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Studying Education: An Introduction to the Key Disciplines in Education Studies

Barry Dufour, Will Curtis

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This book is a comprehensive, student-friendly text, introducing you to the main education disciplines in one handy volume. In a lively and accessible manner, it examines the academic disciplines that underpin our understanding of education and the contexts within which learning takes place.

The book covers the seven main subject disciplines that contribute to education as a broad field of study - history of education, politics of education, philosophy of education, economics of education, sociology of education, psychology of education and comparative education.

Key features include:

- Seven extended chapters all written by specialist and experienced academics in their field
- A brief overview and history at the beginning of each chapter, followed by a selection of key themes and topics within the discipline
- Boxed summaries of key theorists and researchers throughout each chapter
- Tasks for the reader, along with extensive referencing and suggestions for further reading and research

Studying Education is essential reading for students on Education Studies or PGCE courses, as well as all of those interested in or involved with education or schooling.

Contributors: *Rebecca Allen, Clyde Chitty, Will Curtis, Barry Dufour, Diahann Gallard, Angie S. Garden, Debbie Le Play, Richard Waller*

"This book provides an authoritative, 'state of the art' introduction to the key disciplines of education studies. It provides useful study activities and concise introductory notes on key texts, key figures, key centres and key journals in each discipline. A valuable and highly readable addition to the education studies literature."
Clive Harber, Professor of International Education, University of Birmingham, UK

"This book aims to explore the disciplines that are the "foundation" education disciplines: History, Politics, Philosophy, Economics, Sociology, Psychology and Comparative Education. The editors claim that their key aim is to "provide a general overview of each subject [...] enabling the readers to explore each discipline in greater depth" (page1).

This book offers an overview of the disciplines that have been dominant in education. The disciplines the editors have chosen to include in this book thus illustrate a range of diverse approaches to the study of education. The book is written in an accessible style for undergraduate students embarking on inquiry into the nature of education studies and the disciplines that may be important.

Interestingly the chapters in this book will also help students to refine their understanding of historical, political, socio-economical and psychological aspects that are interrelated in the study of education. Although the authors of individual chapters develop a discussion of their discipline in each chapter, they successfully and consistently apply their disciplinarity thus offering students opportunities to discuss the

identity of education studies and debate the relevance of disciplines in the development of educational thought.

Chapter One offers a rigorous and critical approach to key historical developments in education, attempting a useful heuristic consideration to all levels of education and covering a number of factors such as women and education, ethnicity, race and religion in order that students are inducted into the wider socio-political developments of education. The second chapter offers a different, but relevant, dimension to the first chapter by examining the role of politics in education, debating issues around power, conflict and change and for the development of educational thinking such a chapter debating policy-making and politics is vitally important. The third chapter on philosophy of education is central to the study of the foundation disciplines of education as philosophical approaches influence and underpin education studies in terms of history, policy, research and practice. The next chapter debates the economics of education and is particularly welcomed especially in an era that there is a decline in the study of this topic.

The next two chapters examine sociological and psychological aspects of education studies. Finally the last chapter raises an interesting debate of the academic disciplinarity of comparative education, drawing upon the challenges of organisational support, funding and policy making.

Overall throughout the book the students are encouraged to avoid fragmentation and to develop an educational thinking beyond disciplinary perspectives without losing the relativity of education to these disciplines and their contribution to the development of the 21st educational thinking."
Ioanna Palaiologou, The University of Hull

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