

Williams feel limiting. Readers gain a good sense of how prestigious New England men's colleges navigated the mid-twentieth century, but hunger for discussion placing Wesleyan beyond that context. Finally, the last chapter on the 1960s pales in comparison to its predecessors. The material is covered more quickly and in a year-by-year approach lacking deep attention to matters such as the radical student movement or changes in the federal role. Although Potts acknowledges that the start of Wesleyan's "little university" period in the 1960s "is left to others to pursue" (p. 383), a reader nevertheless wishes for deeper coverage of that important decade. Overall, this history is clearly a labor of love by an alumnus with impeccable historical skills and keen appreciation for the value of institutional history. If every American college somehow commanded similar attention, our work as historical analysts would be immensely invigorated.

WHEATON COLLEGE

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Jack Schneider. *From the Ivory Tower to the Schoolhouse: How Scholarship Becomes Common Knowledge in Education*. Boston: Harvard Education Press, 2014. 272 pp. Hardcover \$65.00. Paper \$29.95.

What is the relationship between research and practice in K–12 classrooms and what does it tell us about American education? Jack Schneider considers this critical question in his 2014 book, *From the Ivory Tower to the Schoolhouse: How Scholarship Becomes Common Knowledge in Education*. Schneider argues that the bulk of educational research with practical implications, of which he claims there is plenty, rarely informs its intended audience—classroom teachers. He surmises this is due to the lack of time K–12 teachers have to consume it in any given workday, a structural problem over which they have little control. Schneider also contends that local control is a formidable obstacle to getting educational research to inform practice. On this point, Schneider laments the fact that the real benefits of educational research are lost because of decisions on "how things are taught" at the local level or, as he states, "when teachers close their classroom doors, they are the ultimate arbiters of teaching method" (p. 6). Schneider argues that we have a structural and cultural problem, but also that teachers are at the root of this predicament, since, as he claims, they have "the least capacity to consume research" yet "have the greatest power to implement it" (p. 6).

Schneider suggests that it would take a large coordinated effort to solve the research-practice gap, but offers historical cases where that

divide narrowed. In fact, Schneider argues that there have been particular scholarly ideas that have proven especially attractive to classroom teachers. These ideas possess four salient characteristics: perceived significance, philosophical compatibility, occupational realism, and transportability. The first characteristic of import for teachers is perceived significance. Teachers require research to be of practical value, and it needs to have universal value or, in other words, it must transfer across content and grade levels. According to Schneider, neither the celebrity of the scholar's institution nor the sophistication of the research design or robustness of its findings will convince teachers like the practicality of its implications. Second, teachers are interested in philosophical compatibility—research that supports beliefs they already hold as educators. This would include ideas such as “all children can learn” (p. 8). The third characteristic is occupational realism, which is the test of how expediently a research idea can be implemented within the context of the classroom. Ideas that can be adopted with ease would, in all likelihood, be readily accepted into more classrooms. The final and fourth characteristic Schneider offers is transportability. This element is key to Schneider's argument, since it focuses on the idea that research that is easily boiled down to a straightforward idea or set of ideas has a greater chance of wider dissemination among teachers.

Schneider takes these characteristics, applies them to four research ideas that he estimates met these criteria, and examines their history. He traces the research and implementation lives of Bloom's Taxonomy, multiple intelligences, the project method, and direct instruction. He devotes a chapter to each in which he details how the particular research-based practice was introduced to K–12 educators. Schneider explores why some of these ideas made headway quicker than others and how some had uneven acceptance, e.g., direct instruction, but remained popular, albeit if not with the same group of educators over time.

He also analyzes why ideas like multiple intelligences were readily picked up by teachers and applied to their classroom practice and marketed relentlessly by professional developers and curriculum publishers. To demonstrate further how these ideas succeeded over others, Schneider includes a chapter that examines competing ideas for each of those he highlighted as successful. He holds up these nonexemplars that did not meet his four characteristics, even though they possess value as educational research. This is an effective way to demonstrate how ideas that came about with similar attributes, but that did not meet all of the criteria, did not prove successful with teachers.

In the final section of the book, Schneider concludes by proposing a solution based on the four characteristics that, according to Schneider, make research more accessible and translatable to K–12 classroom teachers. He expands the notion of each characteristic by

suggesting ways that we might attach strategies to promote them. For example, perceived significance could be enhanced by having colleges of education serve as clearinghouses of research for that which is most significant and relevant for teaching and learning. He continues this idea with each characteristic and proposes ways in which scholars, for the most part, and to some degree teachers, policy makers, and others, can be engaged in solutions of bridging the research-practice divide. As he brings the book to a close, he attempts to thwart skeptics from taking issue with his solutions and the need to bring teachers to the table, rather than endorse reform efforts that sidestep them. Schneider's authenticity on this point is somewhat lacking: many of his solutions privilege the "ivory tower" over the "schoolhouse" and echo his comment that research needs to be vetted for teachers, since he believes they lack the capacity to understand it.

From the Ivory Tower to the Schoolhouse presents case studies of important research ideas with instructional implications. These historical accounts are valuable contributions to the history of education. Schneider also gives a solid answer to his central question: What is the relationship between research and practice in K-12 classrooms and what does it tell us about American education? The response is a textured one with a complicated and uneven relationship between educational research, teachers, and classroom practice due to the decentralized system of education in the United States. However, it is not lost on readers that this is of great concern and frustration to Schneider. Also of concern to him is that he believes teachers lack the capability, and perhaps the interest, in making sense of educational research to improve teaching and learning. This oversimplification of teachers detracts from the book's overriding aim at proposing solutions. A more nuanced approach would acknowledge that just as American education is diverse and complex, so are its teachers. Many teachers are quite capable of reading research and integrating it into their practice and have done so beyond the four examples Schneider gives. There is a wealth of educational research that can improve teaching and learning. The reality of a decentralized system of education does make it difficult to disseminate quality and practical research, but this means there is a great deal for researchers to learn about how to better reach their target audience—classroom teachers—which Schneider acknowledges. Perhaps solutions where we work jointly to learn together for our mutual benefit and, most importantly, the improved learning of K-12 students, are in order.