

Reviews

Thinking and Learning Skills: Volume I. Relating Instruction to Research

Judith W. Segal, Susan F. Chipman, and Robert Glaser, Editors
Hillsdale, New Jersey: Laurence Erlbaum Associates, 1985.

—Reviewed by Barbara Z. Presseisen, Associate Director of Urban Development, Research for Better Schools, Philadelphia.

The appearance of the first volume of this two-volume set should convince even the most skeptical educator that the current interest in thinking skills instruction is not a momentary fad. If anything, Segal, Chipman, and Glaser have completed a volume that amply documents the extensive efforts by both researchers and practitioners to make cognitive development a centerpiece in elementary-secondary and higher education. Furthermore, the worldwide concern for cognitive development is underlined in this study.

The volume is divided into two major sections. It first presents various programs in three categories (intelligence and reasoning, knowledge acquisition, and problem solving) and analyzes each. The second part reviews educators' experiences in five instances, sometimes referring to specific programs but always raising the practical issues of what must be done to introduce thinking skills programs to the real world of schools. There is no question in the book but that this is a problematic task: faculties are dubious; clarity is never at a level one would prefer; day-to-day concerns like budget allocations, sufficient time for innovation, and staff development needs never go away. But an equally clear message of the book is that virtually every attempt in the programs reviewed to improve students' thinking ability has been successful in some way. Reviews of the research in the various programs indicate that it is not an easy task to explain these positive findings.

Programs of intelligence and reasoning presented in the book include Feuerstein's *Instrumental Enrichment*, Lipman's *Philosophy for Children*, and Whimbey and Lochhead's *Problem Solving and Comprehension*. Although they are targeted for different populations and have had very different implementation histories, certain questions pertain to all three and, in fact, underlie the whole thinking skills movement: What skills or processes should be taught? What instructional methods are best used to teach them? Should thinking skills be taught separately or related to traditional subjects? Comparing Feuerstein's chart of "deficient cognitive functions" (pp. 52-53) to Lipman's "list of skills and dispositions taught" (pp. 88-89), one sees a great deal of agreement on what the specific skills ought to be. True, Feuerstein seems to stress the importance of various modalities—verbal, pictorial, numerical, figural, and symbolic—in his seemingly tightly structured instruments of mediated learning, in contrast to Lipman's verbal and philosophical approach. Yet the careful exchange between the teacher and the taught in all three programs presents a new role for the classroom instructor of thinking and an equally changed role for the student: the facilitator of cognitive processes models thinking for the learner but, above all, stresses that the thinker must be responsible for his or her own learning and cognizant of these very processes. The importance of metacognitive theory in the new programs is as much a central aspect of their rationale for being as their cognitive bases. The great difficulty, the editors note throughout the volume, is the problem of transfer—whether the particular skills learned in any one experience are carried over successfully to other problems or situations. To some extent, all three programs suggest they are.

The knowledge acquisition programs presented concentrate on the

strategies students can develop to become better processors of new information. Dansereau focuses his program on the ways textbooks are studied at the college level; Weinstein and Underwood examine 9th grade readers and their learning strategies; Jones and her colleagues develop a multiple-year reading curriculum for low-achieving students in Chicago's schools; and Herber describes an approach that advocates teaching reading and thinking skills only within content areas. It is interesting that Campione and Armbruster, in analyzing these various metacognitive strategy programs, emphasize that teaching thinking ultimately forces educators to wrestle with a theory of learning at the base of instruction. The model of the expert learner is caught up in views the practitioner holds along with a greater or lesser awareness of current developments in cognitive and developmental theory. Citing Binet (as does Covington later in the book), Campione and Armbruster suggest that learning new strategies is the heart of education and come to agree with Feuerstein that, indeed, the human learner has a potential for cognitive modifiability (p. 334).

Programs for problem solving presented in Segal, Chipman, and Glaser's book include de Bono's *CoRT* program and Covington's *Strategic Thinking*. They highlight some concerns raised in the programs of intelligence and reasoning: What is the importance of perception in understanding reasoning? Of what significance are motivation and reward in the classroom? Again, the need for further research becomes evident.

The final section on applications of thinking skills raises many issues central to the furtherance of the thinking skills movement. How to deal with inner-city populations, how to affect teacher preparation programs and on-going staff development, and how to link practitioners at all levels of education to the educational research that is

most significant for them. Some of the answers are probably to be found in the second volume of this set, which seems to include more recent research material. No doubt, as a resource to school personnel as well as to university faculties, Segal, Chipman, and Glaser have produced a formidable collection and a full bibliography to delight the most inquisitive educator.

In sum, the first volume of *Thinking and Learning Skills* reviews the history of cognitive development instruction as well as carefully delineates the meaningful issues that currently need to be addressed to make the teaching of thinking and learning skills an effective program in America's schools. Although complex, the present scene is very hopeful. At no other period in the history of American education have so many fields come together on common ground. Cognitive and developmental psychologists, child development and instruction specialists, school practitioners, and educational researchers have much to discuss about the teaching of thinking. Interestingly, a two-way street is described in this volume: research informs practice, and practice shapes research as well. We may be on the threshold of great changes in education, as Lochhead maintains elsewhere.¹ We are certainly raising the proposition that with the teaching of thinking we are challenging the school reform movement to set a new mission for schooling in America: students need "to know what knowledge is of most worth and which cognitive processes are the most powerful, and then be motivated to attain both."²

Available from Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 365 Broadway, Hillsdale, NJ 07642, for \$55.00 (\$35.00 if prepaid).

¹Jack Lochhead, "Introduction to Section 1, New Horizons in Educational Development," *Review of Research in Education, Volume 12* (Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association, 1985), p. 4.

²Barbara Z. Presseisen, *Unlearned Lessons: Current and Past Reforms for School Improvement* (Philadelphia and London: Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis Group, 1985), p. 132.

A Passion for Excellence— The Leadership Difference

Tom Peters and Nancy Austin
New York
Random House, Inc., 1985.

—Reviewed by Jack T. Hearn, Jr., Assistant Superintendent, Warrensville Heights Schools, Ohio.

While the world of academe adequately acknowledged the emergence of *In Search of Excellence* several years ago, its pedagogical value was incorrectly perceived to relate only to business schools within the educational hierarchy because it described America's best-run companies. Assuming the best-selling management book in history was for a different forum, too many educators failed to avail themselves of the opportunity to transfer lessons from corporate America to the educational arena.

Now the sequel, *A Passion for Excellence*, leaves no doubt as to its intended audience: those who interact with people and have an obsession to excel. Tom Peters, co-author of both books, has joined forces with Nancy Austin to "observe and celebrate" the individuals from all walks of life and levels of organizations who have achieved excellence.

The authors' passion throughout this sure-to-be bestseller is improved leadership. They plead for a back-to-basics revolution in which leaders would set aside many of the techniques, devices, and programs that have accumulated over the last 25 years and concentrate on unleashing energy by working with colleagues via listening and staying in touch. The brand of leadership proposed is MBWA (Managing By Wandering

Around). This approach is suggested as a response to the authors' perception as to the No. 1 managerial productivity problem in America: "Managers who are out of touch with their people and out of touch with their customers." By substituting the word "student" for customer, teachers, supervisors, and board members will have little difficulty relating to hundreds of noneducational vignettes that exemplify "passions for excellence." One commonality appearing throughout the book is that successful leaders strive for perfection by listening, trusting, and respecting the dignity and creative potential of each person functioning within their setting.

In the chapter titled "Excellence in School Leadership," we discover that Peters is the son of a former teacher and that he worked for her as an elementary school assistant while attending high school. Like son, like mother—she too had a passion for MBWA and creativity. While the chapter borrows heavily from two books on schooling, it successfully applies the framework and findings of *A Passion for Excellence* to the school setting.

Available from Random House, Inc., 201 East 50th St., New York, NY 10022, for \$19.95.

Young Children Reinvent Arithmetic: Implications of Piaget's Theory

Constance Kazuko Kamii
with Georgia DeClark
New York
Teachers College Press, 1984

—Reviewed by Mary Lou Johns, Marquardt School District #15, Glendale Heights, Illinois.

Imagine a 1st grade class with no math worksheets, where children learn addition by playing games. Kamii's program is firmly based on Piagetian theory, current research, and

Reviews

classroom field testing. The math objectives include numeration (counting) and addition. Purposely omitted from the program are the teaching of missing addends, place value, the writing of numerals, and subtraction. The authors present a convincing argument that prematurely teaching these concepts actually damages the child's ability to acquire logico-mathematical thinking and autonomy.

Those who are concerned about thinking skills as an outcome of education will find the rationale and teacher-to-teacher advice in this book useful and provocative.

Available from Teachers College Press, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, for \$28.95 (hardbound) or \$18.95 (paperback).

Supervision of Instruction: A Developmental Approach

Carl D. Glickman
Boston

Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1985.

—Reviewed by Jerrold Hopfgardner, University of Dayton, Ohio.

Carl Glickman suggests that supervision be, metaphorically speaking, the "glue" of successful schools. He masterfully presents in this book a plan to amalgamate the essential components to formulate the "glue" necessary to bind together an effective and manageable supervisory program.

This book is primarily intended for graduate-level introductory supervision courses. However, it can also serve as a valuable resource for practitioners desiring to enhance their supervisory practices. Chapters are arranged in a functional sequence, and contain exercises to engage both the student and practitioner in academic, field-based, and developmental activities that reinforce concepts and practices of effective supervision.

In addition to topics typically addressed in supervision textbooks, Glickman draws heavily on conclusions emanating from recent effective school studies and successful leader-

ship practices outside education. He places necessary emphasis on considerations of the teacher as an adult learner in the staff development process. Equally significant is his analysis of cognitive, conceptual, and personality development stages through which practitioners pass.

Available from Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 470 Atlantic Ave., Boston, MA 02210, for \$32.85.

Challenges to the Humanities

Chester E. Finn, Jr., Diane Ravitch,
and P. Holley Roberts, Editors
New York

Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1985.

—Reviewed by Ira Schwarz, State University of New York College at Brockport.

"American education is not doing right by the humanities. . . . If an unfriendly foreign power had done this to us we would have deemed it an act of war." So say the editors of this significant compilation, the result of a project of the Educational Excellence Network of Vanderbilt University's Institute for Public Policy Studies.

That the humanities face crucial challenges today is not particularly surprising to most educators. The vague realization that something is wrong, however, does not in itself address the problems or even identify them, which is the focus of this well-considered series of essays. Nearly half of these are devoted to "Understanding the Challenges" through various perspectives: historical, cultural, curricular, and philosophical. The second shorter section, "The Humanities in the Classroom," and the final section, "The Policy Context," serve as a rather brief development of this exposition.

"The Challenges of Educational Excellence," the final essay, by Chester E. Finn, Jr., undertakes to limn this context through a discussion of the "excellence movement" relating to its specific challenge to the humanities. There are five attitudes, according to Finn, which characterize this movement: (1) educational performance should be measured in student learn-

ing outcomes; (2) educational content should be prescribed; (3) "... the excellence movement has a higher tolerance for failure than does the education profession"; (4) institutions and their individual members are accountable for education results; and (5) higher educational standards will not require more money. Clashing attitudinal differences, basically between the reformers and many of the professions, may be a partial explanation of the present cultural lag.

Suppose that our educational leaders, asks Secretary of Education William J. Bennett in the "Epilogue," "... decide that the game is not worth the candle? Suppose many of them come to believe that grave challenges to the humanities should be ignored because there are more compelling priorities for the schools or conclude that the defense and teaching of the humanities simply take too much energy, time, and resources relative to their pedagogical benefits. Suppose, then, that in many places the humanities go untaught, either for lack of interest in them or lack of ardor in their defense against these and other challenges."

What a loss this could be!

Available from Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 30 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003, for \$29.50 (hardbound) or \$16.50 (paperback).

Innovation Up Close: How School Improvement Works

A. Michael Huberman
and Matthew B. Miles
New York

Plenum Press, Plenum Publishing Co.,
1984.

—Reviewed by William Bailey, University of Delaware, Newark.

Michael Huberman from the University of Geneva and Matthew Miles from the Center for Policy Research in New York City bring credibility to school improvement projects using qualitative research. This publication is a partial report of a large field study

funded by the Department of Education. The authors draw from their vast experiences analyzing the innovation process using single-case studies and cross-case analysis. The reports provide a clear accounting of innovation projects and include an excellent chapter on why school improvement attempts succeed or fail. There is also a pertinent summary chapter that integrates their findings.

The book compares favorably with other recent publications such as *School Context and School Change* (reviewed in the April 1985 issue of *Educational Leadership*) in that the information is based on field experiences and reports interesting uses of qualitative data. With pressure mounting on school decision makers to improve the status of education, one could not go wrong studying Huberman and Miles in order to gain insight into systematic approaches to improvement.

Available from Plenum Press, 233 Spring St., New York, NY 10013, for \$29.50.

Multiple Realities: A Study of 13 American High Schools

Barbara Benham Tye
Lanham, Maryland

University Press of America, 1985

—Reviewed by Thomas McDaniel, Converse College, Spartanburg, South Carolina.

In high schools, "classroom instruction proceeds much as it always has, ever since the emergence of the comprehensive high school." There, "teachers are absolute rulers in their own classrooms." These are but two of hundreds of conclusions reached in this perceptive study, a follow-up to John Goodlad's *A Place Called School*.

This detailed description and analysis of 525 high school classrooms shows in fascinating detail the complex culture of the high school. Throughout, the author finds a "deep

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structure" of pervasive control, sameness in curriculum and teaching methods, tracking of students, and resistance to change. Tye shares her vision of the revitalization of the American high school, for "high schools *as they are* ... are not good enough." Her research and reforms deserve our attention.

Available from University Press of America, 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD 20706-9990, for \$29.50 (hardbound) or \$16.75 (paperback).

As Others See Us

Keith Hope
New York

Cambridge University Press, 1985.

—Reviewed by Sylvester Kohut, Jr., Kutztown University, Kutztown, Pennsylvania.

A comparison of schooling and social mobility in Scotland and the United States is the focus of this well-written book, which is based upon longitudinal data assembled between 1947 and 1964 by the Mental Survey Committee of the Scottish Council for Research in Education.

This is *not* a stuffy summary of inconclusive research data from a recently discovered archive. The author introduces new definitions and models for assessing the contribution of intelligence to processes of social mobility. He also clearly explains a major distinction between "disadvantage" and "deprivation" from a social policy analysis standpoint.

The book's blending of empirical, theoretical, and institutional analysis will interest social psychologists and educational researchers.

Available from Cambridge University Press, 32 East 57th St., New York, NY 10022, for \$42.50.

Artistry in Teaching

Louis J. Rubin
New York

Random House, Inc., 1985.

—Reviewed by William R. Martin, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia.

This three-star two-parter presents Rubin's characteristics of the "artist

teacher" and a description of experiments for learning a more dramatic pedagogical and motivational style. *Artistry in Teaching* proposes to stimulate teachers to artistry through a series of vignettes, a list of 12 suggestions ("devote as much time as possible to whatever you enjoy most in teaching"), a personal writing style, and an enunciation of the principal themes related to artistry and teaching ("imagination and inventiveness are far more important than standard operating procedures").

The author's view of the results of artistry in teaching ("students are caught up in the learning") and the four progressive stages for getting "there," help overcome nagging thoughts that teaching as theater works mainly for those students who bought a ticket in the first place. Still, Rubin's six years spent in "gestation" on the importance of teacher attitudes and the subtleties of teaching provide educators another useful response to the current national call for improvement in the quality of teacher education and classroom performance.

Available from Random House, Inc., 201 East 50th St., New York, NY 10022, for \$7.95.

The Politics of Education: Culture, Power, and Liberation

Paulo Freire

South Hadley, Massachusetts.

Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc., 1985.

—Reviewed by K. Paul Kasambira, Bradley University, Peoria, Illinois.

What common thread runs through politics, education, culture, power, and the concept of liberation? This is the question Paulo Freire expertly attempts to answer in this, his newest book. In this "theoretically refreshing" work, Freire utilizes his rich fund of experiences in Latin America, Africa, and North America to unleash his profound theory on the role of politics in education, culture, and people's need for liberation.

Educators, social workers, sociologists, philosophers, theologians, politi-

cians, or psychologists will find this book extremely useful and timely as they try to deal with the dynamics of human behavior in a variety of situations. The book is a must for professionals who wrestle with issues dealing with the politics of education in any given culture.

Available from Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc., 670 Amherst Rd., South Hadley, MA 01075, for \$24.95 (hardbound) or \$9.95 (paperback).

Who Controls Our Schools? American Values in Conflict

Michael W. Kirst
New York

W. H. Freeman & Company, 1985

—Reviewed by Roy Pellicano, Queens College, City University of New York, Queens.

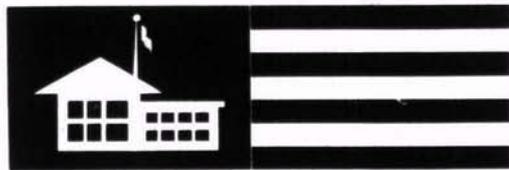
Troubled by the number of reports that present a negative picture of American education? Suspicious of comparative international studies that portray American schools as inferior? Aroused by the number of objectives and demands placed on schools and professional staff? Concerned about fragmented school governance and fragmented curriculum? If so, *Who Controls Our Schools?* is the book to read *and* maintain as a reference. In offering both analysis and agenda, Kirst is unafraid to trammel upon the myths and taboos of contemporary critics as he offers the professional and lay public a review of public school history and an agenda for reform. Proclaiming that "public education cannot 'do it all,'" his agenda includes proposals to delimit the goals and objectives of schools while supporting plans that will reinforce and maintain teaching as a career and profession rather

than as a working-class job.

Unfortunately, the title is misleading, and many potential readers will bypass this important book because they may anticipate a partisan political analysis. However, while Kirst does have a political position and a political agenda, in the parlance of Isaiah Berlin, he posits the view of a "hedgehog"—a view that relates everything to a single central vision, a view that is centripetal rather than centrifugal and diffuse. In so doing, *Who Controls Our Schools?* helps counterbalance a political and educational world filled with the visions and reports of the "foxes"—"those who pursue many ends, often unrelated and even contradictory."

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