the introduction of the National Curriculum has failed to solve problems faced by local education authorities, particularly in regard to the need to provide a broad, balanced, and relevant curriculum. His notion of "good primary practice," which focuses on conceptual, value, pragmatic, empirical, and political considerations, is illuminating. However, and in the spirit of the book, it should be regarded as the first rather than the last word in the debate which he advocates.

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Brezinka, Wolfgang. (1992). *Philosophy of educational knowledge: An introduction to the foundations of science of education, philosophy of education, and practical pedagogics.* Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 301 pp., $99.00 (hardcover).

The title of Wolfgang Brezinka's book, *Philosophy of Educational Knowledge: An Introduction to the Foundations of Science of Education, Philosophy of Education, and Practical Pedagogics* is eminently appropriate. This is the project that is clearly described in the introduction of the book. Arguing mainly from the position that there is a huge confusion in the use of the term "science" or "scientific" to describe educational studies and educational knowledge, Brezinka sets out to propose and defend a tripartite division of educational knowledge which he argues will also serve as a division of labor for educational researchers. *Science of education* is distinguished as a rigorous empirical science seeking factual knowledge of the causal relations involved in education. *Philosophy of education* refers to normative philosophical proposals or recommendations having to do with educational aims and ethical issues in education. Finally, *practical*

pedagogics is the mediating system providing the bridge between the knowledge and understandings gained through the former two (theoretical) systems and educational practice. The author proposes, at a higher level, what he calls "meta-educology" or the theory of educational theories. This, presumably, is the level of the work in the book. The advantages of such a clearly distinguished division, we are told, are to help make the study of a complicated human endeavor more systematic and ultimately more effective; to make it clear when educational knowledge is based on "fact" and when it is based on "ideology" or some "world view;" and finally to ensure that all the different kinds of knowledge needed by (or useful to) educators is given adequate attention in educational studies. There is some promise in the project Brezinka proposes to contribute significantly to these important and worthy goals.

Unfortunately, there are several things that hinder the fruition of that promise. In seeking to provide "an introduction," Brezinka sets out to initiate the reader into whole historical traditions embodying the development of these areas of intellectual thought in education. This attempt to give the reader a grounding in the relevant questions results instead in overburdening the reader with information. Instead of fostering depth of understanding, this leads to confusion and disorientation, specifically in following his line of argument, for any but the most sophisticated and diligent reader. This happens in the chapters on both science of education and philosophy of education. In particular, his division, subdivision, and sub-subdivisions of possible conceptions of philosophy, philosophy of education, and normative philosophy of education (pp. 168ff) can make even the situated reader dizzy and annoyed. By the time Brezinka gets down to describing his conception of philosophy of education the reader no longer has the energy to attend appropriately to his description. Not only does this make it difficult to fully appreciate his ideas, it makes it more difficult to critically assess the proposal. And because his presentation style, at least in translation, is, on the whole, rather dry, it does not inspire the reader to make the extra effort to go back over his lengthy foundational preamble. For example, it is difficult to recall where in his complicated structure we lost the contributions of analytic philosophy to philosophy of education and exactly why.

Furthermore, it does not help when so many references are used (most of them unfamiliar to the English-speaking audience) and terse statements of theories are expected to give readers an understanding of complex ideas.

Another unfortunate outcome linked with Brezinka's excessive information and structural complexity is the inappropriateness of the level of his writing for most prospective audiences. In particular, this is true for the audience we believe would benefit most from a clear examination of the distinctions treated in this book: educators, teacher trainers, and policymakers. For such an audience, the foundational work needs to be less extensive and more selective. Some nuances should be excluded in favor of making the main points more clearly and forcefully. Students of educational science, philosophy, and pedagogy would make up the other prospective audience for the book. For this audience, the detailed foundational work should be included but more patience should have been taken in presenting this work. The work Brezinka presents is too superficial and hurried to provide a good introduction to the historical and intellectual context in which his proposals are best understood. Pivotal views and arguments, such as those describing the different conceptions of normative philosophy of education (naturalism, intuitionism, noncognitivism, and moderate noncognitivism), should have been further explicated to give the reader an appropriate sense of their central role in shaping the landscape in which the book makes its contribution. The reader must, in the end, blindly follow Brezinka to moderate noncognitivism because he gives no other real choice. The book would have to be much larger (for example, more detailed guidance would have to be given through explanatory footnotes or an extra chapter) for it to do the job we believe Brezinka intended for this audience. The only readers who would seem to be capable of reaping the full advantage of this work are those who already have an in-depth understanding of the questions he treats, an audience who does not need an introduction.

The problem of following Brezinka's arguments is further aggravated by the lack of emphasis given to key points embedded in expositions and criticisms of other people's views. Sometimes key points are made in passing; these points will likely elude the uninitiated reader altogether.

They may slide by even well-situated readers, leaving only the slightest impression on their understanding of the issues. This is particularly unfortunate because Brezinka does make several interesting and important points which, had they been given a more forceful and compelling formation, would have contributed considerably to the strength of the book. In the chapter on "the nomothetical field of study" he rightly points out the difficulties involved in looking for nomothetical hypotheses in education. This is something that is not often done, let alone done well, but which is important for both the scientist and the potential user of scientific knowledge to understand. Brezinka does an admirable job in explicating the technical difficulties involved in producing scientific knowledge of education, but fails to communicate the significance of these problems to the project.

Finally, the cautions accompanying the use of certain limited distinctions and arguments should have been made clearer through added emphases. Sometimes Brezinka fails to offer these cautions altogether; at other times his cautions are so mild that it would be easy to miss reading them as cautions at all. With distinctions like fact and value, it is important to include a caveat so that people do not overestimate the division between these two kinds of statements — a tendency all too rampant in educational work. This is a distinction on which Brezinka relies heavily to make the case for dividing science of education from philosophy of education in the way that he does. Despite the fact that he acknowledges the importance of norms and values for eduction, his particular use of this fact-value distinction gives one the sense that norms and values are somehow just not as good as facts without providing a clear understanding of why that should be so. Values and norms are "empirically nonjustifiable" and "are not absolutely justifiable" (p. 91). But these two characterizations are not the same. The first merely states that values and norms are different from empirical facts in the way they are justified. However, the second is true of empirical (scientific) facts in the same way as it is true of values and norms. It is not clear whether Brezinka recognizes this.

The final problem that limits the success of this book is the special terminology used throughout it. The odd use of terms such as "personality" or "psychic dispositions" (pp. 41-44 and 181) to make important points, without any explication of what they mean, leaves the reader perplexed. An unguided leap of interpretation is required to make the points intelligible. This makes a critical reading of his argument nearly impossible. Some of these terminological problems we suspect are due to translation from the original German text. For example, the use of the term "objectivation" is perplexing until one figures out that it should have been translated "objectification." But more importantly, the discussion surrounding the "loose use" of the term *science* versus the more rigorous use of the term is clearly relevant for the German word *Wissenschaft* (which indeed has a well established "looser use") but not really so relevant for the English word *science* (which on the whole parallels the rigorous use described). While this fact does not make Brezinka's discussion irrelevant to English-speaking readers, some discussion of such nuances should have been included by the translators (perhaps in a Translator's Appendix or Prefix). Not only would this kind of discussion clarify confusions and nuances in the translation, it would also focus interest on the distinct way that the German-speaking world talks about (and therefore thinks about) these issues.

Brezinka attempts a noble project in this book. He clearly has a depth of knowledge and understanding which supports interesting ideas worthy of serious engagement by the reader. It is all the more unfortunate that the style and execution of the book works to frustrate such engagement.

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