

in the shifting sands of awareness of place and self.

I would highly recommend this singular book to anyone with an interest in geography teaching, an appreciation for language play, a sensitivity toward creative analyses of curriculum, or an abiding desire to rediscover the poetic possibilities that open up to those who like to draw their own lines. Now *this* is my kind of line dancing.

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Lagemann, E.C. (2000). *An elusive science: The troubling history of education research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Hardcover, 302 pages.

It was with a great deal of anticipation that I looked forward to reading this book. Based on the dust jacket alone I was ready to relish an intellectual feast of the type that does not occur as often as might be hoped. Thus, I began reading with enthusiasm and great expectations, only to find myself now laboring under the banner of the old saw about judging a book by its cover. The book is enjoyable enough, solidly researched and written, but it does not deliver on its promise. Yet to say this is perhaps not entirely fair, since my difficulty with it has to do far more with an unmet set of expectations than it does with the author's presentation. Much of the book is devoted to reporting historical information and discussions of the relative status of education in research universities and society generally, curriculum reform, large-scale funding for research, education policy, and the role of theory in education administration. While this is neither inconsiderable nor unworthy information, I found it frustratingly unrevealing with regard to the deeper purposes, values, and understandings that have played out in formal agendas for research.

I expected a critical review of the history of educational research to explore, for example, what it meant, epistemologically and methodologically, to aim to become a scientifically-based field of study, as early psychologists and educational scholars sought to do. What, exactly, did Edward Thorndike and his fellow thinkers believe they were doing when they introduced the concepts of standardized testing into American education? What were the presuppositions of their science, and how did they fit into prevailing ideological and value systems regarding the purposes and aims of education? How did the adoption of the ideology and values of science shape research, practice, and policy in education? How did research, policy, and practice in education reflect

predominant American values of philosophical pragmatism, anti-intellectualism, and the rise of mass public education as a means of staffing factories and homogenizing an increasingly diverse population? How did the dominant metaphorical understanding of schools as machines shape the ways in which inquiry has been undertaken to interpret what goes on inside them and what ought to go on inside them?

More concretely, in a book that purports to consider the history of educational research, why is there no specific discussion of the application and evolution of statistical methods in education? Surely the work of Sir Ronald Fisher, Sewall Wright, Donald Campbell, Lee Cronbach, Frederick Lord, and many others has had enormous influence on educational research. Though some individuals, such as John Dewey, Edward Thorndike, Ralph Tyler, or James Coleman, are given significant mention, there is little discussion of methodological issues as they shaped them and much more discussion of generalities with regard to policy and data collection. A substantive review of the evolution of testing theory and application and the ways in which such have shaped research, policy, and practice in education would itself be a significant contribution. Further, the emergence of qualitative methodology as a powerful force in thinking about educational research in the United States in the past quarter century is also a story that needs to be told. Lagemann barely touches on such issues, and not until near the end of this text. Even then, when qualitative methods are finally mentioned in some detail, the emphasis is almost exclusively on ethnography. Short shrift is given to such alternative approaches to inquiry in education as Marxism, feminism, critical theory, or post-modern understandings of educational experience. No mention whatsoever is made of the contributions of such figures as Howard Becker, Matthew Miles, Michael Huberman, Harry Woolcott, Elliot Eisner, Anselm Strauss, Barney Glaser, Yvonna Lincoln, Egon Guba, Clifford Geertz, or Robert Yin, to name but a very few who have contributed very significantly to the larger understanding of the ways in which research is done and what it means in terms of practice, policy, and our understanding of what education is and what engaging in it means.

The history of educational research deserves investigation and elucidation that will plumb the depths of assumptions about what matters most in human experience, about what we think we know or can know, and why it matters, about how we think we can learn about the abstract processes that take place within the human mind, and how we attempt to communicate warranted claims to knowledge and then to act on what we believe to be that knowledge. Excellent work on these and related questions about what social science research is and can provide has been done by such individuals as Karl Popper and Imre Lakatos and with regard to educational research specifically such individuals as

Dennis Phillips, Kenneth Howe, and Ernest House have added much to our contemplation of research, its methods and applications.

Lagemann seems to presume that there is a correct way to think about research, and her comments frequently belie the mainstream assumptions that shape her presentation and analysis. The fact that Lagemann does not clearly reveal or discuss her own obvious preferences and assumptions would easily lead an unsophisticated reader to conclude that there is, in fact, one true path that should be followed by educational researchers and policy makers. Though I might agree with many of the assumptions that characterize her presentation in this regard, it is essential that such a work acknowledge the range of differing views and the assumptions and values that underlie them. There is intuitive appeal to the faith in a technocratic model as a basis for educational progress, and fundamental values to which virtually all educational researchers assent, yet, if educational research has taught us anything in the past century it would seem to be that there is, after all, not one best way. Educational research is and has been shaped by a complex amalgam of ideology and circumstances. Lagemann's work helps elucidate the 'what' of this complex history, but falls short of helping us understand more deeply the 'why.'

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Majors, R. (Ed.). (2001). *Educating our black children: New directions and radical approaches*. New York/London: Routledge Falmer, 271 pages.

The high calibre writings that make up this book illustrates how far the field of multiculturalism and/or ethnic studies has come. Some 35 years ago, multicultural literature was inaugurated via published conference proceedings and books of readings. This volume defines the cutting edge of the field by elaborating new directions and radical approaches to resolving inequities in one specific ethnic sector. Unlike less focused volumes, every writer in this collection targets the subject, in this case the difficulties encountered by African American youth in British schools.

Five major sections make up the book, each comprising three or four significant essays penned by academics from England and America. The sections include: Tackling Historical and Contemporary Education Problems, Radical Black Approaches to Education, Reflections on Social Exclusion and Inclusion, Rites of Passage, Manhood Training and Masculinity Perspectives, and Mentoring and Education. The appendices