# Reviews

## Microcomputers and Education

*Edited by Jack A. Culbertson and Luverne L. Cunningham*
*Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986*

*—Reviewed by Richard Diem, The University of Texas at San Antonio*

The past decade has witnessed an explosion in the purchase of microcomputer technology by elementary and secondary school systems. However, despite increases in hardware capabilities, many educators still doubt the usefulness of this technology as a delivery and instructional processing system.

The NSSE 85th Yearbook attempts to allay these fears. This volume goes beyond computer literacy and training issues to discuss organizational, application, and governance questions, which overlap the possible functional tasks of technology. The sections on technology and citizenship and the global implications of the information revolution are especially important here.

Those using, or thinking of using, technology will find this work extremely valuable for putting the "computer revolution" in a sociocultural perspective.

Available from University of Chicago Press, 5801 S. Ellis Ave., Chicago, IL 60637, for $22.00.

## Educational Computing: Issues, Trends, and a Practical Guide

*Dennis M. Adams and Mary Fuchs*
*Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas, Publisher, 1986*

*—Reviewed by Rebecca Bunch, University of Alabama at Birmingham*

Current issues, trends, and practical information about computers are explored in a style so readable that this book could serve as a concise personal reference or as a text for a course in educational computing issues and applications. They describe the most up-to-date ventures that television, VCRs, computers, video disks, interactive video, and networks are playing in education. They also provide teacher inservice training course outlines, computer curriculum planning guides, and names and sources of appropriate software. The recurring theme emphasizes the need for educators to train students to think critically, not only about information found in traditional text form, but also about the new "visual literature" students are encountering through all electronic media.

Available from Charles C Thomas, Publisher, 2600 S. First St., P.O. Box 4709, Springfield, IL 62708-4709, for $25.75.

## Teaching for Thinking: Theories, Strategies, and Activities, 2d ed.

*Louis E. Raths, Selma Wassermann, Arthur Jonas, and Arnold Rothstein*
*New York: Teachers College Press, 1986*

*—Reviewed by Carolyn Hughes, Oklahoma City Schools, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

Teachers seeking ways to help students become better thinkers will discover a gold mine of classroom-ready ideas in this surprising second edition. Readers whose interest has been sparked by the thinking skills movement of this decade could easily underestimate the immense current value of a book that first appeared two decades ago.

Clear descriptions of 15 thinking operations are given life through scores of crisply stated classroom activities that provide elementary and secondary students opportunities to practice thinking within each academic subject. Readers gain not only ideas about what to do in daily lessons, but specific guidance in how to create a climate for thinking, to interact with students in ways that expand originality and initiative, and to recognize behavior changes in students as they become more reflective, thoughtful learners.

While not claiming to provide an inclusive list of thinking skills and thinking processes or a scope and sequence for developing effective thinking, this book is an important addition to the toolkit of curriculum developers, administrators, and teachers who want to expand students' opportunities to think and to share their thinking.

Available from Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027, for $14.95 paper.

## When Teenagers Work: The Psychological and Social Costs of Adolescent Employment

*Ellen Greenberger and Laurence Steinberg*
*New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1986*

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

Our ever-increasing part-time teenage labor force, which staffs the counters of fast food chains and suburban mall retail stores from coast to coast, is a distinctly American phenomenon.

Although adolescents have worked in other eras, today's teenagers' social origins and motivations for employment differ from their earlier counterparts—their own parents and grandparents. The debate about whether working is "good" for teenagers—or better, under which conditions it may be appropriate—is explored in a concise and clear manner in this potential talk show book. Using historical, demographical, and sociological research data, the authors provide convincing and often alarming evidence that challenges our puritan work ethic as it relates to school-age teenagers in the after-school and weekend work force. School administrators, teachers, counselors, and parents of teenagers will benefit from reading this book.

Available from Basic Books, Inc., 10 E. 53rd St., New York, NY 10022, for $17.95.

## Reducing Educational Disadvantage

*Paul Widlake*
*Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1986*

*—Reviewed by Walter Hathaway, Portland Public Schools, Portland, Oregon*

A valuable voice from Great Britain

has been added to the growing chorus of educators and policymakers who are reanalyzing and reaffirming the basic importance of the home and family in student success. It comes at a time when a growing array of national and international studies and conferences is singing the same tune.

The book's unstartling message that educational disadvantage can best be overcome by students, teachers, and parents working together is well supported by research, practical experience, and common sense. Two aspects are especially noteworthy: (1) the historical analysis leading to the rejection of the paternalistic "cultural deficit" belief system and (2) the specific suggestions based on the author's application of the action research paradigm for ways in which schools and families can become partners in helping children learn.

In spite of some gaps between the evidence provided and the conclusions drawn and some problems with vagueness and the generalizability of the results presented, this book is a valuable introduction to the subject of home-school educational partnerships for those wishing to participate effectively in the next great school debate.

Available from Open University Press, Taylor & Francis, Inc., 242 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19106-1906, for $15.00.

## The Magic Feather: The Truth about "Special Education"

*Lori Granger and Bill Granger*
*New York:*
*E. P. Dutton, 1986*

*—Reviewed by Sandra Tonnsen, University of South Carolina, Columbia.*

Parents Lori and Bill Granger are angry! Their son, Alec, has been tested and retested; he scores 47 and 50 on IQ tests. Teachers, administrators, and psychologists recommend placing him in a special education program. The Grangers say, "No!" and fight back.

*The Magic Feather* reflects their anger. The Grangers are mad at the public school system, the special education system, the medical profession (who prescribe drugs for certain students), the psychology "experts," and parents who they say abdicate their responsibility to educate their children.

*The Magic Feather* is also an informative book. The authors document some of the history of Public Law 94–142 and explain terms special educators use. They relate highlights in the development of intelligence tests, suggest visual and hearing problems as a major source of children's failure in a regular educational setting, and recommend 14 books for further reading on learning problems.

Although the tone is negative, the examples are negative, and the implications are negative, teachers and administrators (particularly those involved in special education) should read *The Magic Feather* to understand the frustrations and anger experienced by parents who are told their children aren't normal, and most importantly, to be alerted to the real problems of special education—problems that should be eliminated immediately.

Available from E. P. Dutton, 2 Park Ave., New York, NY 10016, for $16.95.

## Evaluation-Based Leadership: School Administration in Contemporary Perspective

*Naftaly S. Glasman*
*Albany, New York:*
*State University of New York Press, 1986*

*—Reviewed by Paul G. LeMahieu, Pittsburgh Board of Education, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.*

Some books are noteworthy not so much for the issues they settle as for the questions they raise. Naftaly Glasman's recent work is one of these. Anyone who shares the current widespread interest in the principal as educational leader on the one hand and data-driven instructional leadership on the other will be captured by this book.

Exclusive of the summary, the text has three parts. The first is a historical account of the demands for evaluation and evaluative activities that are placed on educational practitioners. Part 2 summarizes a series of studies that describe principals' responses to those demands. It also documents their attitudes toward the use of evaluative information, with an almost exclusive focus on student achievement data, although the author includes a variety of applications. Part 3 focuses on evaluation as a component of school leadership. It attempts to describe, both qualitatively and quantitatively, principals' uses of evaluation.

This book is a summary of the findings of a program guided by the author over the past decade or more. The work is not prescriptive in the least: there is no advice as to how to be evaluation based or data driven as an educational leader. This work is not for practitioners, but rather for those who prepare them and who are interested in the current educational landscape with respect to evaluation use by principals.

If there is some disappointment in that fact and, indeed, there is even some expressed in these pages, it is well to keep in mind that the majority of individuals currently serving as principals responded to a very different vision of the principalship. By and large, they were trained as administrative, not educational, leaders. Descriptive statements based on such individuals simply cannot be very prescriptive.

Systematic training of principals that is consistent with the new emerging vision must await its clear definition as well as the development of a literature and textbooks that support it. Naftaly Glasman does not provide answers, simply because they are as yet unavailable. He does, however, pose important opening questions to a discussion that should shape a vision of the principal as evaluation- and data-driven educational leader.

Available from State University of New York Press, State University Plaza, Albany, NY 12246, for $14.95 paper and $37.50 cloth.

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