The Empowerment of Teachers
Gene I Maeroff
New York: Teachers College Press, 1988

—Reviewed by Patricia M. Dombart, Butler Senior High School, Butler, Pennsylvania.

Maeroff documents the course of the CHART program, which sought to improve teaching in the arts and humanities and to empower teachers. The author describes how the program brought together public school educators and corporate and university personnel. He uses three guiding principles, "status, knowledge, and access to power," in evaluating the extent of teachers' empowerment. Maeroff's intensity gives life to a wealth of data.

This work offers anecdotes—for example, the story of the teacher forced to conduct class in a restroom and the effects of giving teachers business cards—but also acknowledges the many complicated factors of school life. Presented clearly are the pitfalls—including bureaucratic paralysis, the insecurities of superintendents and principals, the impact of school boards, and the still hazy role of the unions—that complicate the path to reform.

The goals of the CHART project were reached, and the book concludes with descriptions of nine projects that demonstrably improved both the teaching of the humanities and the lives of teachers.

This book bears such strong testimony to the power of classroom teachers that it ultimately raises a disturbing question. If teachers can wield influence, earn respect, and act professionally, then why are they content to wait for "empowerment" to be bestowed upon them?

Available from the Teachers College Press, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, for $11.95.

Reviews

Continuing to Learn: A Guidebook for Teacher Development
Susan Loucks-Horsley
Andover, Mass. The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 1987

—Reviewed by Lorin Anderson, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

This book is a must for those who believe that teachers hold the key to educational improvement. The majority of the book is devoted to alternative approaches to teacher development, including teacher as researcher, clinical supervision, mentoring, networks, and individually guided professional development. The introductory chapters emphasize the essential features of, and steps involved in designing and implementing, effective teacher development programs. The final chapter includes suggestions for evaluating these programs.

Available from the Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 Main St., Andover, MA 01810.

Teacher Evaluation: Improvement, Accountability, and Effective Learning
Milhrey Wallin McLaughlin and R. Scott Peifer
New York: Teachers College Press, 1988

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

The following four statements reflect the essence of this fresh consideration of teacher assessment:

• "Teacher evaluation is primarily an organizational problem, not a technical problem" (p. 79).
• "Undertaking significant teacher evaluation means undertaking significant organizational change" (p. 15).
• "Enabling teacher evaluation begins with the process of unfreezing, of re-examining the understandings, beliefs, and practices fundamental to the institution" (p. 30).
• "Teacher evaluation conducted in an institutional context of mutual trust and support for evaluation thus initiates a cycle of reflection and self-evaluation at both the individual and institutional level" (p. 87).

Case studies including teaching episodes and testimonials form the basis for analyzing teacher assessment programs in four school districts. The case studies illustrate well-articulated principles.

This book is a must for superintendents and other central office administrators who are responsible for orchestrating districtwide teacher evaluation policy reform.

Available from Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027, for $25.95 cloth and $13.95 paper.

Teacher, the Children Are Here
Dianne Appleman and Johanna McClear
Glenciek, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1988

—Reviewed by Patricia M. Dombart, Butler Senior High School, Butler, Pennsylvania.

This valuable essay provides both a basic understanding of a typical mixed group of K-6ers and suggestions for dealing with them. The volume is a beautiful blending of theory and practice. For example, an unpretentious but powerful section on the differences between boys and girls combines psychological theory with examples from the authors' own experience.

Teacher, the Children Are Here should be considered a must for beginning teachers, a shot of adrenalin for experienced practitioners, and, because of the vigor of the material, a vehicle for administrators and theorists to experience (or re-experience) the immediacy and energy of the classroom.

Available from Scott, Foresman and Company, 1900 E. Lake Ave., Glenciev, IL 60025, for $9.95.
Remembering and Forgetting: Inquiries into the Nature of Memory
Edmund Blair Bolles
New York: Walker and Company, 1988

"Memory is an act of imagination." So asserts Edmund Blair Bolles, based on his recent synthesis of recent research in cognitive psychology and neuroscience. Bolles presents evidence that "remembering is a creative, constructive process" rather than simple retrieval of data. The book describes the interactions between emotional, factual, and interpretative memory and explains the roles that experience, attention, and chunked associations play in human memory.

Bolles effectively scuttles some of the long held beliefs and misconceptions about memory and imagination, for example, the notion of a "memory file," distinctions between "real thought" and "just memory," and the idea that memory is a mechanism for retaining the past.

Educators will recognize some of the research in Bolles' synthesis, but they may be unfamiliar with the impact of experience on memory or the way generalizations are formed from interactions between interpretative and factual memory. And most will be surprised by the strength of the subjective organization individuals impose on all memory, a point well illustrated by Bolles' comparison of John Dean's Watergate testimony with the Nixon White House tapes.

Throughout the book, Bolles draws useful conclusions with obvious classroom implications. One example is his discussion of the efficiency of recall of four different learning strategies: rote repetition (worst), sentence repeating, sentence construction, and imagery (best). Educators who would like to know more about why students remember and why they forget will find Remembering and Forgetting both useful and enjoyable.

Curriculum: Product or Praxis
Shirley Grundy
New York: Falmer Press, 1988
—Reviewed by William Schubert, University of Illinois at Chicago.

Shirley Grundy offers an alternative to the objectives-based model of curriculum development by drawing on the philosophy of Jürgen Habermas in Germany and the action research of Lawrence Stenhouse in England. The author envisions curriculum development and self-supervision to be done by teachers. Grundy holds that curriculum is not a product but a form of praxis. Instead of one-way progress from ideas to dispositions to actions and outcomes, Grundy posits a dynamic interaction among these four dimensions of curriculum development. This interaction makes curriculum research and development part of teachers' daily work and reflection. Consequently, teachers are not mere conduits of implementation but students of their own lives and contributions.

Curriculum leaders, supervisors, and teachers should reflect seriously on the ideas in this book.

Available from Falmer Press, 100 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10019, for $22.95.

Strategies for Teachers: Teaching Content and Thinking Skills
Paul D. Eggen and Donald P. Kauchak


If I were preparing to teach an undergraduate methods course, Strategies for Teachers would be the text I'd use. From the first chapter, which relates information-processing models of instruction to the active learning research and the recent emphasis on thinking skills, to the concluding chapter, which details how to use their Interactive Model in a variety of content areas, the authors provide a substantive, clear, and thorough map for teaching thinking skills and content.

On second thought, I'd use it as a base text for any staff development program that aimed to give experienced teachers practical tools and precise information for helping all students become learners who think. And if not that, I'd make it a well-thumbed reference for my own teaching.

In the preface, the authors explain how they desired to make this second edition "one of the most up to date and conceptually sound teaching methods texts available today." Although there are some minor gaps, my sense is they have succeeded. This book was too long in coming. Don't pass it by.
