

The last section contains two papers both of which synthesize, in very different ways, the main themes to emerge from the book. Runkel discusses the need to promote and maintain diversity. Using a biological analogy, he argues that variety is the best insurance against inflexibility and offers five suggestions for improving the adaptability of schools as they attempt to respond to societal change. What remains implicit in Runkel's argument is that schools have somehow improved if they respond flexibly and adapt to changes in the external environment. By contrast, Wideen and Andrews identify four themes, namely the needs for: increased awareness, active support and facilitation, understanding the complexities of the process, and diversity. The implications of each theme for the classroom, the teacher, the school, and the supporting agencies are discussed in terms of current practice, possible alternatives, and plans for action.

Despite some shortcomings, this volume has earned a place in the literature on educational change. For those who have not read widely in the field of school improvement or effectiveness, the book provides a limited but useful introduction to some of the pertinent issues. For those who are better acquainted with the literature, the book contains enough content variety and ideational diversity to stimulate discussion not only among academic colleagues but also between academicians and practitioners. There is enough merit in the book to make reading it worthwhile.

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Sherman, Robert R. (Ed.), *Understanding History of Education*. Second Edition. Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Company, 1984, 200 pp., \$11.95 U.S. (paperback).

In a new Preface to the second edition of *Understanding History of Education*, editor Robert R. Sherman points out with some truth that "the study of the history of education has been pursued in the past, usually by observing the historical study of education done by others and by memorizing the content" (p.vii). His belief is that "history of education becomes meaningful to the extent that some of it is done by oneself" (p.vii). Hence, this collection of essays which attempts to introduce to students the techniques and methods of the study of history in order that they may then pursue their own original research in the more specific area of history of education and at the same time achieve an understanding of the importance of the history of education in their professional preparation. This is a tall order by any standards and is probably unattainable in a single book or indeed in a single course of lectures. However, the shortcomings of the collection extend beyond simply a failure to achieve too broadly-based a goal. The shortcomings stem from Sherman's entire approach to and understanding of the topic.

I have no argument with Sherman's attempt to set the study of history of education firmly within the broader discipline of history. Nor do I disagree with his belief that students should understand what is involved in "doing" history. But, having accepted these points, I have two major arguments with his approach. The first may be termed a practical objection and deals with the difficulty of moving from a broad study of historical method to the narrower study of educational history without some specific knowledge of the latter. The second involves a basic disagreement with Sherman's own concept of the nature of historiography in relation to the history of education. Let me deal with each of the points in more detail.

Sherman is not explicit about the type of student for whom the book is intended. Some mention is made of the importance of the study of education for "teachers" but on the whole the impression is that the book is directed to those who are involved in pre-service programs. The majority of these will be neophytes not only to the study of history but also to the study and practice of education. To introduce such students to a wide-ranging collection of essays on various methods of historical writing and then expect them to understand, let alone write, history of education, is unrealistic. Of the twenty-two essays in the collection only one, and that one the very last in the book, actually deals with education in an historic context. I would strongly argue that the beginning student of educational history needs not only to know how to set about understanding and writing history, he also needs to be acquainted with what has happened in the past in relation to education. This does not necessarily imply the memorization of vast numbers of facts or a sole reliance on what has already been written. But the student, if he is to make any sense of, or be able to interpret the information which his own

research brings to light, must be able to set those facts into a context of past developments. He must be aware of what "education" at a given time and place in the past actually meant to those who provided it and to those who experienced it. Without at least a basic knowledge of this nature Sherman's suggestion that each student "identify an interest in education, research it historically and teach about it in [a] class" (p. 126) of his peers will almost certainly result in the uncertainty that Sherman mentions. Worse still, it will likely result in something that is not history.

My second criticism is based on Sherman's understanding of the term "historiography," or perhaps I should say lack of understanding. Historiography is more than just "the study of how history is done and what is involved in doing it" (p. vii). It is also the history of how history has been done in the past and how and why this has changed over time. Sherman pays lip service to this change but his approach is basically ahistorical. He notes in his introduction to Chapter 3, "The Nature and Value of History," that change has occurred; he could hardly have chosen two better examples to illustrate change than Carl Becker's 1931 Presidential Address to the American Historical Association and Howard Zim's 1970 article on radical history. But he omits any comment on why such change has taken place or on its significance in relation to the study of history.

To further compound the omission, this new edition is introduced by Sol Cohen's *The History of the History of American Education 1900-1976: The Uses of the Past*. This article goes some way towards documenting and suggesting reasons for the changes that have taken place in the writing of American educational history in this century. But Sherman dismisses its significance with the glib comment "It should be useful to note where it [the history of education] has been and where it may be going (p. 1)". Apparently, as far as Sherman is concerned, any point of view at any point of time in the past is simply another "perspective" and all are equally valid in the present. In other words, one does not need to use historical method when dealing with past writings on the history of education — only when dealing with historical facts themselves. To my mind, this is a gross and unforgivable error on the part of any historian. However, perhaps it explains the inclusion of several thirty-, forty- or even fifty-year-old essays and numerous suggestions for the further reading of a similar vintage without any editorial or historiographic comment by Sherman. Age alone does not necessarily diminish the value or validity of a piece of historical writing but it may well add a different significance. To omit any comment on this point in a book which purports to teach historical method is a serious weakness.

One final comment must be made. Revisions of publications are sometimes made more with the interests of the publisher than those of the reader in mind. But in this case Sherman assures us that the purpose of a second edition is to bring the book up-to-date. Why then the lack of up-to-date material? Of the new additions in the revised edition, the most recent (with the exception of Sherman's own contribution in Chapter 4) was published in 1979. More than half predate the publication date of the first edition. Likewise the extensive lists of suggested further readings contain only a handful of recent titles.

Understanding History of Education, then, does not live up to the promise of its title; it offers little enlightenment on the problems of writing history, less still on the history of education.

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Slavin, Robert E. *Cooperative Learning*. New York: Longman Inc., 1983, ix + 147 pp., \$39.50.

Robert Slavin's purpose in writing *Cooperative Learning* was to describe the status of cooperative learning research. He accomplishes this goal by first establishing selection criteria and then grouping the investigations into four categories: academic achievement, intergroup relations, mainstreaming of academically handicapped students, and other non-cognitive outcomes. He devotes a chapter to each of these research topics. Along the way, Slavin defines important concepts and briefly describes cooperative learning methods. He concludes by summarizing the major findings of research and by suggesting directions for future investigations.