

In this book it is critical to distinguish clearly between recitation and individualized instructional activities. Here, the author fails a little because the reader must piece together sentences from a number of different places in order to obtain a clear definition of these two concepts. In a broad sense, recitation "is usually characterized by full class participation, one member at a time, a single topic and task, and teacher control over topic and pupil participation." "By contrast, individualized instruction atomizes the work activity and often involves substantial pupil choice over the topic and method of completion." (p. 10)

Even with this definition, it is not absolutely clear how Bossert classified the classroom activities into the two categories. He recognizes this problem in Chapter 2 and explains his position by arguing that others (Flanders, etc.) who have used standardized methods of classifying interaction patterns have often failed to obtain meaningful information because they were too inflexible. That is, they set up their categories before exploring the classrooms in order to determine what was taking place. Bossert, on the other hand, entered the classrooms and then decided on the type of classification system he would use once he obtained information on what was taking place. Even then his classification system remained relatively flexible in order to obtain as much meaningful information as possible.

As a result, this type of analysis takes us away from the psychological model of classroom interaction which generally suffers from the assumption that teacher personality or expectations are the primary determinants of classroom behavior and that classroom structure can be characterized as a system of exchanges between a single teacher and different pupils. The psychological model often ignores the collective properties of classrooms and instruction and how these may determine teacher-pupil and peer relations.

We must commend Steve Bossert for examining some of these issues. Now we need more research on related issues and research within schools with different social and structural characteristics—perhaps lower SES schools and open area schools would be two worthy extensions of the present study. More importantly, we need teachers and prospective teachers to become increasingly aware (and concerned) about the manner in which they structure their classroom activities and how this structure has dramatic effects upon their pupils. Through such concerns the education of children cannot help but be improved.

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Educational Futures: Anticipations by the Next Generation of Canadian Scholars.

Kas Mazurek, ed., *Educational Futures: Anticipations by the Next Generation of Canadian Scholars*. Butterworths, 1979, Pp. 269.

Educational Futures is a collection of fifteen essays by sixteen authors, one of the essays being jointly authored. The essays, although perforce grouped under five sub-headings, are so wide ranging in content that it must be seriously doubted whether being published in their present form can be justified. We are told that the authors belong to that group called (or that they constitute it) the "next generation of Canadian scholars." The purpose here is not to question their scholarship but rather to examine whether the essays warrant being published, at least in their present form.

The five headings indicate the essays are on, respectively, cultural identity, politics and education, education and social consciousness, practical and curriculum issues, and school and community issues. But as has been already said, none of the essays within any of these topic areas addresses itself to anything like the same subject matter, except perhaps the first two essays.

Editors usually, if not always, garner essays or previously published articles into book form in such a fashion that the essays/articles all materially relate to a particular *topic*, not because of what fifteen or sixteen authors happen to be thinking at a given time. If one does, however, have a consuming interest in what is currently occupying the academic and scholarly energies of a group of education students, then of course, the book is worth its cost at any price. On the other hand, *Educational Futures* may serve to acquaint, say, first year education students with wide ranging concerns and issues that seem to be generally accepted as legitimately within the province of education.

For example, if the book was used as a first year text the student might learn that professionalism "serves *only* (my italics) as an artificial status barrier between teachers and other groups" and that "teachers are state workers" not professionals (p.111). Students then can move on to read a discussion of art and perhaps learn of "the truth of the sea" (p. 128). Perhaps it is a trifle unfair to juxtapose these quotations; nevertheless they represent the extreme

diversity of content and emphasis found in this book of readings. But for an introductory course that may be a desirable feature.

On the positive side, the essays are well written. Each author's viewpoints and discussion are, taken at their face value, generally clear, to the point, and unambiguous. Professor Bhattacharya's introduction is particularly worth reading. The immense compass of the issues raised by him could easily and usefully occupy a class or a graduate seminar for a full term. Possibly because of my own biases three of the essays particularly recommended themselves to me. They were "Rethinking Multiculturalism," K. Mazurek; "Competency in Writing," S. Warter; and "Education Counselling and the Crises in Personality Psychology," C. Violato. K. Mazurek argues cogently against popularized multiculturalism in education, S. Warters lucidly puts the case for intervening in the student's psychological process of communicating through writing rather than merely correcting errors already made, and C. Violato clearly sets out (mostly for educational psychologists) weaknesses attaching to the predictive value for student achievement of current personality theories.

The other essays are not without their value. With the extreme diversity in content and emphasis there is probably something for everyone.

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The Politics of Curriculum Change

Tony Becher and Stuart Maclure, *The Politics of Curriculum Change*, London: Hutchinson, 1978, Pp. 192.

Politics as a study deals with the exercise of power. Over the past fifteen years, the number of disparate groups attempting to gain some control over the curriculum has increased dramatically. This is as true in Canada as it is in Britain. So a new dimension of educational research has opened up. Spurred by controversial papers collected in *Knowledge and Control* (1971) by Michael Young, researchers have investigated the forces which influence curriculum decisions. Writers such as Ivan Illich and Edgar Friedenberg have stimulated the public debate. Studies of the curriculum have thus acquired a political dimension.

Given the current climate of controversy, *The Politics of Curriculum Change* is an arresting title. It promises insights into the forces behind new movements: programmed self-instruction, work-oriented programmes, recurrent education, competency testing. Alas, book titles now tend to be chosen primarily for their market value. In fact politics is not the central concern of Tony Becher and Stuart Maclure, the authors of *The Politics of Curriculum Change*. As they themselves state, the book is "an attempt to sort out the variety of materials which make up the present patchwork of curriculum development." (p. 9) Many of these materials do relate to issues of power and its exercise, and the connections are discussed. But the authors concentrate on describing curriculum changes in terms of their educational significance and effectiveness.

Does any theme unify the "patchwork"? Certainly the very broad political issue of where control over curriculum development should be located is threaded through the discussions. Yet as the momentum of argument for decentralization builds, the authors more and more overtly express their preference for centralized control. Let us trace the steps by which Becher and Maclure are propelled into contradiction.

The bias in favour of centralized control over the curriculum by elected officials intrudes subtly in the definitions set forth in Chapter 1. We are advised that a public curriculum is "those aspects of the curriculum which embody an education system's shared assumptions, however formulated, about the main things which pupils should and do learn at school." (p. 16) Implicit is the belief that in a democracy one should, indeed must have a public curriculum as opposed to a private one. The curriculum must represent a consensus of opinion, and specify what pupils are to do in school. In brief, there must be a significant degree of centralized curriculum control and development.

Now it is just this centralized control which Britain seems to lack but a variety of European countries, whose educational systems are described in Chapter 2, to varying degrees have. In particular, Sweden is admired by the authors; it has a centrally determined curriculum which embodies social values in harmony with those of other state institutions. (A telling quotation from one rather disillusioned researcher (p. 24), notes that in this system the only really radical innovations originate at the school level.)

Yet the view that centralized systems are necessarily superior to decentralized ones in ensuring uniformity is a thesis on which the discussion of Britain's approach casts doubt. For in Chapter 3, "Patterns of Control", Becher and Maclure demonstrate that academic standards and a degree of curriculum coherence are maintained in Britain through such groups as examination boards, government inspectors and the Schools Council. But the control systems are rather fragmented. The bureaucrat who yearns for a tidy system with detailed specifications of tasks