
The Introduction to this special issue of Australian educational researcher (vol. 43 no. 1, 2016) notes the “need for tracing the complex relationships between think tanks, edu-businesses, and a range of other players in education policy, not only links to government actors and organisations, but also philanthropic organisations, universities and non-profit organisations. This special issue represents a ‘first step’ in tackling this gap in Australian research, contextualised in relation to the US.” – p. 5.


“The authors persuasively argue that the present cascade of reforms to public education is a consequence of a larger intention to shrink government.” – Publisher website.


“Contributors ... explore the unintended effects of the charter school experiment over the past two decades, and conclude that charter schools are entering a new phase of their development, beginning to serve purposes significantly different from those originally set out for them.” – Back cover.


“This essential introduction includes a detailed history of the charter movement, an analysis of the politics and economics driving the movement, documentation of actual student outcomes, and alternative images of transforming public education to serve all children.” – Publisher website.

Children of the core by Kris L Nielsen. USA: Kris L Nielsen, 2013. 371.26 NIE

“The Common Core State Standards have been lauded as one of the most revolutionary ways to close the achievement gaps in reading and math, make our country competitive in the world economy, and equalize the playing field for all our students in public K-12 schools. The reality is much different from the promises.” – Back cover.


“Corporate reform is not reform at all. Instead, it is the systematic destruction of the foundational American institution of public education ... This book investigates and exposes the handful of people and institutions that are often working together to become the driving force behind destroying the community public school.” – Back cover.


Contents: A short history of high-stakes testing -- The prevalence and many forms of cheating -- Excluding students from education by design and by neglect -- States cheat too! -- What happens to validity when indicators are distorted and corrupted -- How high-stakes testing undermines public education and the teaching profession -- We conclude that high-stakes testing provides perfect conditions for Campbell's Law to operate.


The author explains “in everyday language the esoteric terms, expressions, and buzzwords used in U.S. education today.” – Publisher website.


“A conservative, bipartisan consensus dominates the discussion about what's wrong with our schools and how to fix them. It offers 'solutions' that scapegoat teachers, vilify unions, and impose a market mentality. But in each case, students lose. This book written by teacher-activists, speaks back to that elite consensus and offers an alternative vision of learning for liberation.” – Back cover.

Resources available from the NSW Teachers Federation Library
23-33 Mary St Surry Hills NSW 2010 Locked Bag 3010 Darlinghurst NSW 1300
Ph 02 9217 2113 Fax 02 9217 2481 E library@nswtf.org.au Web www.nswtf.org.au click on Services tab

February 2017

“This book examines American society's shift away from democratic public values, the ensuing move toward a market-driven mode of education, and the last decade's growing social disinvestment in youth.” – Back cover.


“In Education by numbers, Warwick Mansell scrutinises the whole testing regime in detail and exposes the truth of exam-driven schooling, which is corrupting our education system and leaving a generation of pupils less willing and able to think for themselves.” – Book jacket.

Education under siege: why there is a better alternative by Peter Mortimore. Bristol: Policy Press, 2013. 370.942 MOR

“At a time when education is considered crucial to a country's economic success, recent UK governments have insisted their reforms are the only way to make England's system world class. Yet pupils are tested rather than educated, teachers bullied rather than trusted and parents cast as winners or losers in a gamble for school places.” – Publisher website.


This book “analyses the effect of foundations, corporations, and non-governmental organizations on the rise of neoliberal principles in public education. By first contextualizing the privatization of education within the context of a larger educational crisis, and with particular emphasis on the Gates Foundation and influential state and national politicians, this book describes how specific policies that limit public control are advanced across all levels.” – Back cover.


“The mythical failure of public education has been created and perpetuated in large part by political and economic interests that stand to gain from the destruction of the traditional system. There is an intentional misrepresentation of facts ... Our method of debunking these myths and lies is to argue against their logic, or to criticize the data supporting the myth, or to present more credible contradictory data.” – p. 4.


The author shows how, rather than relying on competition, choice, and external testing of students, education reforms in Finland focus on professionalizing teachers' work, developing instructional leadership in schools, and enhancing trust in teachers and schools.

The flat world and education: how America's commitment to equity will determine our future by Linda Darling-Hammond. New York: Teachers College, 2010. 379.2 DAR

"Linda Darling-Hammond brings clarity to complexity, thoughtful analysis to politically charged issues, and sound policy recommendations to the hysteria of what to do to save America's public schools.” – Back cover.


Stephen Ball "explores the policy activities of edu-businesses, neo-liberal advocacy networks and policy entrepreneurs, and of social enterprises and 'new' philanthropy ... addresses the ways in which education and education policy itself are now being exported and bought and sold as profitable commodities and how entrenched problems of educational development and educational quality and access are now being addressed through 'market solutions'." – Back cover.


"Split into three key sections, Part I explores how education agendas are shaped; Part II considers the private financing of education and the export of school improvements to professional consultancies; and Part III analyses new market niches, such as low-fee private schooling and for-profit education provisions. The book draws upon case studies of many global organizations, including The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Pearson Affordable Learning Fund.” – Publisher website.


“This book examines the impact and effects of this global framework in two illustrative nations: Australia and Canada.” – Publisher website.
If we forget history: the thirty year war against public education by Maurie Mulheron. Revised ed. Surry Hills, NSW: NSWTF, 2014. 379.1 MUL

"Why is it that our public school systems in this country have been subjected to seemingly perpetual criticism and radical experimentation? What follows is a sketch, a not-too-complete history, of some of the significant milestones along this path over the last thirty to forty years. This paper attempts to put the current educational policies into an historical context." – p. 8-9. Maurie Mulheron is President of the NSW Teachers Federation. (Eric Pearson study report)

Ill fares the land: a treatise on our present discontents by Tony Judt. London: Penguin, 2011. 909.8 JUD

The pursuit of material self-interest "now constitutes whatever remains of our sense of shared purpose. But we have forgotten how to think about the life we live together: its goals and purposes. We are now not only post-ideological; we have become post-ethical ..." Tony Judt reveals how we have arrived at our present dangerously confused moment and masterfully crystallizes our great unease, showing how we might yet think ourselves out of it." – Publisher website.


"The policies that have encouraged Australians to express their aspirations, cultural differences, loyalties and tastes through the construction of a socioeconomically stratified and segregated school system have proven to be costly and to have delivered a poor yield on our national investment in relation to advancing educational achievement." – p. 71. http://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1024&context=aer

Learning from counternarratives in Teach For America: moving from idealism towards hope by Sarah Matsui. New York: Peter Lang, 2015. 370.71 MAT

"Confronts the glowing official portrayals of Teach for America experiences with narratives by former TFA corps members who offer less rosy accounts of the organization ... Her interviews suggest that TFA is not nurturing future teachers but burning them out." – Rethinking schools, Summer 2016.


The author "explains why school reform has so often disappointed. She recounts grandiose efforts to use the schools for social engineering, even while those efforts diminished the schools’ ability to provide a high-quality education for all children. By illuminating the history of education in the twentieth century, Left back points the way to reviving American schools today." – Publisher website.


"Todd Farley's Making the grades raises questions about the validity of large-scale educational assessments. His behind-the-scenes account of the for-profit testing industry is provocative, hilarious, and instructive." – Back cover.


"[A] collection of essays, poems, speeches, and interviews – accounts of personal courage and trenchant insights – from frontline fighters who are defying the corporate education reformers, often at great personal and professional risk, and fueling a national movement to reclaim and transform public education." – Back cover.

The myths of standardized tests: why they don’t tell you what you think they do by Phillip Harris, Bruce M Smith & Joan Harris. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011. 371.26 HAR

"In friendly, accessible prose, the authors examine – and explode – each of the assumptions that underlies standardized testing." – Allie Kohn (Back cover).


"This book, written from an Australian perspective, explores previous outside policy interest in the Nordic nations and outlines some lessons which the English-speaking world, in particular, can learn now from the achievements of the four main Nordic European nations." – Publisher website.


"Passed on gives us an honest portrayal of what teachers and students are up against in poor, failing American schools today, and provides a much-needed front-line perspective in the current school reform debates." – Publisher website.


A collection of articles from Rethinking schools magazine "takes high-stakes standardized tests to task." – Back cover.
Hot topics

**GERM**

**PISA, power and policy: the emergence of global educational governance** edited by Heinz-Dieter Meyer & Aaron Benavot. Didcot, UK: Symposium Books, 2013. 371.2 PIS

“The book raises the question of whether PISA’s dominance in the global educational discourse runs the risk of engendering an unprecedented process of worldwide educational standardisation for the sake of hitching schools more tightly to the bandwagon of economic efficiency, while sacrificing their role to prepare students for independent thinking and civic participation.” – Publisher website.

**Politics, policies and pedagogies in education: the selected works of Bob Lingard** by Bob Lingard. London: Routledge, 2014. 379.1 LIN

“The author ‘provides critical sociological engagement with the politics of education. The focus is education policy and the impact of globalization.’” – Back cover.


“My research in the United States showed clearly that in the absence of a strong public education system, corporations and neoliberal agendas flourish. Australians need to be aware that in such environments continual untested experimentation can put student learning in jeopardy. Neoliberal reforms in the US – as well as in Third World countries targeted by edubusiness – have tended to unfairly target and take root in the most disadvantaged communities, and teachers, unions and government have a responsibility to act as guardians against such exploitative agendas.” – Conclusions, p. 38. (Eric Pearson study report)


“The authors ‘show that gains in student achievement at public schools are at least as great and often greater than those at private ones . . . [T]hey [also] show that the very mechanism that market-based reformers champion – autonomy – may be the crucial factor that prevents private schools from performing better. Alternatively, those practices that these reformers castigate, such as teacher certification and professional reforms of curriculum and instruction, turn out to have a significant effect on school improvement.’” – Publisher website.


“In this book, I show that the schools are in crisis because of persistent, orchestrated attacks on them and their teachers and principals, and attacks on the very principle of public responsibility for public education.” – Introduction.

**Setting the record straight: responses to misconceptions about public education in the U.S.** by Gerald W Bracey. 2nd ed. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2004. 371.01 BRA

“In this series of analyses, Bracey homes in on specific topics like vouchers, school funding, and comparisons to international test scores, themes around which agitators have created a host of mythological American school failures from the flimsiest of evidence. In fact, each essay begins with a question you might commonly hear in conversation about these alleged shortcomings, to which Bracey provides a brief, sound-byte-ready rebuttal.” – Back cover.

**The teacher wars: a history of America’s most embattled profession** by Dana Goldstein. New York: Doubleday, 2014. 370.973 GOL

“In her groundbreaking history of 175 years of American education, Dana Goldstein finds answers in the past to the controversies that plague our public schools today.” – Publisher website.

**Teachers’ perspectives on Finnish school education: creating learning environments** by Eduardo Andere. Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2013. 370.9 AND

“[T]he country’s magic educational ingredients … include a highly motivated cohort of well-trained teachers, a recognition of the vital importance of early years education and nurture, functional and inviting learning environments, and a rejection of pedagogical dogma in favour of developing methodologies that produce results at the same time as fostering students’ confidence and collegiality.” – Publisher website.


“Standardised tests perform an accountability function of serving the neo-liberal aims of shrinking the allocation from the public purse to education whilst consolidating centralised control of curriculum and pedagogy.” – Introduction, p. 5. (Eric Pearson study report)


“This is the definitive and compelling story of New Zealand school self-management over more than two decades. Cathy Wylie explores the paths taken and the growing tensions of a system that left too much to chance.” – Back cover.

**Resources available from the NSW Teachers Federation Library**

23-33 Mary St Surry Hills NSW 2010 Locked Bag 3010 Darlinghurst NSW 1300
Ph 02 9217 2113 Fax 02 9217 2481 E library@nswtf.org.au Web www.nswtf.org.au click on Services tab

February 2017