

necessary reading for anyone – including teachers – who is seriously concerned about a "child-centered perspective." One may ask: Why should teachers read difficult books? Giroux (1988), commenting on the development of the new sociology of curriculum and the serious challenges it has raised to long held beliefs and assumptions, writes: "The new sociology of curriculum speaks a language that might seem strange when compared to the input-output language of the traditional curriculum model. The new language may be difficult, but it is necessary, because it enables its users to develop new kinds of relationships in the curriculum field and to raise different kinds of questions" (p. 16). Indeed! And the same applies to some readings in philosophy of education. *Autonomy and Schooling* is one of them.

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Kieran Egan and Dan Nodaner, Editors.

IMAGINATION AND EDUCATION.

New York: Teachers College Press, 1988.

pp.283. \$US31.95; paper US\$17.95.

This collection of fourteen articles is, in the words of the editors, "about the roles and values of imagination in education and about the dangers of ignoring or depreciating them" (p. ix). The book explores a variety of conceptions of imagination and examines ways in which education can develop imagination to the benefit of individuals and society. It also clarifies the way in which imaginative thinking skills serve as an underpinning to learning across the curriculum.

The first section of the book, "In Search of the Imagination," focuses on the variety of conceptions of imagination which provides the conceptual basis for the rest of the book. The opening chapter by Brian Sutton-Smith presents an excellent survey of the historical conceptions of

imagination which assists the reader in placing subsequent chapters in context. The authors in this and subsequent sections have views of imagination ranging from the imagination involved in pretend play to imagination as visualization. In the second section, "Imagination and Education," the authors examine the way in which education influences imagination and, in turn, the role that imagination can play in education. The final section, "Imagination across the Curriculum," addresses the nature of imagination in specific content areas, including science, art, music, philosophy, and intercultural understanding.

Two themes recur throughout the book: the social value of imagination, and the role that imagination plays in learning and thinking. Both are addressed in many chapters and approached from a variety of viewpoints. Several articles focus on the role of imagination in social life, although the topic is by no means limited to those chapters. Maxine Greene discusses the importance of imagination for ensuring that society develop more humane political and social structures. June Sturrock describes the conceptions of education held by writers of the romantic period, that is, the link they see between an education system destructive to imagination and the inhumane social conditions of their era which led to their belief that a humane society is dependent on its citizens having well-developed imaginations. Karen Hanson considers the crucial role imagination plays in developing the capacity for understanding ourselves and others, and thus in promoting harmonious relations. Dan Nadaner also explores the crucial role of imagination in social understanding, and Michael Degenhardt and Elaine McKay develop the topic further in a chapter on using imagination in school to develop intercultural understanding.

Several articles address the relationships between imagination, thinking, and learning. Greene makes the point that imagination is necessary to create connections among ideas and experiences, and Robin Barrow argues that the development of imagination is necessarily a curriculum-wide process. In one of the best chapters of the book, Kieran Egan uses recent research on oral cultures to illuminate some of the thinking strategies that children learn to use before they become literate. These strategies provide a rich foundation for subsequent learning that is not well exploited by most schools. Otto Weininger describes the role of pretend play in developing children's capacity to consider "what if" and in starting them on the road to testing out concepts that can then be added to their thinking repertoire. Roger Shepard reports on the crucial role that visual imagination plays in scientific thinking, and discusses the challenges to education that follow from this. Gareth Mathews elucidates the way in which children's literature may be used to develop children's philosophical imagination through presenting them with real philosophical problems in literary guises. In a chapter on children's art, Claire Golomb describes the

manner in which the human propensity for making symbols drives the developmental changes in children's drawings.

Two excellent chapters deal only indirectly with the two themes noted earlier. Robert Walker considers the reasons for a lack of knowledge about the developmental processes in the musical imagination, and he describes the kind of musical education that would be needed to develop such imagination in children. Ted Hughes explores the use of myth in developing the human ability to create metaphors that give voice to emotions and spiritual feelings which otherwise would remain unconscious.

As with many books consisting of collections of articles, there is considerable variation in the quality of the writing. *Imagination and Education* is based on papers presented at a conference on the same topic sponsored by Simon Fraser University. Some articles have made the transition from speech to print better than others. Particularly well-written are the chapters by Sutton-Smith, Shepard, Matthews, and Golomb.

Imagination and Education is a thought-provoking book. It makes clear that the education of the imagination is not merely "enrichment." Rather, it is the basis on which learning and thinking can best be built. While the article by Egan makes this point most directly, it is the cumulative effect of all the articles, written from many viewpoints, that is responsible for the persuasiveness of the book. Equally cumulative in impact is the message that the cost of not developing imagination is a less humane and less tolerant society. It is an important book for educators.

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