

they should know how to make learning more efficient for the poor. Ethnography and education philosophy surely constitute a useful background. But they cannot substitute for knowledge of scientific research relevant to literacy, statistical concepts, and practice in rigorous weighing of evidence. The methodological orientation of the book suggests that adult education curricula in some universities could benefit from significant updating.

Helen Abadzi
Education for All Fast Track Initiative. World Bank
Washington, DC, USA

Ora Kwo (ed.): *Teachers as Learners: Critical Discourse on Challenges and Opportunities*. Comparative Education Research Centre, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong/Springer, Dordrecht, 2008, 349 pp., ISBN 978-962-8093-55-7.

It was a surprise to find that reading and writing a critique of a book about a profession in which I spent 42 years was not as easy as I had first envisioned. I have much experience with the subject, having participated in mentoring programmes in numerous school systems, supported the inclusion of special needs in the regular classroom setting, responded to the influx of students from around the globe as second-language learners, experienced a school system that had segregated schools until the Supreme Court ordered the bussing of students to create a more just society, and supervised beginning teachers who themselves were going to school to continue their learning. With this background, reading this book took a while and was a source of pleasure, stimulation and thought. I found myself reading it slowly, immersing myself in each chapter, and applying my own experiences to the topics at hand.

Of particular interest to beginning teachers and schools of education will be the breadth and timeliness of the topics and the wide geographical reach of the submissions. The foci include teaching about Indigenous Forms of Knowledge in New Zealand, understanding Korean Children's Dialogue Journals, examining teaching as a "lived practice" in Singapore, and using an inquiry stance to study the research surrounding teacher learning in the United States. Other chapters focus on continuing professional development through mentoring to create a community of lifelong learners, critiquing policy that sets professional standards in Victoria, Australia, and challenging the market-based approach to professional standards and test-based teaching outcomes in the United States.

The book is an outgrowth of a meeting in Hong Kong of the World Assembly of the International Council on Education for Teaching (ICET). The result is a thorough and thoughtful examination of the role of the teacher as both a source of knowledge and a person who is in the process of learning. The chapters are grouped under the headings: Research Stances on Learning and Teaching; Initial Teacher Education; Continuing Professional Development; and Policy Concerns for the Teaching Profession. The groupings work well, with the chapters intertwining and the topics blending nicely.

It is clear from the chapters written by Ora Kwo that she is keenly aware of her responsibility as a teacher of teachers. Her focus is on the formative stage of teacher

learning with the hope that teachers will be inspired to continue to learn as they go about their daily tasks of conforming to the policies that run a school day. A mentor once suggested that “educators (of teachers) should not see themselves as holding any responsibility for teachers’ choices in their classroom”. Dr. Kwo accepted that fact, but grew to understand that she was responsible for what she knew about the theory and the practice of teaching and thus needed to teach her students in such a way as to communicate that integration between theory and practice. As this book makes eminently clear, the best teachers see themselves as both teachers and learners, and the more one learns, the better one teaches.

In the first section, Cohran-Smith and Demers argue cogently that understanding the complexities of teaching and learning demands an inquiry stance. What we learn from teachers, pupils, and teacher educators should constitute the foundation of student–teacher curriculum in schools of education. Learning is to be seen as an activity before, during, and after official college preparatory classes for teachers. Schools of education must continue to examine their courses to identify what constitutes the makings of a good teacher. At the time of this review, schools of education in the United States are being challenged by school systems that readily hire novice teachers from Teach for America, by-passing the traditional philosophy of education approach to preparing teachers to teach.

Many sound ideas are presented in the chapter entitled *Telling Stories: Understanding Teachers’ Identity in a Context of Curriculum Innovation*. The authors argue convincingly, using evidence from China, that teachers can understand much about teaching and learning by using stories about daily experiences, and can learn a lot about themselves and their teaching effectiveness in the process. It was late in my teaching career that I began to keep a detailed notebook chronicling my daily interaction in the classroom; but I learned so much about teaching—what to do and what not to do—at every gathering of teachers where stories were shared.

The practice of an interactive notebook is common in many classrooms in the United States, so teachers would have a lot to learn from, and with which to identify, in the chapter on *Understanding Korean Children’s L2 Dialogue Journals*. The idea underscored in this chapter is that learning takes place not only in the context of practice but also through the special bond of trust and intimacy that such journals produce. The final chapter in this section, *Teaching about Indigenous Forms of Knowledge: Insights from Non-Indigenous Teachers of Visual Arts Education in New Zealand*, is especially insightful given the pressure placed on the teaching profession to mirror, as closely as possible, the students taught. Moving indigenous people to the ranks of teachers and administrators, and assuring that the teaching profession in any given country or area reflects the pupils at the desks remains a challenge and is a moral responsibility of the profession.

The second section takes a practical approach to the art of the profession. The chapter on the use of videos of exemplary teaching in pre-service teacher education underscores the importance of allowing novice teachers to observe master teachers deliver their lessons and even, at times, struggle in difficult situations. What better place than a classroom of novice teachers to reflect on what they saw and how they think they may have acted in a similar situation? Alex Moore’s chapter on *Working*

and Learning under Pressure focuses on the evolution of teaching methods as the teacher gains experience and expertise. Class size and the disposition of students play a role in determining teacher success, but it is up to the teacher to tap into any weakness and make learning happen. This is more difficult than it may first appear because teachers need to accept the idea that learning must take place even if the students before them are disinterested and lacking in skills.

Ora Kwo's own enlightenment about the art and meaning of teaching comes through in her chapter in this section entitled From Students' Evaluation of Teaching (SET) to Students-and-Teacher Evaluation of Learning-and-Teaching (STELT). Kwo was evidently willing to put aside a conventional teacher control of the curriculum and allow students to take charge of their learning. This switching, or more accurately sharing, of roles can be risky for everyone involved, and especially for students who probably came through a system where the teacher was seen as the dispenser of all knowledge and the students the receptacles. Students who see themselves in that way are shaken by the transition, but this is a necessary shake-up if teachers are going to succeed with media-driven, multi-tasking students. The best teachers are ones who have had great teachers who were willing to experiment and take risks with the method of delivery and the curriculum itself.

Lily Orland-Barak's chapter, *Lost in Translation: Mentors Learning to Participate in Competing Discourses of Practice*, heads the third section of the book. The chapter highlights the tension of language since teachers have professional and personal selves that often can be in conflict as the teachers learn the language of teaching and mentoring. Also in this section is a chapter on mentoring by Gorinski, Fraser and Ayo that examines the ambiguity of the mentoring role. Where is the balance in mentors helping to support and evaluating their mentees? The language used by a mentor can be stressful to the mentee, who may be burdened by the policies of the school or who may lack confidence.

Learning to share in the governance of a school is the focus of the chapter by Aeillo and Watson. What one can conclude from this thoughtful examination of a sixth form school in Great Britain is that the principal is the heart of the school but his/her ability to share the vision and outcome of the school with the teachers leads to a culture of openness and a learning organisation in which everyone takes ownership.

The final section contains three highly-charged and informative chapters. The first focuses on reform, the second on professional standards, and the third on lessons from other professions for the education of teachers. These three chapters and the Conclusion by Ora Kwo entitled 'Teachers as Learners: A Moral Commitment' should be read by every professor of education, every student teacher, every teacher, every principal, every school board member, and every superintendent.

The idea that is highlighted and stressed throughout the book is that the most important activity of any given society is that of educating its citizens at all levels, and the most important person assigned that task is the teacher. Teachers of teachers, then, have the awesome responsibility of preparing individuals who are self-aware and self-assured as well as well grounded in their subject matter. Versed in a sound curriculum, these teachers face classrooms of students who will learn

with them what they need to know and more importantly what they can become as a person. Nothing short of that is teaching.

Linda Wanner
Washington, DC, USA

John Chi-Kin Lee and Michael Williams (eds.): *Schooling for Sustainable Development in Chinese Communities*. Springer, Dordrecht, 2009, 285 pp., ISBN 978-1-4020-9685-3.

Here, editors John Chi-Kin Lee and Michael Williams present the writings of 12 contributing scholars/researchers who discuss the academic foundations, trends, and traditions of environmental education for sustainable development (ESD) in several Chinese cultural contexts. Descriptions and report highlights from a number of recent research initiatives involving case studies, surveys, and artefact collection in China, Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan are shared and analysed. Observations, recommendations, and predictions of future trends regarding ESD initiatives within these four Chinese contexts are presented within the concluding chapter of the text.

Chapter 1 commences with three fitting epigraphs by Confucius, Mencius and Chuang Tsu dealing with wisdom, nature, and equality, respectively—topics germane to this introductory chapter and, more broadly, to the themes and content of the entire book. Co-editors Lee and Williams provide an informative (albeit necessarily brief) and helpful primer in Chinese history, geography, demographics, ideology, religion and cultural traditions. They further describe the People's Republic of China (PRC) in terms of primary education, in general, and then environmental education within the primary level, more specifically. By tracing the three phases in the development of environmental education policies in China (i.e., expert phase [1973–1982]; “red” phase [1983–1992]; and, following the significant Rio Summit of 1992, the “sustainability” phase [1992–present]), the authors provide the reader with a meaningful context for understanding the development of ESD initiatives in China, Macao, Taiwan and Hong Kong, each of which are described in general terms throughout the remainder of the opening chapter. The book structure and order are also explained here.

In Chap. 2, Lee and Williams begin with a cross-cultural caveat which they will eventually revisit in the concluding chapter after highlighting specific examples of it throughout the text: “What works in any one educational system may, for a myriad of cultural reasons, be a complete disaster in another country. Ideas and insights, theories and principles, guidelines and frameworks, procedures and practices do not readily transfer across nations, provinces and cities—sometimes, not even between neighbouring schools” (p. 25). Education for sustainable development (ESD) is discussed in terms of its varied definitions, an historical recounting of international events and approaches to ESD, and several national approaches/cases wherein ESD has seen significant development (i.e. England, ENSI).

In Chap. 3, Lai and Lee focus on assessment and evaluation in light of ESD initiatives. They highlight new learning approaches, various types of assessment (formative, authentic, self-assessment, peer-assessment), the assessment culture in Chinese communities and strategies of ESD assessment. Whole-school approaches