

Above all, we worked at helping children believe they were learners. By adjusting the number, pace, and difficulty of learning tasks for each child and making sure that everything we asked children to do had meaning and purpose, we laid a foundation of success that was both apparent and real.

During these two years of change, we have been more successful at attaining this last goal than the preceding ones. Not only do our goals require significant alterations in customary practices; but they demand more time, better planning, problem solving, and the most efficient use of money and personnel possible. Like most school staffs in today's economic environment, we are stretched pretty thin.

At present, a committee of teachers, administrators, specialists, and parents is refining our model to make it work better next year. Our classroom teachers need to become more adept at managing the larger range of students and resources they've been given, more aggressive about asserting their competence to teach all students, and more insistent about getting the help they need. Our specialists need to improve their skills as consultants and diminish their role as *the* teacher of handicapped students. Administrators need to become more proficient at securing human and material resources and directing them to the places where they are needed. Parents need to understand how special education in regular classrooms works and become a part of the team that is supporting their child.

Navigating the mainstream is difficult for all of us, adults and children, but there is no going back to the stagnant pond we left behind. □

Forms of Curriculum Inquiry

Edited by Edmund C. Short
Albany, New York:
State University of New York Press, 1991

Forms of Curriculum Inquiry is a well-titled book, useful principally for graduate students exploring methods of curriculum scholarship. This edited volume brings together an international cast of authors: each one describes a different way of asking and answering curriculum questions. Introductory and closing chapters by Edmund Short provide an important context for the 17 different "forms" of curriculum inquiry described in the volume.

Are there really 17 distinct forms of curriculum inquiry? Short himself cautions that the forms represented in the book (including, for example, conceptual analysis, ampliative criticism, and inquiry that is historical, ethnographic, aesthetic, narrative, hermeneutic, or action-oriented) are not necessarily the only ones available or even the preferred ones. They are illustrative of the ways curriculum scholars work and the problems curriculum scholars work with — a first step toward defining a schema for curriculum inquiry. What is most important about the volume is that it should help readers recognize the necessity of multiple forms of inquiry if the range of worthwhile curriculum questions are to be adequately addressed. It also provides initial clues about how to match method of curriculum scholarship with the specific question one wants to study.

The chapters describing particular forms of curriculum inquiry describe their purposes and procedures as well as their strengths and weaknesses. Each chapter also provides a helpful bibliography for readers interested in serious work with a particular method.

Available from State University of New York Press, State University Plaza, Albany, NY 12246, for \$19.95 (paper) or \$59.50 (hard cover).

— Reviewed by Lauren Sosniak, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri.

The Enlightened Eye: Qualitative Inquiry and the Enhancement of Educational Practice

Elliot W. Eisner
New York:
Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991

Just as Picasso took a yellow spot and made it into a sun, Elliot Eisner takes a manuscript and makes it into an educational planet. *The Enlightened Eye*, though at times a litany of educational gurus and their theories, remains both fascinating and illuminating as it presents the world of human beings teaching and invites us to expand our epistemological and critical approaches to teaching. Seldom do we find in our curriculum library a book so erudite, so expressive, so sensitive, replete with literary and artistic excerpts and metaphors that are both exemplary of the author's focus and striking in their effect on the reader.

Eisner describes in detail the role "qualitative inquiry" plays in generating consciousness of what and how we are teaching or learning and shows us why the most sophisticated practitioners and critics may be called connoisseurs.

Since schools rarely encourage teachers to reflect about education, this work, heavy as it is, can be the fuel for curricular discussion prior to the process of school improvement.

Available from Macmillan Publishing Co., 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022, for \$37.

— Reviewed by Jonathan Swift, Livonia Public School, Livonia, Michigan.

Inconsistent Politics

Diane Ravitch rails against the thought of public schools abandoning "their historic mission as the common schools of the nation" ("A Culture in Common," December 1991).

She also writes that schools have an obligation to "serve as a bulwark against ethnic chauvinism and to counter the forces of social fragmentation."

I strongly agree with her, but find it curious that she works for an administration that is using its best efforts to destroy public education and the common school by relentlessly advocating vouchers and privatization. Obviously Ravitch has learned that continued employment at DOE depends on an implacable ability to overlook the most blatant inconsistencies in Federal doctrine.

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Which Lessons from Europe?

Thomas Kellaghan and George Madaus caution us against the movement to a national test ("National Testing: Lessons for America from Europe," November 1991). Having recently visited schools in seven European nations as part of my doctoral work, I was surprised to see the European example cited as the road to avoid.

In an elementary school in Hard, Austria, where 95 percent of students were expected to go to vocational high schools, we watched 5th graders perform a play in flawless English.

In a vocational high school in Italy, we inspected curriculum more challenging than that used by many American college-prep schools. This school

had plush carpet, expensive vases on antique stands, and fancy art. Compare this to my own district, where the superintendent has asked a local bank to store two relatively expensive paintings in its vault for safety.

Students in all the schools we visited were working on material one to two years more difficult than is being studied by American students the same age. Language study was most impressive. Vocational students master two to three languages; college-prep students master three to five.

Perhaps the European custom of national and regional testing has had no positive impact on the quality of their schools, but it certainly has not hurt them any.

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Paralyzing Consequences of Low Prestige

Dr. Goodlad is correct ("Why We Need a Complete Redesign of Education," November 1991). Teacher education programs do lack prestige at universities. Far more serious, however, is the fact that at the public school level, the lack of prestige associated with our profession has nearly paralyzing consequences. As a result of the perception that public school teachers work few hours, are out of touch with new knowledge, and in need of administrators, professors, or politicians to get them through the day, a number of curious "solutions" have evolved. In some states rigid continuing education requirements for teachers imply teachers cannot learn on their own; a longer school day/year has been proposed; the Hunter model of instruction has come down from the mountain; the political establishment has proposed a quick fix by promoting

new, improved "teacher tests." To make matters worse, the media "cover" education on slow news days.

Because of the way public education is perceived, lasting school improvements are impossible. Consider all the wonderful science curriculum projects and successful new math and reading programs that have been shoved in a closet due to a shortage of taxpayer-voted or legislature-appropriated funds. No shortage of talent exists at any level in the educational delivery system, but a shortage of money and public confidence in the educational delivery system overrides them.

Perhaps there is a lesson in public relations that we might borrow from those in the health care profession. Physicians, dentists, nurses, and other medical practitioners always identify themselves by appropriate title and consistently remind the public of their qualifications and education. Contrast this with education where first names are used at seminars and conferences.

A lack of public awareness of the education of teachers leads to the devaluation of their efforts and social contributions and to diminished financial support and prestige. If we as educators do not publicly acknowledge our own qualifications, how can we expect the public to do it?

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Teacher Training Not "Debilitating"

John Goodlad should not point an accusing finger at all schools and at all teacher training programs.

Many coherent, nurturing professional programs produce concerned, dedicated, and informed teachers. I am a product of such a quality program, and I teach in a school where the administrators and teachers have a

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