Introduction to Education Studies (3rd edn.)

Reviewed by MOIRA BAILEY

The authors of this text are practising academics, have extensive publication records and are well known in their field, and so have the credibility necessary for such a text. They state that they have set out to produce a text which provides a good grounding in the study of education, providing an overview of the subject as well as an introduction to essential and contemporary theory and discussions. These contemporary topics include globalisation, international education and education policy issues. Developing a student's ability to critique research is clearly another objective of this text.

I had not seen earlier editions of this book, and so am not aware of how the authors have developed their ideas since the first publication. However, following my reading of this edition, my opinion is that it does provide a good grounding for those new to educational studies. It covers all the areas I would have expected in a text of this nature. The authors discuss and compare education across the EU and worldwide. The chapter on politics and policy is contemporary and includes recent actions and initiatives of the present UK Government. The authors make a good attempt to encourage critique by the reader, through identified articles on the companion site, additional reading at the end of each chapter, and questions raised in the reflection boxes. They further encourage readers to adopt a critical perspective by identifying journal articles or reports which present alternative views.

In my opinion, the strengths of this text are many. First, it is very readable; the tone is engaging and encourages the reader to work through the whole text. Second, the fact that a companion website has been created to support the book is of particular significance. The website consists of a number of academic journal articles being identified, with hyperlinks to the article. For each of the identified articles there is a sentence which highlights the relevance of the article to the topic in question. I think this is particularly important as it encourages students to participate in wider reading than might otherwise be the case. The third strength of this text is the inclusion of reader reflection boxes, containing questions or topics for consideration, which can be used either by the student alone or as a basis for discussions at tutorials or student study-group meetings. Another strength is that each chapter presents a brief 'aim' of the chapter which clarifies what the authors intend to cover in the chapter and concludes with a summary of the chapter which will be extremely helpful for the student in terms of revision and preparation of theses or assessments. In addition, at the end of each chapter there is a list of suggested student activities designed to reinforce the learning within the chapter. Finally, a recommended reading list at the end of each chapter, identifying relevant additional reading on each of the topics, provides the student with a complete 'learning package'.

However, there may be an issue here. While I believe this approach will be seen as relevant and helpful for the reader, I feel it is appropriate to raise the question, 'Have the authors given so much in the way of resources that students will be discouraged from seeking out further material themselves?' If I have a slight reservation about this book, it is simply a question of whether a text such as this - effectively a self-contained learning package, with so much in the way of additional material - is working for, or against, the notion of student autonomy. Are we really encouraging readers to be dependent rather than independent learners?

Social capital, children and young people

Julie Allan and Ralph Catts (Eds.) (2012) Bristol: The Policy Press.
ISBN 978-1-84742-927-8 (pp. 233, £23.99, pb.)
Reviewed by DONALD GILLIES

This book springs from the Applied Educational Research Scheme (AERS), a £2m programme, backed by the Scottish Executive, which ran in Scotland from 2004-2009. The value and impact of the programme remain heavily contested but it may well be that some of the recent decline in government engagement with the educational research community in Scotland can be connected to the perceived failure of the AERS programme to achieve all that policymakers and funders desired. These expectations may well have been unrealistic, given the significant number of projects involved within what amounts to a modest headline budget, in those circumstances. For example, this book covers eight different research projects, some lasting for years, which were undertaken within but one of the three themes of the AERS programme. In those terms, one can well see that money came to be spread very thinly, which must have restricted the capacity of AERS to achieve its more aspirational goals.

It is also worth noting, however, the developments within educational research generally in the years immediately prior to the AERS scheme and throughout its existence. From the late 1990s a succession of highly critical interventions were made about the quality of educational research: some of those could be dismissed as the petulance of politicians such as David Blunkett, and fixated ideologues such as Chris Woodhead, who wanted, and expected, research evidence in education to be as convincing and unproblematic as that of the hard sciences. This 'what works' agenda has swept through the USA and still features heavily in the UK, particularly in England, where politicians continue to pine for some kind of secret recipe to emerge from research which will cure all of education's ills. However, criticism of the quality of educational research was found in academic circles too and a series of very damaging reports by such as Hargreaves (1996) and Tooley and Darby (1998) led to a considerable crisis of confidence within the sector. Thus the AERS programme was conceived partly in response to that challenge but was also based, as far as political funders were concerned, on the simplistic expectation that positivist, 'what works', outcomes would now be produced. Needless to say, that wish was chimerical and so, if AERS is deemed a 'failure' in this respect, it is only because political hopes were absurdly misplaced.

This book, therefore, represents an interesting artefact as a summary of the outcomes from the 'Schools and Social Capital' theme within AERS. The focus is both a strength and a weakness: on the one hand, the book is tightly coherent with all chapters reporting on empirical studies conducted within a social capital framework; on the other hand, the concept proves to be slippery and awkward and, only in very few of the research studies reported, illuminative or explanatory. In this sense, it comprises a very helpful addition to the social capital canon in that the limitations of the concept are evidenced and explored. This critical edge is also timely, given the proliferation of 'capitals' now stalking the educational world: Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) have concocted the idea of 'professional capital', for example, and many other forms have surfaced, including such as 'spiritual capital', 'intellectual capital', 'experiential capital', 'linguistic capital'. Such 'capitalism' too often amounts to a dispiriting, reductivist view of the human.

Where the concept does prove fruitful in the chapters of this book, it helps researchers understand how different individuals respond to different circumstances and how certain, well-connected individuals and groups can maximise returns from specific social situations. Chapter 5 on youth club connections, Chapter 9 on primary-secondary transitions, and Chapter 10 on independent schools are the ones where the concept appears to be at its most useful, whereas in many of the other chapters social capital does not seem to be an especially productive theoretical tool. Many of the authors acknowledge this and yet readers will still find these chapters interesting for their insights into educational practices.

Consideration of the research potential of social capital is picked up in the two commentary chapters by George MacBride and Rowena Arshad and in the introductory and concluding chapters by the book editors themselves.

There are two main issues in relation to the difficulty of finding social capital a useful concept in these studies. One is that the authors' framework is based on combining the work of Coleman, Putnam, and Bourdieu and, while this makes sense in relation to fusing the literature, it may obscure some of the fundamental theoretical tensions between these theorists. It is significant, for example, that the richer insights of Chapter 10 are related to a much more focused Bourdieuian approach which sees social capital as one of a number of capitals, and which also utilises his other concepts of habitus and field. In addition, while the editors stress that social capital is relational and exists in networks, at times in the book this idea slips and social capital is presented less helpfully as an individual possession. All of the chapters demonstrate that social capital is not transferable and so viewing it as a possession is unhelpful. For example, the fact that many P7 children in primary school have numerous beneficial social relationships in school, at home, and in the community may have little bearing on what they will experience in S1 at secondary. The fact that they operate effectively in primary school is no guarantee that the same will happen at secondary. Instead, new relationships need to be forged and the 'social capital' from primary school is no longer valid currency.

The second problem is with the concept itself. In recent times, it has been presented as a means by which certain disadvantaged groups can improve their situation; if they can increase their social capital then they can improve their situation. The weakness of this approach is amply demonstrated in Part I of this book which deals with inclusion. Few of the authors can offer much prospect of this being a successful strategy. In this regard, the book is helpful in differentiating consistently between bonding, binding, and linking capital, it being clear that linking capital is one most related to social mobility. However, as the authors of Chapter 10 point out, this is hugely dependent on other forms of capital, economic being the most salient. Indeed the authors of Chapter 8, Rowena Arshad and Susan Maclennan, bleakly conclude that 'social capital, no matter how strong, cannot address institutional, structural or societal disadvantage' (p.155). They do recognise its role in maintaining social hierarchies – as Chapter 10 confirms - and concede that as 'social glue' it may provide some hope in a fragmented world.

Thus, the publication does leave the reader feeling that 'social capital' is a far more problematic - and weaker - concept than some of its strongest advocates may recognise. Certainly, as Stelfox and Catts in Chapter 9 demonstrate, social relationships have a key role in the educational and personal success of children and young people, and so the development and maintenance of social capital is valuable, but the idea that enhanced social capital can, of itself, effect significant change seems implausible as many of the research projects reported in this publication highlight.

This is a well-produced book, at an accessible paperback price, which will be of interest and value to anyone researching children and young people in Scotland, and to anyone who wishes to explore further the role of social capital in empirical studies.

Self-esteem: a guide for teachers.

Reviewed by GEORGE HEAD

The first thing I noticed about this book (and completely appropriate for one on self-esteem) is that it speaks directly to the reader. Not that the tone is conversational, but that it is accessible and assimilable. Consequently, from the outset, the book deals with the complexity of the concept of self-esteem and the range of theories that surround it in an informative and engaging way. The title indicates that the book is written for practising teachers, the opening chapter indicates specifically primary school teachers , the authors extend the intended readership to include student teachers, and the tone and level of discussion are pitched exactly right for that audience. This is definitely not, however, a 'tips for teachers' publication, as the authors rightly claim.

Miller and Moran introduce their topic by contextualising it within what they see as a divide between pro- and anti- self-esteem lobbies, an argument that they seek to reconcile through theorising a two-dimensional model of personal evaluation that entails self-worth ('I am a good person') and self-competence ('I am able to do this'). In particular, they question the often held assumption on the part of self-esteem advocates that improved self-esteem leads to better academic results. Equally, Miller and Moran acknowledge the counter argument, that focussing on self-esteem detracts time and effort from developing cognitive attributes, resulting in an over emphasis on feeling at the expense of doing, which is, therefore, counter- productive in terms of academic attainment. Instead, the authors argue that there is a reciprocal relationship between the affective and cognitive; that success in a specific academic domain will enhance self-esteem and that enhanced self-concept will contribute to improved performance. But that is to over-simplify the argument which the authors treat in considerable depth in the opening four chapters.

The second half of the book shifts to considerations of how enhancing self-esteem might be nurtured in classrooms and those readers who already engage in pupil affective development will find themselves in more familiar territory here. The classroom techniques introduced in chapter 5 are posited on a belief in enhancing self-esteem through promoting success in facing new challenges. The principles are exemplified via six strategies, ranging from differentiation to game-based learning. Each of these strategies is considered in turn, with useful examples and activities suggested where appropriate. In a book of this size, there is never enough room for the authors to include everything that they might wish and, for this reviewer, each of the strategies is worthy of more extensive treatment, perhaps even a chapter on their own. In particular the authors argue for 'effective' differentiation and an exploration of what entails effectiveness (and by implication ineffectiveness) might have been helpful for the intended readership. Similarly, the sections on gaming and ipsative assessment introduce concepts that are significant for the theoretical position argued earlier and developed later and, although persuasive, left this reader wanting more and could be expanded considerably. Perhaps these could form the subject matter of a further publication, which, at the hands of these authors, this reviewer would welcome.

In the remaining chapters, Miller and Moran tackle issues of mindsets, self-worth and pedagogy. Essentially, these chapters relate to the relationships and identities created in classrooms through teacher and pupil interactions, culminating in their chapter on 'living according to good principles'. In these chapters, the authors explore how teachers' values and beliefs regarding young people and how they learn impact on the decisions they make with respect to their teaching and the experiences they wish to provide for the children with whom they work. These chapters constitute a rich and important opportunity for teachers and student teachers to engage with self-esteem, especially the two-dimensional model, at a highly conceptual level in which they are invited to explore the theoretical and practical

positions offered earlier, and to consider how they might contribute both to their own development as teachers and to the cognitive and affective experiences of their pupils.

Miller and Moran are not psychologists, philosophers or sociologists, nor do they pretend to be. They are teacher educators and this book is firmly rooted in that context; that is, they do not seek to add to the psychological, philosophical or sociological debates but to draw on them in order to generate understanding and insight into them for teachers.

The chapters are prefaced by a boxed summary of key ideas that the reader will find helpful in orientating themselves around the content. Similarly, the schemata, figures, exercises and thinking points which conclude chapters are useful additions to generate clarity and understanding for readers. Overall, I found this an enjoyable and informative read and would recommend it to teachers and student teachers.

Children's Services: Working Together

Malcolm Hill, George Head, Andrew Lockyer, Barbara Reid and Raymond Taylor (Eds.) (2012). Harlow, Essex: Pearson.
ISBN: ISBN-10: 1408237253 (pp. 416, £25.99, pb.)
Reviewed by LISA McAULIFFE

Collaboration between professionals from different agencies has been highlighted as a priority in many recent initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for children, including *Every Child Matters* in England and *Getting it Right for Every Child* in Scotland. *Children's Services: Working Together* provides a comprehensive overview of the opportunities such collaboration offers professionals from different agencies, along with evidence-based suggestions on how to overcome some of the challenges that may arise in the process of crossing boundaries and joining forces.

The overarching aim of the book is to bring together insights from research and practice relating to children's services and to the partnerships that help deliver these services more effectively and efficiently. The topics covered are diverse, including an account of the emergence of children's commissioners and some of the work that they have done to ensure that children's rights are respected; an examination of children's social networks and of the role of professionals in strengthening existing positive connections and facilitating new ones; a discussion of joint working at the point of transition to adulthood for young people with learning disabilities; and an exploration of how inter-professional collaboration can improve the health of children who are looked-after by the local authority. The policy context is predominantly British, but the research evidence cited in support comes from around the world, while a chapter on relevant European developments provides valuable wider perspectives.

The book is very readable and well organised. It is divided into four parts, each bringing together a set of perspectives relating to an important dimension of the topic. The first part covers policy and organisational issues, including children's rights and experiences of services. The second part considers the contexts where inter-professional working takes place, such as children's centres and extended schools. The third part highlights theoretical and research insights that can be used to enhance inter-professional practice, e.g. insights arising from attachment theory and research on resilience. The fourth part explores some of the factors that promote successful inter-professional collaboration, such as shared vision, strong leadership, clarity about roles and procedures, and some of the barriers that may stand in the way, including concerns about confidentiality, organisational autonomy, and the sharing of resources.

The introduction to each part is very effective in highlighting the key issues covered in the chapters contained in that part, while teasing out important questions which the chapters attempt to answer. Each chapter is punctuated by examples which illustrate points made, and exercises which encourage readers to reflect on issues raised and to consider their

relevance for their specific field. For example, the reflections of a teacher in charge of a support base, which are shared in the chapter entitled 'Working together for better learning', illustrate how action taken to improve the attendance of case review meetings led to more effective collaboration with professionals from other services. Later on in the same chapter, readers are asked to reflect on what may act as a barrier to effective collaboration in their own professional setting and to consider how the identified obstacles can be overcome in light of the concept of 'less bounded' inter-agency working, which is explored in the chapter. The concluding section of each chapter includes implications for policy and practice, and suggestions for future research that may provide further insights into specific aspects of the topic. All the references are listed at the end of the book, but each chapter concludes with a short list of extension materials, with a brief annotation for each. These recommendations serve as an excellent starting point to further reading for readers interested in acquiring more in-depth knowledge of particular topics.

Professionals working with children are caught in the flux of rapid changes in the way children's services are planned, managed and delivered. It is crucial for them to be able to respond to these changes in ways that meet the needs of children effectively and efficiently. *Children's Services: Working Together* contains a wealth of ideas that can help with this task. It is a very valuable learning and reference tool and will appeal to a wide audience, including practitioners, researchers and students who want insight into the intricacies of children's services and the processes whereby inter-professional working can maximise the positive contribution these services can make to the development and wellbeing of children.

Primary Professional Studies (Second Edition)

Alice Hansen (Ed.) (2012) London: SAGE
ISBN: 978-0-85725-959-2 (pp.264, £ 21.99, pb.)
Reviewed by SUSAN McWHIRR

Primary Professional Studies is part of the 'Transforming Primary QTS' series. It takes a holistic approach to the development of what it refers to throughout as trainee teachers. The central themes of the text focus on personal values, research-informed teaching and personal professional development. The book is structured in 4 sections: the Curriculum, the Developing Child, the Developing Teacher and Teaching Skills. Each chapter is preceded by a set of specific learning outcomes and clearly linked to the 2012 (English) Teacher's Standards.

The introduction to the text emphasises the complex nature of the Primary School Teacher's role and establishes the importance of the trainee teacher's characteristics in shaping their own teacher education and practice. The argument is that learning to teach is not simply a technical process centred on competencies and the delivery of a 'prescribed curriculum' but also a personal journey centred on values, lifelong learning through reflection and research-based practice. Thus, from the outset, this text sets out an impressive manifesto.

The first section of the book takes a historical view of curriculum development, from the creation of the Welfare State through to the present day debate regarding curriculum reform. This section provides a comprehensive overview of curriculum design, underpinned with learning theory and research findings. In addition, case studies are used to illustrate practice, and activities have been included to encourage readers to engage with the planning format illustrated.

The next section, 'The Developing Child', includes a summary of main learning theories which, although fairly superficial, will act as a useful outline chapter for students and trainee teachers. The following chapters on inclusion, transition and progression discuss some of the many ethical considerations involved in teaching young children, and start to explore the relationship between personal, professional and societal values in the teaching profession.

Each chapter ends with a series of 'Learning Outcomes Review' questions, which enable readers to check knowledge and understanding, before referring to the suggested further reading.

A particular strength of this publication can be found in the third section which centres on the developing teacher. This part of the book reviews the legal, professional and ethical responsibilities of the teaching profession, but has a clear emphasis on personal responsibility. The emphasis here is on trainee teachers to establish a teaching 'identity' or philosophy which underpins their professionalism and practice; this is a valuable feature. On the other hand, the coverage of topics such as 'safeguarding children' are perhaps too scant, given the importance of the subject content; whilst additional links to Department for Education and Skills publications are included, it would be a concern that these were not pursued.

The final section of this textbook is about teaching skills, in particular assessment, planning and managing classroom behaviour. The topics for this section have been well chosen by those who clearly understand the anxieties of trainee teachers. This section offers more practical support for the trainee teacher and includes a variety of planning and assessment formats and a section on National Testing. Whilst this text is of English origin, and more suited to those training and teaching in the English school system, this is the only aspect which is specifically England-centric.

The final topic, 'Managing Behaviour for Learning', focuses on the underlying reasons for children's behaviour and offers advice on classroom management in relation to lesson planning and the learning environment. What it does not do is offer strategies for managing more challenging behaviour and, as such, the book concludes with a noble but slightly idealistic vision of 'embracing the variety of human nature'. The practical utility of this sentiment to trainee teachers is not quite clear.

Despite some minor reservations, this second edition of Primary Professional Studies is a useful textbook for students and trainee teachers. It is, however, unlikely to be of significance to the experienced teacher. Although the scope of the textbook is wide, thus resulting in the fairly shallow treatment of some topic areas, readers will be able to use this text as a springboard to the other resources listed and, therefore, to deeper learning. There is value in this textbook for early career teachers working all over the UK despite the emphasis on the English system. For the most part, the authors, all experienced teacher educators, have clearly understood the experience of student and trainee teachers and produced a book which underlines the importance of teacher values, research-based practice and continuous professional development.

Silence in Schools

Reviewed by GRAEME NIXON

This book is timely. Mindfulness, Meditation, Stilling and Pausing are increasingly prevalent in schools and Lees offers both a range of evidence for this, and importantly a lexicon by which we can distinguish the various forms that silence can take in schools. She argues cogently for the currency and appetite for silence, skilfully referring to social theory as well as case studies in schools to argue that there is a pressing need, in such a stimulating (some would say toxic) social climate for childhood, to have some form of pause or silence.

Lees helpfully provides terms such as weak and strong silence to differentiate repressive, coercive forms of silence, from positive, democratic and planned manifestations of silence. In her distinction between 'techniqued' and 'technique-less' forms of silence she also distinguish approaches such as mindfulness and meditation from less structured and less planned forms of silence.

Lees provides evidence that silence is an effective means by which learning can be democratised as a means "for children to appreciate their own natural inner resources in a world of mainly media-driven externalising tendencies of the self" (xiii). Silence is presented as a subversive and radical pedagogical approach that subverts education which has privileged binary, linear thinking and a certain form of cognitive performance. For Lees, silence counters the instrumentalist culture. Silence provides an intimate freedom; a seed bed for original thought, and a means to develop respect for others with whom we publicly are silent; developing an empathetic awareness of the internal experiences of others vis-à-vis a more intimate knowledge of our own.

This book argues that government policy encourages loquaciousness and successful contributions in education, perhaps precluding the child who wants to elect to be silent. More broadly there is a cultural climate where noise is privileged over silence, particularly evident in the perpetual audience of social media. Perhaps Lees is correct in stating that in a social climate where children are continually forced to consider how they exist in the minds of others there is a need for them to rest in their own experiences. In this Lees echoes the work of Susan Cain, who has argued that there is a tyranny of group work and social collaboration in education that ignores the right to individual counsel and silence. Perhaps it is not only introverts that are sidelined by education, but the very possibility of introspection and space for creative engagement with ourselves.

Lees argues that silence has 3 powers. It allows pupils and teachers to:

1. Escape from binary thinking and develop more creativity;
2. Democratise schools, personalising the learning and developing more respect for others;
3. 'Re-incarnate' themselves within their own experience

Lees also argues that it enhances pedagogy. Teachers become more adaptive and spontaneous; they are challenged to move away from linear, product-fixated education. Lees posits that silence can revolutionise not just schools, but challenge unhelpful binary and prejudicial thinking. Silence encourages children and teachers to become students of themselves. This perhaps offers a powerful means by which schools can develop genuine (rather than tokenistic) metacognition.

In the first half of the book Lees supplements her broad analysis with a series of interviews with teachers who have introduced silence into their teaching. What emerges from the presentation of the data is that silence nurtures spaciousness; enables rational autonomy; dissolves dichotomous thinking; develops trust, respect and sensitivity; heightens powers of observation and attention; develops clarity of thought, and leads to academic benefits. The interviewees provide powerful testimony for silence.

However, perhaps there are some important caveats for the reader to bear in mind. All 4 schools where the interviewees work are private or free of the national curriculum. One gets the sense, unfortunately, that silence occurs in ultra-liberal, faith-based or private education. This may be down to the lack of mainstream evidence for the use of silence. Lees claims that school leadership and ethos, as well as a certain philosophical commitment (religious or profane) is vital to the successful introduction of silence. This may be indeed be the case, but perhaps more could have been said about the fact that this can be introduced in both secular and faith education. Some readers may also feel that there is a tension between her claim that silence develops rational autonomy in children, and the fact that it is often introduced in a school with a prior commitment to a philosophical or theological stance. For example, it is perhaps strange to argue for autonomy for pupils if they are told they have an immortal and pure nature as is the case in one of the interviewees' schools.

A further question is about the ethics of introducing silence to children. Though Lees asserts that there is no "danger" there may be a number of possible risks in doing so. For example, introducing practices from mindfulness-based cognitive therapy may be problematic for certain vulnerable children. Silence used thus can actually provide room for rumination, self-attacking, and a seed bed for low mood. There is also a need for any

teacher considering using 'techniqued' silence approaches to properly understand the aims, for example, of mindfulness. Telling children to try to silence their thoughts can be counter-productive (as well as simply impossible), leading to a sense of failure and low self-esteem. This is, of course, an incorrect application of mindfulness which is essentially the acceptance of thought as it arises rather than some attempt to subjugate it.

These concerns apart, Lees' emphasis on technique-less silence approaches towards the end of the book offers an approach that chimes with educational theory about the need for some form of pause in schools, and with psychological thought about the need for humans to have space to distil information and experience in order to become more skilful in a range of circumstances. For any teacher considering using silence in their schools this book provides powerful testimony for doing so, and for academics involved in developing thinking skills in education this is an excellent review of an approach that may be at the tipping point in terms of popular application.