

**BOOK REVIEWS – BUCHBESPRECHUNGEN –
ANALYSES BIBLIOGRAPHIQUES**

LIEBERMAN, A. ed. 1990. *Schools as Collaborative Cultures: Creating the Future Now*. New York: The Falmer Press, 261 pp.

The book edited by Ann Lieberman for the series *School Development and the Management of Change* is portrayed by the series editors as “a collection of ‘essays’ from a brace of the best commentators American education can offer”. As the title of the book itself and the content of several, if not all, articles suggests, the context within which schools operate and within which they create their own cultures is crucially important. Thus, a full appreciation of the viewpoints and arguments that various authors make presupposes substantial prior knowledge of the American political, social and educational scene. Similarly, the authors’ conclusions and caveats cannot be quoted as generalizations that automatically apply in other contexts and cultures. In spite of these inescapable limitations, the collection deserves careful reading also by educators and policy-makers outside America.

The first part of the book is entitled “Understanding What We Value”. A common – either explicit or implicit – theme underlying all the articles is rejection of the bureaucratic, control-oriented view of organizing and managing schools and the whole educational system. Thus David L. Clark and Judith M. Meloy argue for the need to establish a democratic structure for leadership in schools, in which control and freedom as well as the organization and the individual are given equal consideration.

Linda Darling-Hammond argues that a bureaucratic model of teaching is inadequate and that teaching should be transformed into a genuine client-oriented and knowledge-based profession. This, in turn, means that high standards must be set for teacher education and induction; conditions must be created for responsible practice and professional development; teacher isolation should be broken; a greater share in decision-making must be guaranteed; and accountability must be ensured. Seymour Sarason urges schools of education to learn from the history of education and to have better first-hand knowledge of schools.

The second part of the book is entitled “Examining Critical Issues of Fundamental Change”. Larry Cuban claims that basic ways of schooling children have not changed much in spite of reform rhetoric and activity. Cuban suggests that there are two types of reform, first-order and second-order change. First-order changes aim at factors that directly influence how efficiently and effectively schools are operated (e.g., recruiting better teachers, improving methods of teaching and evaluating). Second-order changes seek to alter more fundamental ways in which schools are organized: What are the goals of proposed changes? What blocks the changes within and outside the schools? How do organizational structures help or hinder the proposed changes?

Susan J. Rosenholtz cites data from the minimal competency testing and the career ladders schemes to illustrate how policy interventions can affect teachers’ academic

success with students, teachers' sense of efficacy and their commitment to the reforms. Rosenholtz cautions against eager anticipations concerning the improvement of the quality of education. Policy changes and interventions need to have a strong and compelling rationale. The research community has an important role to play in providing solid information, accurate analysis and sound recommendations.

Gary Sykes addresses the question of incentives and rewards in teaching. There is a tendency to think of incentives in too simplistic terms as directives with rewards attached to them. One typical approach is prescriptive: legislating better teaching and requiring external accountability. This is based on the view that there are modal and systemic tendencies which characterize teaching as an occupation. The alternative perspective stresses the awareness of the variety that exists among teachers and educational settings and the need to have a variety of rewards and incentives. Sykes concludes that the interplay of incentives, motivation and behavior is complex, and therefore there are no simple ways to improve teaching through the manipulation of incentives. Recent research literature offers, however, some promising leads.

Terrence E. Deal draws the reader's attention to the role that myth and symbol have to play in changes. Cultural changes do not always and uniformly imply improvement (as Cuban also suggests) but they also typically create significant individual and collective loss. Heavy emphasis on rationality underplays the importance of rituals, symbols, stories and ceremonies.

The third part of the book is entitled "Changing the Roles, Relationships and the Culture of Schools". Ann Lieberman and Lynne Miller open the discussion by exploring the notions of rhythms, rules, interactions and feelings of teachers in their daily work with students. The discussion is based on their analysis of the nature of teaching, which leads to 'social system understandings': teaching is an interplay between individual teacher experiences and the social context of schools. Some of these understandings see teaching as personalized style and as art, with teaching rewards being derived from students, goals being vague and conflicting, knowledge base being weak, and professional support being largely lacking. All of this means that teachers are best viewed as craftspeople and teaching as a craft learned on the job.

Judith Warren Little explores the possibilities and limits of collegiality between teachers. Research by Little and others shows that collegial relations between teachers are rare. Collegiality can lead to increased genuine talk about teaching (rather than just "war talk"), to shared planning and preparation, to training together and training each other, and to classroom observation. But collegiality is also relatively fragile. Without support and recognition at all levels of the educational hierarchy collegial relations can unravel in a matter of weeks.

Gary A. Griffin stresses the role and function of school-level administrators in promoting educational reform. Teachers should increasingly be seen as classroom executives (a notion suggested by David Berliner and echoed by Schlechty in a subsequent article). Educational reforms can be successful only if principals provide the necessary context. The professional preparation of principals needs reorganization so that it transcends the present narrow managerial approach and helps principals to become experts in curriculum development. Then schools could increasingly be places where everyone learns: students, teachers and administrators alike.

Milbrey Wallin McLaughlin and David D. Marsh discuss staff development and school change. They draw, in particular, on the extensive and nationwide Rand Change Agent Study carried out in 1974-1978. The study revealed several necessary conditions for implementing desired change in schools. These included institutional motivation, project implementation strategies, institutional leadership and teacher characteristics and learning opportunities for professionals. It also suggested that universities ought to implement significant changes themselves if they want to be effective partners in school district staff development.

Phillip D. Schlechty draws some analogies between businesses and schools. Teachers are to be empowered as classroom executives, and students are to be seen as knowledge workers since schools are places where children are expected to work on, with and for knowledge. The principal's role, then, is to be the leader of instruction, working with other partners in the educational enterprise. Schlechty concludes that with a clear vision educators are in a position to invent what happens. That thought ties nicely with the subtitle of the book: *Creating the Future Now*.

In spite of the context and culture-dependence of all education and the consequent caution needed in extrapolating and generalizing from one context (country, culture) to another, there is no doubt that anyone who is interested in or concerned about the planning and implementation of educational reforms will find this collection of articles very informative and thought-provoking. There is some overlap, as is almost inescapable in a collection of related papers, but in this case it is not so much a question of overlap as of complementary perspectives. The book contains a magnitude of significant and important findings that represent a promising basis for future research. It also contains many well-argued recommendations for educators. The fact that the articles are written in a clear and succinct style adds to the impression that the book can be highly recommended to a wide audience: teachers, teacher-educators and persons involved in educational administration and policy-making.

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MAKAU, B.M. 1990. *Computers in Kenya's Secondary Schools: Case Study of an Innovation in Education*. Ottawa: IDRC, 233 pp.

During the 1980s, computers were introduced into schools on a large scale in most developed countries. Research studies show that they represent a very complex and costly innovation which is beset with problems and only very gradually implemented. Although for developing countries the cost aspect constitutes a major impediment to introducing computers in schools, the quality of education in developing countries might be improved as a result of using computers as tools in the instructional process.

The report contains a description of the results of the Computers in Education project in Kenya (CEPAK), which started with a pilot phase in one school (1983-1986) and an expansion phase in five more schools (1986-1989). These schools (varying in size between 440 and 630 students) were equipped with five Apple IIe 128-K computers, peripherals (disk drives, printers, mice and joysticks) and software (subject-specific, programming languages, applications, graphics, etc.). The project was evaluated by means of case studies (observations and interviews, examination of school records) and surveys among students and teachers in order to "(1) decipher and record the extent of changes, associated with the introduction of the technology, which occurred in the teaching-learning transaction and the management of the school; (2) study the cost implications of the innovation", and was expected to yield generalizations as to the possibilities of replicating the innovation on a larger scale and suggestions for improvement of education in Kenya even if computers could not be introduced on a large scale.

The results which are reported reflect that the project had to work under a number of serious constraints such as lack of hardware (see above), problems with hardware maintenance, lack of relevant software (most software was imported,