were not considered to be training texts, such became the practice. Two, it is not comprehensive in coverage. There is a sizable imbalance; theory and concept outweigh practical and program matters to a point of almost total absence. Three, the majority of the content fails to assist training or to help various educational personnel.

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