

this book, I have taken up their geography of knowledge – to understand the "borders," "landscapes," and "crossings" behind prison walls. I believe, though, that the authors should seriously explore the critical possibilities that these new forms of representation imply for the interrogations of place, knowledge and identity, and authority. Reading the politics of location and identity formation across theories (critical theory, post-colonialist theory, cultural studies, feminist theory) would extend their valuable work by deciphering the locations of both the personal and social formation of knowledge and identity. I find for example, that I am anxious to treat Sara's story of her classroom as an example of how critical public spheres might appear in practice: as a place where everyone is free to "agree, disagree, argue, debate, question, dream and wonder" (p. 52). Questions arise then, around how administrative practices destroy the possibly critical, dialogic, pedagogic space that she has managed to create. Giroux's book *Border Crossings* (1992), is an example of how we can use the spatial metaphors offered by post-colonial and postmodern theory to interrogate the cultural, epistemological, racial, and gendered "borders" which are constituted, consigned, and contested by individuals and groups. Truly, there are different places on the landscape. Some places however, offer a better view.

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Egan, Kieran. (1999). [With Foreword by Elliot Eisner]. *Children's Minds, Talking Rabbits and Clockwork Oranges: Essays on Education*. London, ON: The Althouse Press. (Softcover), 200 pp.

Those who are familiar with Kieran Egan's writing will find nothing new in this volume but its great value lies in the bringing together of eleven major papers previously published in a range of different journals and conference collections over the past 20 years. The earliest (chapter 5) was originally published in 1978 and the most recent (chapter 6) first appeared in 1997. However,

as the juxtaposition of these two indicate, chronological order is of little significance. For, as Egan himself admits, with his customary humour and self-effacement, when he first sat down to select from an assumed hundred or so articles written over a professional lifetime he found – as I suspect we all would find – that, in fact, he had actually written, "about 5 articles 20 times each, or perhaps 10 articles 10 times each" (p. xiii). It is this, together with thoughtful editing, which gives cohesion to this collection and makes it easy and satisfying to read as a continuous text.

The book falls neatly into the three sections suggested by the imaginative title. The first four essays are concerned with children's minds and how they work. Here Egan acknowledges his debt to Margaret Donaldson's long-term influence upon him but the examples, illustrations and the structuring of the arguments are all his own.

The talking rabbits' designation (which was initially to have been "middle class talking rabbits") holds together chapters 5 through 8 and refers I assume, among others, to those of us who are no longer children but "rabbit on" about features of childhood thinking in our professional theorizing and research, often failing to examine our presuppositions.

"Clockwork Oranges" is borrowed explicitly from Anthony Burgess's book title and is used here to cover three articles which investigate in educational *praxis* Burgess's own theme of the confusion which arises when we treat organic things as though they were mechanical. Significantly the third of these chapters and the grand finale to the book looks specifically at Educational Research within this context.

What makes Egan's writing so distinctive in our contemporary world is that he has resisted all pressures to conform and become a specialist. Education is holistic or it is nothing. It is not of itself an academic discipline like physics or psychology although many pretend that it is for reasons of professional respectability. Its proper function is to be holistic; it has to do with the whole life of individuals and of communities as seen from the perspective of learning to live that life. And because it has to do with life and living it cannot be other than a process: it is never static.

Egan's perspective is of this whole. It might be argued that he sits on Cloud Nine but at least the view from there is so much

better than is that of those who burrow like myopic moles into narrow tunnels of analytical specialities without awareness either of the whole scenario or, even more importantly, of the fact that process can never be static and consequently never exact. The final chapter of this collection dealing with "The Analytic and the Arbitrary in Educational Research" was greeted by three of my own research students with sighs of recognition and relief in the face of their mandatory "Educational research methodology course" frustrations. Egan's arguments gave them permission to find an alternative story to that of the empirical sciences especially when focusing on the affective.

Story, of course, is Egan's prime analogy and we are all captives of one analogy or another. As he himself remarks (p. 153), "We use analogies to think with: it is not so easy to think about what we think with." But of stories there is no end. Many still live with the assumption that they are necessary for young children but that education entails replacing them with propositions – as they break off to watch their favourite soap opera or to engage in the latest staff-room gossip.

By contrast Egan has long argued that finding the story line is the key to holding in balance the subjective and the objective, the action and the intention, the inner and the outer, the student and the syllabus. It is also the way to teaching that is effective by being affective, by acknowledging that we learn through the emotions as much as through the intellect, and that we learn most effectively when both are employed simultaneously. His example of teaching what is so often regarded as an arid subject, namely punctuation, through the story of its evolution is quite superb (see pp. 53-54).

The integrity of these writings is that their author is what he proclaims. "Socialising," he argues, (p. 116) "aims to make people more alike: educating aims to make people more distinct." Egan's work is distinctive: he has not been "professionally" socialized into that part of the Educational fraternity which so often confuses concepts with images, talks regularly of development as if it was synonymous with improvement (it meant, of course, "to reveal what is there" the opposite of "envelop," until economists got hold of it), and specializes in fragmenting the whole on the assumption that a pile of bricks constitutes a wall. He remains an educated person and he can write with a style that communicates

and evokes emotion as well as intellect and itself possesses both rhythm and poetry.

If this review appears more eulogistic than critical then all I can plead is that Egan's approach is nowhere more needed than in the centralized state system of England, where teacher training has been reduced to lists of competencies by order of a centralized Government Teacher Training Agency which openly and explicitly promotes the notion that teaching can and should be an exact science and that enclosed with its 1999-2001 Corporate Plan an endorsed essay which includes the statement, "there is a quaint old fashioned and ultimately damaging British view that teaching is an art, not an applied science." It goes on to call for more political intervention in teaching methods.

'Egan – England hath need of thee. She is a fen of stagnant waters.' I feel it is a subversive act to place this book in the university library and I have enthusiastically done so.

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Neilsen, Allan R. (Ed.). (1999). *Daily Meaning: Counternarratives of Teachers' Work*. Mill Bay, BC: Bendall Books Educational Publishers. (Softcover). 197 pp.

In her novel, *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley creates a mystical morality tale about what happens when we dare to transgress the limits of knowledge, the accepted boundaries between human self and other, between what has been socially and scientifically established as typical and atypical. The nameless creation of Victor Frankenstein embodies the transgression, blurring the boundaries between, and constituting a hybrid of human and non-human characteristics. Here, Shelley is playing out the problem of identity construction in the arena of transgression.

It is this relationship between identity and transgression that seems central to *Daily Meaning: Counternarratives of Teachers' Work*. Teachers tell stories of their struggles to live outside the