

1998

Gough, A. (1997). Education and the Environment. Policy, Trends and the Problems of Marginalisation. Melbourne: The Australian Council for Research Ltd, 204 pages.

Geoff Lumis
Edith Cowan University

Recommended Citation

Lumis, G. (1998). Gough, A. (1997). Education and the Environment. Policy, Trends and the Problems of Marginalisation. Melbourne: The Australian Council for Research Ltd, 204 pages.. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 23(1).
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.1998v23n1.7>

This Book Review is posted at Research Online.
<http://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte/vol23/iss1/7>

BOOK REVIEWS

Cunningham, George K. (1998).

Assessment in the classroom: Constructing and interpreting tests. London: Falmer Press. vii + 225 pages.

The techniques of constructing tests is the central focus of this book. Conventional assessment items such as multiple choice (Chapter 4), short answer and essay format questions (Chapter 5) are compared and contrasted. Extensive examples are included throughout the text to indicate how to implement the various test items. The advantages and disadvantages of each item type is examined.

This book is designed to be a practical guide to test planning and construction and the interpretation of test results. It also provides educators with important fundamental information about assessment and measurement. While in one chapter (Chapter 2) it gives clear and precise advice on the technical aspects of measurement, including descriptive statistics, standard scores, reliability and validity, other chapters consider test planning (Chapter 3), grading techniques (Chapter 7), standardized testing (Chapter 8), and the ethics of student assessment (Chapter 9).

The chapter on alternative assessments, such as performance assessment, authentic and portfolios, is a highly valuable chapter in a book designed in the first instance for

"teacher preparation courses that are not primarily devoted to classroom assessment" (p. vii). Without the inclusion of this chapter (Chapter 6) the book could be judged merely as a mundane educational assessment textbook with little to offer readers apart from the basic principles of test construction.

Twenty two pages of appendices which include formulae, tables and figures add weight to the quality of the book and ensure that it can also be used in "teacher preparation classes that have assessment as their major focus" (p. vii).

In recent years measurement and assessment have increased in importance in the professional lives of teachers and educators. This book is recommended for both "teacher preparation courses that are not primarily devoted to classroom assessment", but for which "assessment is an important topic,, and for "teacher preparation classes that have assessment as their major focus" (p. vii). It is cleverly constructed and clearly written so that it can be readily adapted for both purposes.

John R. Godfrey

Edith Cowan University

L.D. and D.P. Newton (1998). *Coordinating science across the primary school*, London: The Falmer Press, 121 pages.

Lynn Newton is a senior lecturer in education and course leader for a new undergraduate degree for primary science specialist teachers and coordinators at the University of Durham. Douglas Newton is a reader in education at the University of Newcastle, with a interest in science, technology and mathematics. Both authors are experienced primary science educators.

This publication is a handbook designed specifically for British primary teachers who have been given the responsibility to coordinate science in their school. The handbook serves the policy interests of the National Curriculum objectives in science education. Many of the examples refer to very specific British policy, educational administration culture and a particular professional experience. The publication is deliberately written in an interesting jargon free style with the stated intention that this style will include a much wider range of primary teachers uninitiated in science education. This notion also accommodates teachers who may have been given the task of coordinating their school's primary science programme, but have a limited prior knowledge in science themselves. The style of language and content infers a very limited knowledge of material centred science and the constructivist learning theory.

This handbook introduces two aspects of the accountability role of a science coordinator:

Coordination as liaison role
accommodating; communicating;
'harmonising'; bring together, making links;
establishing routines and common practice;
and

Subject leadership in the form of: providing information; offering expertise; direction; subject development; and evaluating standards.

The handbook is divided into five sections and fifteen short chapters.

The role of the science coordinator, is divided into four chapters:

The role of the science coordinator;

Your own development as a science coordinator;

Working with others; and

Contributing to school effectiveness.

What science coordinators need to know, is divided into four chapters

Interpreting the national curriculum;

Interpreting experimental and investigative science;

Interpreting life processes and living things, materials and physical processes;

Science and the whole curriculum.

Whole school policies and schemes of work, includes two chapters:

Developing the school policy for science;
and
Policy into practice.

Monitoring for quality, represents three chapters:

Monitoring and evaluating the science curriculum;
Monitoring and evaluating science teaching; and
Monitoring and evaluating science.

Resources for learning and support, being the final two chapters:

Managing resources; and
Information and resources for science coordinators.

The introduction of the publication cites quotations from the Chair of the Association for Science Education (1986). References are also made to domestic issues being confronted, prior to the establishment of the National Curriculum for Science. For example:

Bringing about change in the educational world is rarely easy. Well established and familiar practices die hard; our system is complex and it is not often that we are able to bring the necessary resources to bear. These are all very good reasons for standing

still or at best moving forward very slowly. There are, however, some imperatives for change which, despite the inertia of the system, refuse to give up.

(Nellist, 1986, p. 2 cited in L. D. and D. P. Newton, 1998, p. 1)

The Office for Standards in Education or OFSTED

(1995a, p. 17) is cited describing the recent growth in primary science in England and Wales and the need to maintain standards. The policy rhetoric is specific to those who have an interest in the interpretation of this area of government policy regarding accountability in science education. Key statements from Her Majesty's Inspectorate reinforce the sense of a government determined to ensure specific policy outcomes are achieved. Throughout the publication there is a strong indication that there is little room for individual interpretation of what primary science could be outside of the particular order of defined policy. It is a directive on 'how' to become totally accountable in a narrow realm of science curriculum policy.

This tone of accountability becomes central to the publication's intention. It is therefore a less than gentle reminder of how coercive a educational culture can become, if education is assumed to be totally instrumental as a tool of social

reproduction. The practical steps offered to support science learning are rather superficial, offering little interest to the established science educators appreciative of more open systems or assuming fundamental professional capabilities of teacher as people. For example:

Many teachers enter the teaching profession because it allows them to build relationships with and help others, particularly children. Being a coordinator extends that dimension to include greater professional interaction with adults. ...as the science coordinator, you will need to work with a number of different colleagues in different ways. (p. 30)

The early chapters provide a extended list of checks and audit formats. The notion of audit, is also extended into the researching the extent of a colleague's knowledge and experiential background. This type of probing has to be questioned, as it assumes an a lack of confidence in the professional capabilities of the other primary teachers. For example:

A more objective approach is to carry out an audit of staff skills and expertise in science. This will give you a more accurate picture of their strengths and needs, allow you and the head teacher, to plan an appropriate staff development programme. (p. 360)

Chapter Three endeavours to provide mechanisms which are tactics to politely persuade the sensitive ,other' to engage in a willing spirit to teach science. There are list of tips for providing a successful in-servicing for reluctant colleagues. Audits of non school resource people are also suggested, such as the RSPCA, local vet and fire brigade.

Chapter Four further carries the momentum of the audit notion as it introduces the notion performance indicators, league tables and accountability requirements of OFSTED inspectors. This top down preoccupation reinforces the need for 'the authority' to receive extra reinforcement. Policy development and review is continually emphasised and a detailed chart on how the National Curriculum must be honoured is included. Particular advice is directed to the preparation of a school for inspection. A safe ten point check list is offered so that minimal errors and maximum accountability can be achieved. Throughout the publication the learning processes takes a secondary position as by-product of accountability.

In Chapter Five the discussion is centred around the Education Reform Act of 1988 and also the National Curriculum Order for Science. Some very basic pedagogical assumptions about children are introduced

to complete the chapter framework for a non specialist teacher the processes of science, and the discovering approach is introduced with some examples of how to show teachers how working scientifically is achieved. The examples included provide a basic outline for primary science to 'update' teacher skills.

The pedagogical content is introductory, with science as a process and product being reinforced as well as the importance of prior experience. For example:

Children do not come to a classroom with empty heads. They have many ideas about science topics and these have been developing from a very early age. (p. 66)

Chapters Seven revisits basic concepts pertaining to interpreting life process and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. These topics reinforce many of the universal strands in contemporary science education programmes. Again the tone of the outline approaches a teaching community of re-establishing a basic awareness of scientific knowledge and its development with children.

The latter chapters are devoted to developing issues like school policy for science and again check lists are provided teachers to reinforce accountability. Discussion is also directed to demonstrate a

'step by step' approach to place policy into practice. The interactive learning approach is introduced with the aid of an expanded chart. Monitoring and evaluation of the science curriculum becomes a whole chapter focus and this leads into another two on evaluating science teaching and science learning. The final chapters covering managing resources and information and resources for science, provides a useful background reading for teachers and people interested in staff development workshops. A most useful collection of Science teachers' associations are enclosed and these would prove most valuable for contacts outside the United Kingdom. A list of British suppliers are also provided with addresses, telephones and facsimile numbers.

This publication is designed to support the needs of National Curriculum policies appropriate to England and Wales. The tacit assumption from this handbook suggests that teachers are poorly prepared to coordinate or teach primary science. The handbook offers extensive guides to ensure 'step by step' survival in a 'top down' driven educational context, by reinforcing an authoritative approach to the organising a primary science programme. In terms of pedagogy, there are many other publications that offer a wider range of

creative syllabus presentations for both elementary and primary science.

The value of this publication to the international educator, lies in the particular insight and appreciation of an administration that demands strict adherence towards its National Curriculum policy. The publication characterises the means by which government policy and inspectorate processes have influenced the re-shaping of the professional leadership character and role of the teacher, and the teacher coordinator in primary school science.

Geoff Lummis

Edith Cowan University

Gough, A. (1997). *Education and the Environment. Policy, Trends and the Problems of Marginalisation*. Melbourne: The Australian Council for Research Ltd, 204 pages.

Annette Gough teaches science and environmental education in the Faculty of Education at Deakin University. She has worked on environmental education policy and curriculum development in the formal education sector for over twenty years.

This publication, developed from Gough's (1988/94) doctoral dissertation, represents a most comprehensive review of environmental education in Australian and related international forums. Gough's book

is the first major work on environmental education to be published in Australia since the late Russell Linke's (1980) *Environmental Education in Australia*. Linke's comprehensive work dates back to his research survey in 1973/4, and has provided the foundation for the initial development of environmental education as an area of national curriculum action by the Curriculum Development Centre. Gough extends the historical significance of Linke's work on environmental education.

Gough carefully traces the emergence of environmental education in the late 1960's and the early 1970's from the international and Australian contexts. Her emphasis is on education rather than any instrumental relationship with the 'green' or 'environmental movement'. She analyses how society and science have helped mould what is generally in a popular sense appreciated and understood as 'environmental education'. The historical issues reach into the core of policy, trends and the important contextual problems of marginalisation. All contextualities are elaborated upon in essential detail and evolving discourses of relevant critical theory.

Gough offers the reader a broad appreciation of the emergence of environmental education as 'a history' of the field. The need to move towards

environmental education commences symbolically with the appropriate acknowledgment of Rachel Carson (1962). The scientific warnings about the ecological destruction of the planet through anthropocentric activity are reintroduced to the context of policy and international debate. Gough elaborates upon the early formation of the central associated issues, examining the processes that have moved towards international and national consensus. It is this background that positions the significance of her research as an imperative beyond the 1990's. The important notion of sustainability is also explored in context with the multiplicity of policy trends and marginalisation. Specific contemporary Australian policies on environmental education are carefully identified and explored. The national curriculum policies are outlined on a state by state basis. The vital theme of marginalisation is thoughtfully threaded throughout. The political scope and realities of the Australian process are examined in interesting depth.

Marginalisation as an outcome of discontinuity is explored with respect to the status of policy and curriculum development being negotiated in a time of political reactionism. Gough captures the problems of change, as an ongoing dilemma within the Australian educational

context. The pressures of maintaining a focus with shifting policy, is an issue that educationalists are all too familiar with today. The impact upon an already marginalised field such as environmental education, sees a most tentative existence in finding its appropriate place in mainstream curriculum. Issues of content versus process, are explored as important issues in the debate. The problematic of placing environmental education in the curriculum is also discussed. Issues of marginalisation through subject integration of as a 'part field' placement in either the sciences or social sciences is also examined.

Importantly, Gough links the educational relevance of the debate in total with both the 'environment' and epistemology. The 'social construction of reality' is expanded upon for the widest appreciation of the influence of cultural ideology as an defining process within power structures and its influence upon the field of environmental education.

Constructivism and learning is covered with the appropriation of the emerging political and cultural views of curriculum with knowledge. Gough explores the extent of alternative perspectives from 'Earth education', 'critical environmental education', 'deep ecology', 'technocentrism', and 'ecofeminism'. Important statements and clarifications are directed towards the

pedagogical significance of feminist insight and a socially critical feminist analysis of environmental education. Gough offers the challenge of alternative directions. The debate and irritations between 'deep ecology' and 'ecofeminism' are also profiled. Green politics, environmentalism and the issues of marginalisation are linked to the history of policy and trends. She describes a pedagogical frame work that is inclusive of feminists perspective such as Patti Lather (1991). Gough not only questions the domination of Anglo-American English speaking hegemony and the androcentric paradigms which have driven the agenda in environmental education to date, but also cites the transformational work of Carolyn Merchant (1996) on 'partnership ethics'. The citing of 'partnership ethics' as a guide towards a workable process and metaphor for change, positions the debate into the contemporary discourse and hints at 'rehabilitation' rather than a polemic extension.

Gough sets challenges for the future as ongoing discourses are elaborated upon at an inclusive level for all interested teachers and educators. The final coverage of Gough's work examines the possibilities of poststructuralist pedagogy for environmental education. There is a healthy sense of optimism in her closing chapter. A

sense of optimism that in no way understates the extent of what is a planetary crisis for both humanity and the life-world. Gough extends an encouraging appreciation of the directions established to accommodate the necessary praxis and the necessary ecological pedagogy as explained as 'environmental education'.

Gough's work reactivates the sense of a 'new praxis' "which recentres the environment from the periphery and positions it as an equal partner with human perspective". As Gough explains in her closing page:

Poststructural methodologies are destabilising, through their deconstructions of stories we have previously held to be true. Accepting that there is no one story is not easy, but once that leap is made then there is a freedom to explore the multiple stories, multiple subjectivities and multiple discourses that constitute our lives, and to explore other ways for addressing the issues of environmental education.

Annette Gough's significant work extends Russell Linke's foundation contribution, to complete the Australian setting in the field of 'environmental education' for the closure of the 1990's and far beyond 2000. This publication, like Russell Linke's (1980) Australian classic, will become essential reading.

Geoff Lummis

Edith Cowan University

O'Neill, J. (FA) (1997), *Teacher Appraisal in New Zealand - Beyond the Impossible Triangle*, Palmerston North, NZ, ERDC Press Massey University, 146 pp.

John O'Neill invites readers of his book to begin by examining the picture on the front cover where there is a reproduction of Escher's lithograph *Ascending and Descending*. For O'Neill, Escher's lithograph "captures perfectly the idiocy of the Ministry's model for teacher appraisal" in New Zealand.

On the rooftop of this building a number of identically dressed, anonymous figures are walking on a stairway, apparently with great purpose. However, on close examination, the figures are seen to be walking endlessly but going nowhere, neither up nor down. Now imagine the building is your school, and the figures are the teaching staff engaged in the formal appraisal procedures demanded by the Ministry, while, inside, the students are left unattended. As you do so, ask yourself whether formal teacher appraisal is really meant to be anything more than a device intended to secure teacher conformity and accountability, to their employers and to the wider community?

This sets the tone of what follows. The language of the Ministry of education in Wellington, according to O'Neill, is the language of management, in which the themes of contracts, targets, objectives, delivery, evaluation and accountability for performance "ooze from every sentence". O'Neill and most of the contributors to this book take the position that teachers are entitled, in terms of their professional appraisal, to considerably more than this. Ideologically, O'Neill and the contributors to this volume, challenge the New Zealand Ministry of Education's recently published document *Performance Management in Schools* (1996b), which followed rapidly from the publication of *The Draft National Guidelines for Performance Management* (1996a). Citing John Olson (1992), O'Neill points out that "teaching takes place in a communal world with shared meanings".

Most Australian readers are probably aware of the major changes that have been implemented in the New Zealand education system, starting with the publication of *Tomorrow's Schools* (Lange 1989) almost a decade ago. The transformation of the education system, along with the national economy, has led to a reconsideration of teacher appraisal in New Zealand. In early 1995 the Ministry of Education established a 'Development Group for Performance Management in Schools' and charged it

preparing draft guidelines for the introduction of performance management in all New Zealand schools. Amongst the twelve requirements of performance management for teachers in New Zealand schools are the following "expectations of performance for all staff must be documented at the start of the process... For classroom teachers a developmental objective, focussing on improving classroom performance, must be set... developmental assistance or support must be provided for each objective... an appraisal interview must be part of the process... an annual evaluation must document outcomes of the process against expectations of performance..."

This book is a challenge to such an approach to the evaluation of New Zealand teachers. In his Introduction O'Neill argues that an annual, formal appraisal round is not likely to secure the "critical self-analysis or collaborative working needed to promote teacher development and enhanced student learning". In the Ministry's model of teacher appraisal, he argues, teachers have a choice of whether to go up or down the stairway of Escher's 'impossible structure'. The model of teacher appraisal that is promoted in this book embraces teacher non-conformity, diversity and a range of alternative strategies. O'Neill and his contributors favour critical self-analysis and

collaborative styles of working in schools for both teacher development and the enhancement of student learning. Mollie Neville's chapter argues that performance appraisal and equity are a contradiction in terms. She points out that schools contain differing cultures, realities and discourses which are not accounted for in the simplicity of the Ministry of Education's model. She points out that "minorities construct their world and discourse differently from the dominant masculine, heterosexual, able-bodied culture". She further notes (pp. 84-85) that minorities have their own realities that differ from a model borrowed from business, and these realities are rich, varied and complex. However, in the teaching profession the irony is that the so-called minorities are often in a majority. White, male teachers are a minority in early childhood and primary education as noted by the Ministry of education (1996c). In secondary schools women are half the teaching force but only hold twenty-five percent of the principalships and only thirteen percent in co-educational schools. According to Neville "this makes the imposition of an alien masculine, market oriented culture through minority domination even more unacceptable. The result is that the majority are made outsiders in the teaching profession." Neville's powerful essay concludes:

'The Ministry's model for appraisal is deceptively simple. Its authors claim the model can be adapted, adjusted and made flexible for differing institutions. However, the whole concept of performance management as conceived in the documents is disturbingly silent on equity issues and by definition a method of controlling and limiting teachers rather than encouraging individuality and creativity.'

The eight chapters that comprise this slim volume are drawn from a mix of school principals and university lecturers, mostly from Massey University and schools in the region of that institution. O'Neill and his contributors succeed in bringing to public attention a major educational change in New Zealand but to be really useful more context is needed and more balance in the selection of papers to let the reader engage in a major policy debate. I would like to have read more about the background to the new policy of teacher appraisal and heard more from those who support its implementation. The first chapter by Graham Collins outlines the development and implementation issues of performance management, whilst most of the rest of the book provides readers with a variety of counter positions. In spite of this limitation, the contributors to this book focus on a very important issue for all teachers: appraisal in terms of a performance management model

versus a collaborative, collegial and collective approach within the profession.

REFERENCES

Lange, D. (1989) *Tomorrow's Schools*, Wellington, Government Printer. Ministry of Education (1996a) *Draft National Guidelines for Performance Management in Schools*, Wellington

Ministry of Education (1996b) *Performance Management in Schools*, Wellington

Ministry of Education (1996c) Women in the Teaching Service, *Education Trends Report*, Wellington, 8 (1) July

Olson, J. (1992) *Understanding Teaching: Beyond Expertise*, Buckingham, UK, Open University Press *Ken Stevens Memorial University of Newfoundland*

Freire, P. (1997) *Pedagogy of the Heart*, New York, Continuum, 141 pp., ISBN 0-8264-1039-1

Freire, P. (1998) *Teachers as Cultural Workers: Letters to Those Who Dare Teach*, Boulder, Westview Press, 100 pp., ISBN 0-8133-2304-5

Paulo Freire's work has become the subject of renewed interest following his untimely death in 1997. Best known, perhaps, for his programmes of adult literacy education in Brazil in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and for his classic book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972), Freire continued to

reflect upon, modify and extend many of his earlier ideas in later works. The two books under review here - *Pedagogy of the Heart* and *Teachers as Cultural Workers* - have both been published posthumously. With another volume (*Ideology Matters*, coauthored with Donaldo Macedo) currently in press, it is clear that in his last years Freire was extraordinarily productive as a writer and thinker. After resigning from his position as secretary of Education for the municipality of Sao Paulo in the early 1990s, Freire has returned to his books and, in the process, found the appropriate theoretical space to show a new side to his work.

These two books exhibit a similar style to *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1994) and *Letters to Cristina: Reflections on My Life and Work* (1996). In these last works, Freire adopts a highly personal, very readable style of writing, weaving autobiographical accounts with theoretical discussion. Enhanced accessibility to complex philosophical arguments and revealing insights into the man behind the myth are two advantages conferred by this stylistic transformation. The weaknesses of this approach are most evident in *Pedagogy of Hope*, where the somewhat rambling character of Freire's narrative might, for some, be seen as an impediment to

systematic study. This flaw is rectified, to a significant extent, in *Letters to Cristiria* (so named after a promise he made to his niece some years ago to set out his ideas and recollections in the form of a series of thematically linked letters), with a tighter structure and clearer delineation of major concepts and issues in evidence. *Pedagogy of the Heart* and *Teachers as Cultural Workers* combine elements of both of Freire's previous two books, the former perhaps being closer to *Pedagogy of Hope* in style and substance, the latter having much in common with *Letters to Cristina*.

Pedagogy of the Heart is true to its title. In this book Freire addresses some of the issues closest to his heart: the joys and difficulties of study and learning; the need for what he calls 'unity within diversity' among progressive groups on the left; the difficulties of exile; and, most of all, the enormous challenges facing contemporary Brazilian society. The need for hope in the face of corruption and adversity is a persistent theme in these pages, particularly toward the end of the book. Here Freire is at once both vulnerable and original. He discusses his faith, while admitting to feeling less than comfortable doing so, and urges his fellow Brazilians to continue the struggle for a less racist, sexist and classist world. For readers familiar with Freire's work, *Pedagogy of the Heart* will not

disappoint. While there are significant points of overlap with earlier books, a number of fresh observations on familiar topics emerge. Perceptive comments on Freire's politics can be found in both the Foreword (by Martin Carnoy) and the Preface (by Ladislau Dowbor), and Ana Maria Arujo Freire's notes provide helpful additional information on the Brazilian context, past and present.

This book gives evidence that when Freire died he was, at 75, at the height of his intellectual maturity: his style of writing in his last years was relaxed but not ill-disciplined, he was able to address political issues with conviction and clarity, and he was confronting new policy questions relating to the rise of neoliberalism in Brazil and elsewhere across the globe. He was prepared to defend his work against stiff criticism where he felt this was appropriate and warranted, but he also displayed an admirable willingness to reconsider old ideas. He was constantly curious, restless, and investigative in his work as a scholar, educationist and political figure. He was passionately committed to Brazil, yet brought to that commitment the wisdom gained from years of experience in other parts of the world.

Teachers as Cultural Workers is a book for educators - for all who have an interest in the processes of teaching and learning,

whether in the Third World or the First World, with adults or children. Freire notes in his Preface that the book was written over an intense two month period. This is consistent with a pattern established in earlier books (the first three chapters of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* were written in a matter of weeks). Freire defines his purpose in *Teachers as Cultural Workers* in these early comments:

My intention here is to demonstrate that the task of the teacher, who is also a learner, is both joyful and rigorous. It demands seriousness and scientific, physical, emotional, and affective preparation. It is a task that requires that those who commit themselves to teaching develop a certain love not only of others but also of the very process implied by teaching. It is impossible to teach without the courage to love, with the courage to try a thousand times before giving up. (p.3)

The book is structured around ten letters, housed between preliminary and concluding chapters, with the multifaceted process of teaching providing the pivotal reference point throughout. The themes addressed in this volume are of concern to many other teachers around the world. Freire critiques 'prepackaged' teacher education programmes, reinforcing his long held view that education can never be neutral, technocratic transfer of content

from one person to another. He emphasises the importance of contextualising education, and of recognising impediments (often generated by a radically unequal distribution of resources) to teaching and learning. Teaching, he argues, is more than 'coddling': it must challenge learners, encouraging them to be rigorous, serious, critical - even uncomfortable - in their search for knowledge. Reading, studying and writing, he maintains, are difficult but rewarding intellectual endeavours. Freire discusses the motivations for teaching, and identifies some of the practical problems teachers face on a day-to-day basis. The question of cultural identity is addressed at some length,

In *Teachers as Cultural Workers* educators at all levels will find the most detailed examination of teaching since the first of Freire's coauthored, dialogical books, *A Pedagogy for Liberation* (published in 1987 with Ira Shot). There is a strong focus on the 'day to day' activities of teachers in this volume. Freire offers his thoughts on how to approach the first day of teaching, how to deal with fear, how to enhance dialogue, and how to engender a critical and questioning (but respectful) atmosphere in the classroom. A detailed analysis of the proper role of discipline in the learning process is provided. Freire draws upon his own experience, and recites concrete

examples, in developing pedagogical principles. He tries to speak to all teachers (by addressing issues common to almost every teaching situation), without pretending to have all the 'answers' to classroom problems.

Some unfortunate typographical errors have found their way into both books.

In *Pedagogy of the Heart* these include a missing full stop on p. 24, 'a' instead of 'at' on p. 54, 'whe' instead of 'she' on p. 72, a missing word in the second paragraph on p. 86, and 'me' instead of 'we' on p. 96. In *Teachers as Cultural Worker*, 'my point' instead of 'our point' is used on p. xv of the Foreword. These are minor blemishes, but mistakes of this kind can interrupt the flow of an author's prose and detract from an otherwise professional presentation.

On more substantive matters, a number of theoretical weaknesses in Freire's work must be noted (in brief). First, while questions about 'power' and 'ideology' feature prominently in both books - and especially in *Pedagogy of the Heart* - these concepts are only superficially defined and elaborated. A theory of power - always hinted at but never fully developed in Freire's published writings - might have provided a robust platform on which to defend his continuing use of the universal categories of 'oppressed' and 'oppressor' in the face of mounting dissatisfaction with

such constructions from postmodern and poststructuralist thinkers. The new book on ideology (Freire and Macedo, 1998 in press) is eagerly awaited as a possible antidote to this criticism.

Second, and following from the first point, Freire is critical of postmodernism - or at least a certain variant of it - in *Pedagogy of the Heart*, but he is rather vague about his target. In books such as *A Pedagogy of Hope* he speaks approvingly of a certain postmodern attitude - a mode of openness commensurate with his view that one should never be too certain of one's certainties. It would be fair to say, however, that Freire never really caught up with much of what was being said under the banner of postmodernism. At least, this is the impression one gains from reading his work. This relates to a third problem with these books and other publications from recent years: Freire makes only limited explicit use of other theorist's writings. In avoiding filling his books with citations, footnotes, and lengthy bibliographies, Freire's work has a distinctively original flavour to it. This is refreshing in an age characterised by a frequent recycling of the old as if it were new. But Freire's approach has its difficulties. His later books are filled with insightful comments and searching questions. His writing can be thought-provoking and stimulating. Yet like all

written work it has its limits: additional citations might, at some points, have allowed the reader to see (with greater clarity than might otherwise be the case) how Freire had arrived at an idea and where one might go for further justification, discussion or debate.

Many teachers may have read, or heard about, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* but know little else about Freire's work. For serious scholars, engaging the full range of texts across Freire's publishing career of more than thirty years is essential. For those familiar with Freire's name but not his books the two volumes under review here would provide an excellent starting point for further reading. Freire provides a clear alternative to the dominant ideology of neoliberalism underpinning educational reform in many countries today. He develops and defends his ontological, ethical and epistemological position at greater length in earlier writings. These books extend some of the fundamental philosophical principles articulated in previous publications, but also address contemporary political and pedagogical problems. Freire's mind was arguably at its sharpest in the years immediately preceding his death. *Pedagogy of the Heart* and *Teachers as Cultural Workers* both show, if in somewhat different ways, where a rich lifetime of practical and theoretical work

had taken him and give some indication of where he might have gone had further years for reflecting, writing and struggling been granted.

REFERENCES

Freire, P. (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Hannondsworth, Penguin.

Freire, P. (1994) *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York, Continuum.

Freire, P. (1996) *Letters to Cristina: Reflections on my Life and Work*, London, Routledge.

Freire, P. and Macedo, D. (1998) *Ideology Matters*, Boulder, Rowman and Littlefield.

Freire, P. and Shor, I. (1987) *A Pedagogy for Liberation*, London, MacMillan.

Peter Roberts

University of Auckland