

Books and Articles

Callini Daniele(2008). *Arcani al lavoro. Metafisica della vita organizzativa*. Milano: FrancoAngeli.

[Mysteries at work. Organization life metaphysics]

The book talks about the general topic of the sense fall in working life and the different and most diffused forms of social and organization systems' uneasiness. It suggests a metaphysical path to recover the meaning and to face the new complexities.

Callini Daniele (2008). *Lezioni veneziane. Discorso sociologico e universi relazionali*. Milano: FrancoAngeli.

[Venetian lessons. Sociological speech and relational universes]

The book collects and arranges the themes developed during the sociological lessons, which the author run at the University Institution SISF in Venice. They analyse the socio-economic becoming, the post-industrial coming, the evolution of the communicative, cultural and symbolic processes of social actors.

Censi Antonietta (2008). *Famiglie e giovani. Esperienze, immagini e memorie*. Milano: Franco Angeli.

[Families and the Young, Experiences, images and memories]

A collection of autobiographical short stories have allowed to re-enact situations in which several aspects concerning the sense and the meaning of contemporary families can be recognized. By starting with some remarks about the various images and representations of the family, some different typologies of families that the Young have gone through during their life experiences, together with the related meanings, have been identified. In the young adults' short stories, the family appears as the starting point in the making of their Self through relation, fighting and consent with the others. As the family is the first place where a man' subjectivity reveals itself and where he is recognized, it does not provide only his belonging but his identity as well. By objectifying the past and by referring to the memories through a continuity among past, present and future, the young

adult can re-enact, in a critical and analytical way, the education received and the socialization path followed. The family, as it is portrayed by their authors in their short stories, meets their basic needs of protection, safety, affection, in each of their aspects. A clear attitude of well rooted appreciation for the parental institution and role appears in all biographies, even when the representation of either the crisis or the development of different family cycles emphasizes conflictual dynamics or imbalance in their affective relations.

Colombo Maddalena (eds), (2008). *Cittadini nel welfare locale. Una ricerca su famiglie, giovani e servizi per i minori*. Milano: FrancoAngeli.

[Citizens of local welfare. A survey on families, young-people, and services for children and younger]

The main agents of education policies are nowadays families, young people and social services. These elements are sociologically different but they find their common point in local welfare system (municipality or local community). Local community – which is usually identified with a municipality, a district or a social-system area, is a caring system based on one principle: the one according to which who needs help should receive it while staying in his/her life environment. Towards children, teenagers, and young people, furthermore, local community is also an education agency which comprehends institutions (like families and schools) and which connects them. But how do these educational agencies do networking? Which sort of participation can be obtained by citizens, both individually both considering their primary networks and associations, when projecting services for this age-groups of the population? The book analyses, through theoretical essays and data obtained by an empirical research, the role of “the local” in policies for families, childhood and youth and different form of involving users, while recalling the recent laws (L. 285/97 e L. 328/00) and their principles (integration, networking, subsidiary-help, participation). General considerations of the book are the back ground to a case-study, carried out in the town of Pioltello (Brescia), commissioned by the local Public Administration and realized with the Catholic University of Brescia and local associations of young people.

The research, carried out to define needs, attitudes and requests of young citizens, has been the pretext to start a positive and virtuous circle of local

participation which has given useful inputs to projecting local policies and has been an example for the active communication among families, associations, young people, local services and local municipality, far beyond the simple consultancy and distant-collaboration.

Colombo Maddalena e Varani A. (eds.) (2008). *Costruttivismo e riflessività. La formazione alla pratica di insegnamento*. Bergamo: Edizioni Junior.

[Constructivism and reflectivity. Training to the teaching practice]

The book presents an innovative way of teachers training, which can be transferred in other educational jobs. The book is divided into two parts: the first part deals with theoretical aspect of the epistemology and the didactic related to the constructivist perspective (where teacher is not only an agent who transmit knowledge but s/he builds cultural objects together with the student, supporting a constructive processes in him-her self as well as in the student) and with reflectivity as an “epistemology of practice”, according to the definition of D. A. Schön in his book *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* (where teacher is a social actor who works in a system of conditioning, limits, un-predicted events and where s/he learns continuously through experience).

The second part, as in an handbook, collect different experiences developed with this perspective within the schools for specialization in teaching in secondary school (Scuole di Specializzazione per l’insegnamento Secondario) from where the book takes examples, models of action, proposals, ideas to reflect upon, laboratory modules, about some themes like observation, auto-biography writing, group-cooperative learning and virtual environments. In these double sides, the books is targeted both to those who plan and put into action teacher training, both to teachers, trainers as well as teachers in training.

Colombo Maddalena (ed) (2008). *E-learning e cambiamenti sociali. Dal competere al comprendere*. Napoli: Liguori.

[E-learning and social chances. From competing to comprehending]

E-learning diffusion has introduced relevant consequences on values, practices and actors in training and education that can be analyzed from a

sociological perspective. The meaning of learning changes its meaning according to different contexts (schools, universities, professional training courses, public administration, private companies, medical sector etc) which are characterized by the use of new technologies. Thus, ways of access and of building knowledge are changing as well. The traditional functions carried out by the socialization process (integration, increasing productivity, social control) are redefined in an innovative perspective, through the challenge of tradition, of modern efficiency, of old hierarchies imposed by linear and vertical way of knowledge transmission. The volume explores, through theoretical essays, firstly the process of innovation and reorganization started by the introduction of e-learning system and, secondarily, the hypothesis that didactic technology – chosen to increase competitiveness of knowledge as a good – can bring to learning people a more active comprehension of the world, re-conquering knowledge as a common good.

Mentasti Laura, Ottaviano Cristiana, (2008). *Cento cieli in classe. Pratiche, segni e simboli religiosi nella scuola multiculturale*. Milano: Unicopli.

[One sky, hundred heavens in the classroom. Religious practices, signs and symbols in multicultural education]

The book deals with the possible living together of different religious practices, signs and symbols in multicultural education. This issue is very important nowadays and has very different responses in Europe, e.g. the so-called French law about headscarf or the Italian confirmation of crucifix in classrooms. As the number of students from different countries and with different religious beliefs is quickly increasing, the issue of inter-religious meeting and dialogue is now unavoidable. In Italian education there are many religious practices concerning food, clothes, festivities and traditions that sometimes lead up to “critical incidents”; nevertheless, the religious issue is not much explicitly faced and thematized.

The book offers an exploration of this issue through an analysis of the debate in European Union, France, Spain and Italy and the use of two field works; the first one gathers the voices of some specialists and the second one illustrates the results of interviews to some headmasters, teachers and cultural mediators in schools of two Italian towns characterized by a large number of immigrants.

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The aim of this work is to offer a detailed search, free from any defensive position or ideological alignment.

Serpieri Roberto (2008). *Governance delle politiche scolastiche. La Provincia di Napoli e le Scuole dell'autonomia*. Milano: FrancoAngeli.

[Governance of education policies. The Province of Naples and the self-managing Schools]

This book is about the emergence of governance processes after the school autonomy reform during the last ten years. The research illustrates the case of a local government (the Province of Naples) facing the challenges of devolution, that is implementing new ways of decision-making in the educational field. The establishment of new partnerships between local authorities, the autonomous schools and other institutional actors has been the principal aim for a strategy where a democratic discourse could be practiced. The main resources enabled have concerned networking logics, trust relations enacting and new forms of knowledge creation and mediation through ICT. Chapters in the book highlight how the efforts in constructing a new governance model inspired by the democratic discourse are still tackling the bureaucratic and professional path dependencies and the raising of a new subtle discourse of quasi-marketization. Issues such as the planning of educational provision, the promoting of new forms of social justice and educational equity are discussed.

Serpieri Roberto (2008). *Senza leadership. Un discorso democratico per la scuola. 1 Discorsi e contesti della leadership educativa*. Milano: FrancoAngeli.

[Without leadership. A democratic discourse for the school. 1. Discourses and contexts of education leadership].

A widespread map of education leadership literature is presented to the Italian public using discourses and contexts as interpretative devices. The introduction is about the epistemology and the ontology of the education leadership and three types of contexts of analysis are highlighted: categorical-individualistic, categorical-interactive and a network of practice type. Each of the following three chapters is dedicated to the interpretation of education leadership models in the light of the contexts and of one specific discourse. The first discourse is the bureaucratic-

professional one that could be also seen as a welfarist one. The second discourse is the emerging managerialist which is challenging the first one in the light of neoliberal education policies. And finally the democratic-critical discourse representing an alternative view on educational policies aimed at coniugating social equity and democratic citizenship with a renewing role of education encompassing also moral and emotional dimensions. The conclusive remarks the conception of a school *without leadership* is discussed.

Cobalti Antonio (2008). *L'istruzione in Africa* [Education in Africa], *Quaderno n. 42*, Dipartimento di Sociologia e Ricerca Sociale, Università di Trento, (available at www.soc.unitn.it/dsrs)

This "Quaderno", which is part of a larger study on education in the world, gives data and discusses problems of education in Sub-Saharan Africa. After highlighting the influence of colonial dominations in the continent (Part 1), the situation at the different levels of education is presented (Part 2). The main problems of education in Africa are examined, seeking the causes of the low educational attainment of the region -- among them, the extreme variety of languages, the dramatic increase of population, and the Aids catastrophe (Part 3). The reforms recommended by international organizations (privatisation and decentralization) and carried out by the states are shown in Part 4. Part 5 contains some final considerations on the role of the African state, and on the future perspectives of education in this region.

Cobalti Antonio (2007). *Globalizzazione e sistemi di istruzione verso forme di neoliberalismo. Una rassegna della letteratura.*[Globalization and education systems to neo-liberalism forms. A review of literature] Paper presented at the Italian Sociological Association (AIS) Congress, Urbino, Italy.

http://portale.unitn.it/ateneo/persone/antonio.cobalti/principali_interessi

Dei Marcello (2007). Devianza e fair play tra i banchi di scuola. La socializzazione del compito in classe [Deviance and Fair Play at school. Socialization of the in class task], in *Studi di sociologia*, n.4.

In Italy cheating at the school is not considered a social problem to face, and therefore does not receive any attention from the public nor any monitoring by the school boards and authorities, as instead happens with regard to violence and bullying. A first attempt to shed some light on this matter is presented here with the results of a national sample survey devoted to the classroom cheating of high school students. The evidence shows that during class assessment tests and exams cheating through a variety of deception devices including computer-based ones, is widely practised. The majority of the respondents claimed not to feel guilty for such behaviour because they considered not harmful to anyone. Teachers and headmasters do not worry much to prevent this form of deviance that jeopardizes basic values such as honesty and fair play. More research and more understanding are necessary, in order to change deeply this aspect of the school mores and to boost social responsibility and civic culture among the younger generations.