

Book Reviews

The Early Childhood Curriculum: A Review of Current Research

Edited by Carol Seefeldt
New York:

Teachers College Press, 1987

—Reviewed by Christine M. Roberts, University of Connecticut, Storrs.

Kindergarten teachers, curriculum planners, and graduate students in early childhood education will appreciate this succinct review of recent theory and research with implications for teaching in the usual subjects (e.g., math, social studies, etc.).

Although the separate-subject-chapter format is contrary to the major theme of an active young child learning joyously and meaningfully in an integrated curriculum, readers will nevertheless find the chapters on determining the curriculum, approaches to teaching, language arts, and play especially informative and provocative. The chapters on the arts present a convincing rationale for them. All the chapters contain bibliographies for further reading.

Available from Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027, for \$23.95.

Writing to Read

John Henry Martin and Ardy Friedberg
New York:

Warner Books, 1986

—Reviewed by Carolyn S. Hughes, Oklahoma City Public Schools, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Educators seeking insight into "writing to read" as an approach to language arts instruction will find answers in this book to basic questions about theory, research base, materials, and methodology.

The reader who is expecting to be "sold" a computerized approach to reading instruction will be relieved to discover a humane, child-focused approach based on the premise that children are more motivated by sending messages (writing) than by receiving messages (reading). Hence, writing, using invented and phonetic spelling,

is the recommended starting place for teaching language arts. Instructional strategies described employ a wide variety of multisensory materials to provide opportunities for children with different learning styles.

Though co-written by the father of IBM's Writing to Read Program, John Henry Martin, the book focuses on ways to apply the principles without computer technology.

While the first few chapters will be of greatest value to educators, the book is designed for parents of young children. Schools that maintain a "parent shelf" in their library will want to consider this worthwhile addition to parent education resources.

Available from Warner Books, P.O. Box 690, New York, NY 10019, for \$17.95 plus \$1.00 for postage and handling, prepaid.

Selling Students Short: Classroom Bargains and Academic Reform in the American High School

Michael W. Sedlak, Christopher W.

Wheeler, Diana C. Pullin,

and Philip A. Cusick

New York:

Teachers College Press, 1986

—Reviewed by Barbara Benham Tye, Chapman College, Orange, California.

This book merits a careful reading. It's about the ways in which American high school students have, over the past 40 years, increasingly disengaged and distanced themselves from what is supposed to be the primary purpose of schooling: academic learning. Drawing on a wealth of literature (primarily from qualitative and ethnographic studies but including also some of the best quantitative research of the past 30-40 years), the authors firmly establish the societal context of schooling, stressing the systemic nature of the institution.

Within this framework, they explore the "organizational dynamics and fusion of personal and professional interests of all the members of the school community that in many cases discourage academic learning." It becomes clear that the current reform

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movement is doomed to failure if it does not address these complex realities. Indeed, some much-lauded efforts to "get tough" and "raise standards" may actually make the situation worse.

These are provocative themes, well presented and supported. This volume is a valuable addition to the sociology of education literature.

Available from Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027, for \$28.95 cloth and \$14.95 paper.

**Instructional Leadership:
Concepts, Issues, and
Controversies**

*Edited by William Greenfield
Newton, Mass.:
Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1987*

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

The literature on effective schooling is abundant, but implementation is either slow, narrow-minded, or misinterpreted. What is needed during the current phase of theory into practice is "reflective practice." The term, used first in the foreword by Thomas Sergiovanni and repeated thematically throughout, accurately depicts the nature of these readings.

Instructional Leadership will make a substantial contribution to educators who are interested in reflecting on the research and finding the unique applications for their own settings. The 20 contributing authors each successfully help instructional leaders focus on the meaning of the effective schools literature.

The book's four units are (1) "Images of Leadership in Effective Schools," which provides thought-provoking perspectives; (2) "Leading and Managing Schools," which gives practical examples and information; (3) "School Cultures and Context," which explores the influences of the cultural context on school improvement; and (4) "Professional Development Practices and Policies," which discusses staff development and performance evaluation. The book's strength lies in

the considerable experience, knowledge, and writing skills of the authors.

Available from Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 7 Wells Ave., Newton, MA 02159.

**Critical Pedagogy and
Cultural Power**

*Edited by David W. Livingstone
Hadley, Mass.:*

Bergin and Garvey Publishers, Inc., 1987

*—Reviewed by Asa G. Hilliard III, Georgia
State University, Atlanta.*

This volume is a skilled autopsy of the practice of cultural domination through the process of education. The educational vehicles of family, mass media, and schools reflect the political struggles in the wider society. Models of careful analyses of cultural paradigms, ideologies, schooling and skilling, and critical pedagogy and practice are presented to serve as antidotes to domination through education. Especially important here is an extension of the nature of domination to include types other than that based on social class (e.g., domination pattern within families).

Critical Pedagogy and Cultural Power provides great clarity in its description of educational processes. It is a major addition to the literature on applied conflict theory in education. Educators who value the works of such writers as Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux, who wrote the introduction, will find this collection indispensable. Serious educators will be provoked to a deeper level of critical thought about professional practice and leadership.

Available from Bergin and Garvey Publishers, Inc., 670 Amherst Rd., South Hadley, MA 01075, for \$34.95 cloth and \$16.95 paper.

**Control Theory in the
Classroom**

*William Glasser
New York:*

Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., 1986

*—Reviewed by Shirley A. McFaul, Lewis
University, Romeoville, Illinois.*

As a reaction against what Glasser sees as the false assumptions of S-R

psychology, he champions the use of learning teams and control theory as an alternative to individualistic work in the classroom. According to Glasser, students are motivated by what is satisfying to them, and the present *structure* of most classrooms works against their needs for survival, belonging, power, freedom, and fun. Learning teams make students feel they belong, and this motivates them to work. Through work they discover the "knowledge-is-power" connection.

Glasser gives examples of success, citing the work of Roger Johnson, David Johnson, and Robert Slavin. While he may overstate the usefulness of learning teams, Glasser raises some critical questions about the psychological tone of many classrooms. His alternative approach is worth considering.

Available from Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., 10 E. 53rd St., New York, NY 10022, for \$14.95 cloth, \$5.95 paper.

The Invitational Elementary Classroom

John H. Wilson
Springfield, Ill.

Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 1986

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

As its author would say, "I invite you to read this book!" We're talking here about William Purkey's concept and process of invitational learning interpreted for elementary teachers who wish to encourage children to feel able, valuable, and responsible, and to behave accordingly. Experienced and preservice teachers using the "doable" ideas in this 156-page monograph will find that invitational learning works.

For background, Wilson includes definition and principles for comparison built around his belief that invitational learning enhances positive self-concept while strengthening basic skills development. He offers specifics on how a teacher organizes and manages to be "invitational" and suggests

that invitational learning can be used elsewhere—in families, churches, for instance.

"Readability" is high, with illustrations, clear examples, poems, and quotes, as is "usability," with handout materials and exercises, including a unique one on "invitational epigrams," for which readers are invited to add suggestions and make contributions. With its sections on involving parents and gaining feedback on how an invitational classroom is working, the book rather fully meets its mission: that of honoring, for students and teachers alike, both cognitive and affective learning successes through establishing and maintaining a teaching and learning environment "invitational" in substance.

Available from Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 2600 S. First St., P.O. Box 4709, Springfield, IL 62708-4709, for \$18.50.

Leadership Papers (Nos. 1-5)

John W. Gardner
Washington, D.C.

Independent Sector, 1986-87

—Reviewed by Clark D. Webb, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah

Any new publication by John Gardner promises thoughtful reading. The founder of Common Cause and the author of *Excellence and Self-Renewal* has put together a spirited, readable defense of leadership in late-twentieth century America. These five separately bound pamphlets contain the mature, illuminating observations of an internationally known leader and philosopher of leadership. Seven additional papers are planned.

While Gardner does not aim his writing directly at educators, the relevance of the papers for teachers—at all levels—is clear. As he says, "... [E]very great leader is clearly teaching—and every great teacher is leading."

One evidence of Gardner's thoughtful writing is his criticism of some of today's received wisdom about leadership. He challenges ideas such as the leader/manager dichotomy, the sancti-

ty of participative leadership, "power" as inherently corrupting, the unalloyed goodness of perfect equality, and the use of consequences as a reliable measure of one's leadership efforts.

Many teachers, supervisors, and principals will applaud Gardner's insistence that influence runs two ways. Referring to leaders and followers, Gardner notes that "each is in some measure the shaper, and each is in some measure shaped."

School people rightly put great stock in the progressive development of the individual. Gardner speaks to that when he specifies that the first "moral goal" of leadership is "the release of human potential." Such a view gives heart—or guilt—to the educator-leader bogged down in mindless rule-following, unable or unwilling to put first things first.

Perhaps Gardner's greatest potential contribution to educational leadership is his blending of the visionary and the practical. He champions leaders who are high-minded and idealistic yet are in control of the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to allow them to implement decisions, affect lives, and bring about changes.

Available from Leadership Studies Program, Independent Sector, 1828 L St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, for \$1.00 per paper, prepaid. To receive these five papers and the seven others as they are published, send \$12.00 to the publisher.

Supervision in Education: Problems and Practices

Daniel Tanner and Laurel Tanner
New York

Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987

—Reviewed by Edward F. Pajak, University of Georgia, Athens

Supervision in Education: Problems and Practices is dedicated to "The American Teacher." The same might be said about the model of supervision it presents. The book's theme is not the latest fad or reform, but rather assistance to the teacher in the classroom.

Tanner and Tanner define supervision as helping teachers solve instructional problems, but they also advocate broad participation by teachers in curriculum and staff development—areas where they often have little responsibility and even less influence—to foster their professional development.

The authors emphasize almost exclusively the value of supportive and collaborative work with teachers and downplay the worth of other supervisory strategies. An extensive "Checklist of Developmental Criteria for School Improvement" enables readers to determine how well their schools provide professional growth opportunities.

To the authors' credit, they carefully weigh evidence that both supports and disputes their position. They also cleverly dissect and challenge views espoused by major figures in the "re-

form" movement. Readers will be rewarded with an unusual combination of intellectual stimulation and practical advice.

Available from Macmillan Publishing Company, 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022, for \$24.00.

A Better Start: New Choices for Early Learning

Edited by Fred M. Hechinger

New York

Walker and Company, 1986

—Reviewed by Kathy Fite, Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas.

Almost anyone interested in the education of young children should find this book useful. The contributors describe model programs and their effect on education, validate the tremendous impact that the home environment has on the young child, identify components of high-quality early

childhood programs, and maintain that good programs offer some children a "better start" that can extend into adulthood.

It is not the authors' intent to suggest that all children under five should be enrolled in formal educational programs, but rather to communicate the message to parents, teachers, and the general public that there are very real reasons to recognize the importance of education for all ages. We can do many things, they say, to improve our educational system, especially when it comes to providing high-quality day-care and early childhood education for children who would not otherwise receive the guidance, interaction, and reinforcement that can help them succeed once they are in school.

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Global Images of Peace and Education: Transforming the War System

*Edited by T. M. Thomas, David R. Conrad,
and Gertrude F. Langsam*

Ann Arbor, Mich.:

Prakken Publications, Inc., 1987

—Reviewed by Louis Goldman, Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas.

Quality texts are increasingly in demand in the burgeoning field of peace education, and *Global Images of Peace and Education* ranks high among recent works that understand the vital role of education in the establishment of peace and justice.

Peace education approaches are as varied as philosophies of education, but the reconstructionist position taken in this volume seems especially relevant. The scope is broad, including chapters on the ethics of deterrence, economic conversion, worldmindedness, high school textbooks, and one comparing Brameld and Galtung, two major peace educators.

Perhaps a contemporary book on peace should say more about nuclear war and Star Wars, but this book says

much—with comprehensiveness, balance, and clarity.

Available from Prakken Publications, Inc., 416 Longshore Dr., Ann Arbor, MI 48107, for \$15.00.

After the School Bell Rings

Carl A. Grant and Christine E. Sleeter
Philadelphia

The Falmer Press, 1986

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

After the School Bell Rings is perhaps one of the most ambitious books resulting from direct observation of students, teachers, and administrators in their "natural" habitat. The authors take a unique, critical look at these three populations in a desegregated, mainstreamed school.

Using conflict theory, the researchers spent three years observing, interviewing, and collecting data to determine the effect unalterable traits of race, gender, or handicap had on the school's teaching and learning styles.

Because the book reads more like a textbook than a research study report, classroom teachers, teacher educators, administrators, and educational sociologists and psychologists should find it helpful. Practitioners will welcome the recommendations.

Available from The Falmer Press, Taylor and Francis Inc., 242 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19106-1906.

Different by Design: The Context and Character of Three Magnet Schools

Mary Haywood Metz
New York

Methuen, Inc., 1986

—Reviewed by *Mary Anne Rayuid, Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York*

This rich ethnographic study of three magnet schools in a district seeking to desegregate by diverse educational innovations offers an informative view of the conflicting demands and the ironies generated when districts establish magnets. Since each school is examined according to com-

mon categories (the environment external to the school, instructional processes, teacher culture, relationships), similarities and contrasts in the lives of the three become evident. The author's rich background yields multiple explanations of the events and conditions described, for which sources are available in a valuable bibliography.

The book's balance and careful, patient treatment strongly recommend it for those interested in magnet schools and other systems of choice. But it should prove extremely valuable as well for all who want to understand just how we alienate both teachers and low-achievers in confrontational schools. Thus, this book is important reading for all who are interested in changing schools, in reducing the internal conflicts that undermine them, and in improving the quality of education offered low-achievers.

Available from Methuen, Inc., 29 W. 35th St., New York, NY 10001, for \$33.00.

Reality and Reform in Clinical Teacher Education

Edited by James V. Hoffman

and Sara A. Edwards

New York

Random House, Inc., 1986

—Reviewed by *Georgea Mohlman Sparks, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan.*

"Clinical teacher education" is a set of learning opportunities that occurs in classrooms and complements other types of teacher education, such as professional and academic studies. Preservice, beginning, or experienced teachers may be involved.

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The effective clinical practices described in this book emerged from three studies and three teacher colloquiums conducted during 1980-85 by the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, University of Texas at Austin, during their Research in Teacher Education Project.

The chapter authors are respected researchers who have studied the practical aspects of teacher education: Hilda Borko, Willis Copeland, Gary Griffin, Beatrice Ward, and Ken

Zeichner. While the ideas presented are research based, this is no sterile "review of the literature." The authors provide practical suggestions and illustrations of the practices in action. The book also proposes future directions for the reform of clinical teacher education.

This book is a must for anyone seeking to make significant improvements in clinical teacher education and who wants to be on the cutting edge of reform in teacher preparation,

induction, or staff development. People hoping to work toward partnerships among state, local, and university educators will also benefit greatly from the ideas presented. The authors and the RITE researchers have provided a state-of-the-art, balanced synthesis of research/craft knowledge needed to accomplish meaningful reforms in teacher education.

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