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**Introduction To This Issue: Educational Psychology as a Policy Science**

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First, I want to thank CJEAP for hosting this special issue on the role of educational psychology in educational policy. As an educational psychologist myself, I am delighted and honored to present the ideas of such a distinguished group of scholars, all of whom are known not only for their substantial contributions to research in the field, but for also for their continued efforts to "make a difference," to improve the teaching and learning that goes on in our schools, as thus ultimately improve the lives of children. Though this "conversation" uses mainly examples from the United States, I believe the issues addressed and the questions raised are equally applicable to similar educational problems and policy issues in Canada, and indeed in many industrialized countries struggling to educate an increasingly diverse population.

This issue began with David Berliner's acceptance of an invitation to address the Special Interest Group on Teaching Educational Psychology at the 2002 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association in New Orleans, LA. Dr. Berliner chose to speak on our responsibility to "teach" educational psychology to policy makers, to help state and federal lawmakers better understand basic principles of learning and motivation and how these principles might apply to current educational problems and proposed policy solutions. The lead paper in this issue is a revised and expanded version of his speech. In it, Dr. Berliner calls upon educational psychologists to use their knowledge and expertise to take an active role in the policy arena, both as advisors to policy makers and as researchers who can, at least, "establish reasonably credible facts about a situation."

He also expresses (and supports) deep misgivings about two specific policies that are gaining currency in the United States: the high-stakes standardized testing mandated by the newly passed "No Child Left Behind" act, with its potentially negative consequences for individual student's advancement in grade and for teachers' and schools' economic well-being; and the intensifying push toward development of alternative routes to teacher certification. These alternative routes are typically faster and cheaper, relying primarily on would-be teachers' subject matter knowledge, and often requiring little, if any, coursework in pedagogy or its bases in educational psychology, history and philosophy.

Two other well-known educational psychologist's, Jere Brophy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, were invited to reply to Dr. Berliner's speech when it was given. Their replies, again revised and expanded, are also included in this issue. Dr. Brophy's reply focuses on the pros and cons of policy involvement on the part of educational psychologists, including the danger, borne out by experience, that our views and ideas "will be stereotyped as more simple and more extreme than they are," and thus do more harm than good in the end. Dr. Ormrod writes persuasively about our frequent failure as educational psychologists to communicate our established theories and new findings to the public in clear, effective prose, in "places where are apt to take notice." She points out that when our work is "exclusively abstract and highly jargonized" and published "primarily in journals and other venues that only we ourselves read . . . our writings become inaccessible to others who might benefit from reading them."

Finally, as this issue moved toward publication, Asa Hillliard III and Virginia Richardson were invited to write replies to Dr. Berliner's article as well, each of them chosen because of their ability to bring a different and important perspective to the conversation. Dr. Hilliard reminds us that poor and minority children suffer disproportionately from ill-formed educational policies, and asserts that "the value of public support for education, . . . the profession of education, [and] the science of educational research" are "under assault, not just by researchers and policymakers who may have honest disagreements, but, more ominously, by those who oppose public funding for education for the masses of America's children." Dr. Richardson examines the potential pitfalls of the type of "partisan research" called for by Dr. Berliner. She cautions us that it may be impossible to avoid having our data "tainted by our values" and uses one of the teacher certification studies he cites to show how researchers with different values, different "agendas," can study the same phenomenon, but arrive at seemingly opposite conclusions.

The issue finishes with Dr. Berliner's response to his respondents, appreciating most of their points, disagreeing with some, but above all calling for the "conversation" thus started to continue.