

## CONCERNING THIS ISSUE

Our guide in developing this issue has been the desire to provide a variety of perspectives from which the reader might further examine the elements and values involved in community-school relations or partnerships.

We urge readers to consider anew this fundamental premise: Achieving a sense of community in our lives — the antithesis of estrangement, loneliness, alienation and rebellion — is by no means an inevitable outcome of our involvement in community-school partnership development, but it is nonetheless a highly desirable outcome of education to which community-school partnership building can contribute. Our premise is that a “learning community” is an outcome of education proportional to the effort extended in that direction.

In asking our readers to consider education from this normative perspective we are aware of the difficulties in balancing the development of regard for and commitment to others, key elements in those networks which are abundant in a sense of community, with the development of the values of personal independence and individual achievement and advancement, values so characteristic of our necessarily impersonal urban life.

Today’s social and educational problems are enmeshed in the problem of scale. The urban, technological and bureaucratic scale of modern life is of a different order than is the human scale. It does little good to approach problems in a scale smaller than the scale on which they arise. But today’s urban, technological and bureaucratic structures and management processes can readily turn the achievement of a sense of historic and geographic community into an empty victory. Can we do more than speak of the community of limited liability and provisional commitment? What problems and what scale, human or technological, are we putting a premium on? These are questions, essentially, of the moral and technical dimensions of our lives.

Community-school relationships by the very nature of our society seem readily fashioned from above. Yet it can be argued that the values of personal independence, individual achievement and advancement, as expressions

of a unique personhood, can be coupled with caring and commitment to others as elements in the human scale so basic and essential to community.

Our schools and community-school relationships serve and reflect our urban, technological and bureaucratic structures and management processes. To the extent that they also serve and reflect the elements of human scale and community, they afford an alternative to the estrangement, loneliness, alienation and rebellion so characteristic of modern, large-scale social structures and impersonal management.

Our underlying search is for that kind of education which successfully creates the kind of community needed for all of our many individuals to flourish intellectually, socially, aesthetically, and morally. Communities so defined reveal always the educational dimension in civic life and law, in nutrition and health, in occupations, in history and culture, and in religion, family, and the arts. When community members come self-consciously to these elements in their lives with their own self-development in view, we know in a profound way that it is the community that educates and the idea of a learning community takes on reality.

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### When communities and schools work together . . . partnership takes on its purpose.

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When communities and schools work together in partnership toward these broadened educational grounds, community and education become inseparable concepts and experiences; partnership takes on its purpose.

We know that schools alone cannot create a learning community, hence community education intersects with schooling but is not limited by schooling. We also know that schools alone do not, and cannot, educate the public. While it is true that our schools are beset by conflicting demands of competing publics, a “leave it to the experts” attitude is no solution. Community-school partnerships that begin to consciously move the community and the

public in the direction of an ecology of education — an environment in which all institutions and agencies of our society bear a responsibility and opportunity for fostering learning — that movement may spark the vision and leadership needed for a people desirous of shaping and controlling their own lives.

Fukumoto leads off the issue by noting again — in this time of zealous educational reform — that education is too important to be left to the educators. Drawing from his research into what perceptions school-community council members in Hawaii have of their role, Fukumoto brings together historical analysis and role perception, with policy development on the part of the Hawaii State Board of Education. Fukumoto's article sets the stage for the description of *'Aha Kuka* which follows.

*'Aha Kuka*, "the gathering of councils" in the Hawaiian language, is a community education partnership concept and practice entering its third year of evolution and testing. *'Aha Kuka's* origins are rooted in Hawaii's ethnic community mix, in a "coalition" of 21 agency sponsors, in the singular leadership of Mrs. Vivian Ing, and in traditional desires among Hawaii's people to overcome isolation, prejudice, and powerlessness in establishing ownership and responsibility for their schools, and good citizenship on the part of youth and adults.

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#### **Faddishness too often becomes the pitfall in educational reform**

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The mix of rhetoric and reality surrounding the place of teachers in advancing a true sense of partnership of school and community is the subject of Radcliffe's analysis, which was presented as a major speech before the *'Aha Kuka* 1984 Conference. As Executive Director of Hawaii's public school teachers' union, Radcliffe reveals again the anguish teachers often feel as reform measures fail to include teachers as more than token partners. The hierarchical nature of educational authority appears contrary to a genuine partnership.

Oda next sets forth the perceptions of the office of the Hawaii State Superintendent of Education on the matter of school-community partnership. *'Aha Kuka* provides a setting and a forum for dialogue between the citizen and the educator and both Radcliffe's and Oda's thoughts are printed here to further that process.

From a more generalized perspective, Wear and Cook take a critical look at the issues in public school/private sector partnerships. Faddishness too often becomes the pitfall in educational reform. The risks of faddishness when coupled with confusion of private and public

purposes are high as Wear and Cook sound a necessary cautionary note.

Community studies are a natural part of the work of an educational sociologist. Fruehling, who is ever prone to join theory and practice, presents a theory of community for the community education practitioner. Scholarly perspectives on "community" and "education" of necessity involve both descriptive and evaluative considerations. Fruehling sets forth his view on the nature of community, and kinds of learning community educators need to acquire in their work of creating and sustaining community.

Hawaii's history and changing cultural milieu provide the context within which Munro narrates the history of development and change in the community of Waipahu. In her story, the legacy of the immigrant-plantation community experience, a legacy of the interwoven nature of schooling, politics, and labor organization, yields to an exploding world around. What conditions and meanings of community will emerge? We are left with food for thought.

Adult and community educators demonstrate over and over that education occurs in a great variety of settings. Galbraith and James help us understand that an uncritical acceptance of the student-teacher relationships inherent in traditional school pedagogy acts as a barrier to adult learning. Andragogical education is presented as an approach to teaching adult learners that takes us beyond today's standard instructional theory.

Our issue concludes with a book review essay by McCutcheon. The role of community in American historiography is re-examined in the book under review. Our understanding of the past strongly influences present actions and plans for the future. This essay review tells us that a shift in historical perspective opens up new responsibilities for a viable and achievable sense of community in our lives.

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Associate Editor

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