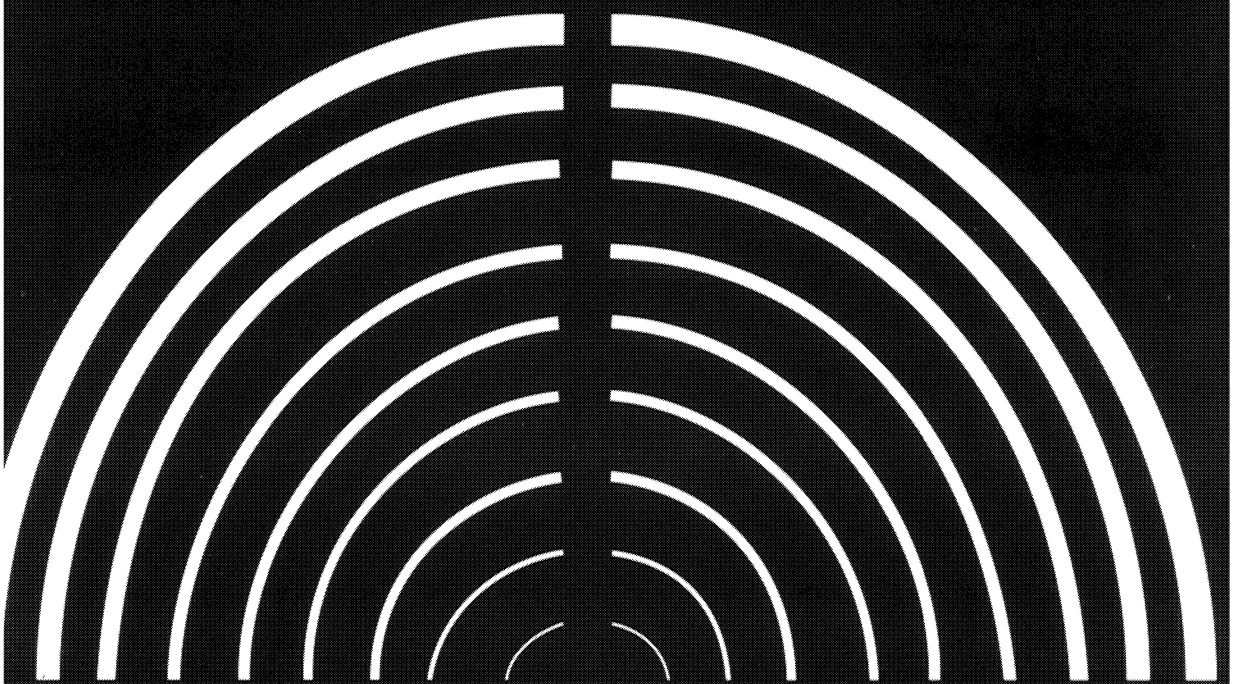
CHANGE

TRANSFORMATIONS IN EDUCATION



A JOURNAL OF THEORY,
RESEARCH, POLICY, AND PRACTICE

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 2 NOVEMBER 1999

CHANGE: TRANSFORMATIONS IN EDUCATION

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Change: Transformations in Education seeks to promote discussion of a wide range of issues, themes and problems arising from the varieties of change which now impact upon education at every level, in differing contexts and with enormously varied results. The orientation of the journal is cross-disciplinary and critical. The journal's intended readership is that of educational policy-makers, analysts and activists working in contexts of social and organisational change and development. It also aims to interest professionals involved in the planning and implementation of educational programs across all education sectors nationally and internationally. The journal is published twice a year, in May and November. These two issues constitute one volume.

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE SUBMITTED TO AT LEAST TWO REFEREES BEFORE BEING ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION

Editorial correspondence, including manuscripts for submission and books for review, should be addressed to Change: Transformations in Education, Professional Development Unit, Faculty of Education, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia. Details concerning the preparation and submission of articles can be found on the inside back cover of each issue.

Business correspondence, including orders and remittances relating to subscriptions, back numbers, offprints and advertisements should be addressed to Change: Transformations in Education, Professional Development Unit, Faculty of Education, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia.

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CHANGE

TRANSFORMATIONS IN EDUCATION

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Editorial

The articles in this volume of *CHANGE: Transformations in Education* are written from diverse perspectives using a variety of discipline bases, contexts and theoretical orientations. The editors are pleased to note the international flavour of the papers in this issue. We have two papers each from Hong Kong and Singapore and several from various states in Australia. Each of these papers in its own way promotes discussion of a wide range of issues, themes and problems arising from the varieties of change which now impact upon education at every level, in different contexts and with varied results.

In the first article, Geoffrey Riordan and Paul Chesterton from New South Wales report on a study that analysed an attempt by a principal at a traditional independent boys' school to change curriculum practices and school policies in order to produce graduates who were independent learners capable of persevering with university study.

The second article, by Anne Jasman, Lesley Payne and Shirley Grundy from Western Australia, reports the findings from an Australian Research Council-funded research project investigating teacher educators' construction of knowledge for teacher education. The study focused on what teacher educators learn from and with their interactions with teachers, and the interactions and relationships between teachers and teacher educators, which facilitate this construction of knowledge. In this study teacher educators are found to construct their knowledge from and with teachers' personal practical knowledge and an understanding of their professional knowledge contexts.

John Retallick from Charles Sturt University in New South Wales argues in the third article that teacher-constructed portfolios represent a new way of learning for teachers by encouraging them to reflect on their everyday practice. Retallick argues that portfolios provide a useful way of documenting teacher learning.

In article 4, by Jill Forster and Mike Horsley, the focus is on the application of case-based and problem-based teaching in a teacher education program at the University of Sydney. Forster and Horsley claim that case-based teaching is effective in four main ways: learning is active, it is reflective, it is collaborative and, finally, that learning occurs. Their results indicate that individual, small-group and whole-group student reactions to cases were markedly different. They claim that this in turn influenced student collaboration and reflection.

Articles 5 and 6 are from academics working at the National Institute of Education in Singapore. Jason Tan and S. Gopinathan describe an innovation in educational financing in Singapore. This article illustrates the case of a government continuing to invest heavily in education against the backdrop of cutbacks in government expenditure on education in a number of countries. The article describes the Edusave scheme, which

commenced in 1993 and was used to provide schools and individual students with annual grants for educational expenditure. It was also used to provide individual students with scholarships based on academic merit and to provide bursaries on the basis of academic merit and financial need. Following this article, Steven Coombs and Ian Smith, also from the National Institute of Education, recognise the contribution that information technology (IT), which they argue offers flexible education solutions, brings to teaching and learning. They suggest that an IT learning environment offers the potential to enable critical and creative thinking skills by learning in classrooms as well as at home. This paper analyses a module on IT in the postgraduate diploma of education program offered to teacher education students in Singapore.

Papers 7 and 8 are from academics working at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. In article 7 Clive Dimmock and Allan Walker, writing from a Hong Kong policy context, argue that while policy reforms in the international arena become more convergent, and while policy-makers ignore the specific conditions of local contexts, the likelihood of securing successful transformation of school systems becomes more remote. Article 8, by Jack Lam, focuses on distance education as an alternative mode of educational delivery. Using Canadian data Lam describes some of the issues that emerged when the same instructor used three different types of delivery.

In the final article in this edition, Bernadette Hood, Cynthia Fan and Gerard Kennedy examine questions of transition between secondary and tertiary psychology programs. On the basis of their findings, Hood and her colleagues claim that only students with low Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) aggregate scores show a significant positive relationship between secondary school psychology and tertiary psychology performance scores. Their data also indicates that the successful transition between secondary and tertiary education in psychology appears to be primarily determined by generic aspects of student ability, with discipline-based knowledge being of secondary importance.

THE EDITORS