

Book Review:

Inviting Educational Leadership: Fulfilling Potential and Applying Ethics to the Education Process

by John M. Novak

L. C. MacFarlane (University of Potchefstroom)

M. P. van der Merwe (Rand Afrikaans University)

John Novak is unequivocal about his vision for schools and their role in society: "Schools can either be part of the solution or part of the problem." If schools are to be a part of the former, then they need to be unconditionally invitational. Invitational Education is the theory that informs his book *Inviting Educational Leadership: Fulfilling Potential and Applying Ethics to the Education Process*.

If educational leadership is to be truly successful, leadership will acknowledge that there are specific invitational ideals required as founding principles. There are five core invitational principles which underscore the notion that education is fundamentally an imaginative act of hope aimed at inviting all stakeholders to continuously savour, understand, and better their expectations.

The book is divided into three parts in order to deal comprehensively with the theory and practice of invitational leadership. The first part, entitled "Inviting Educational Lives", expounds the democratic ethos, perceptual tradition and self-concept theory that is integral to the theoretical framework and practice of Invitational Education. The second part, entitled "Leading and Managing Educational Life", examines the relationship that invitational leaders have with themselves and the notion of intentionality. It also considers the nature of inviting relationships, and suggests particular skills for managing conflict and philosophical differences. The educator's association with values and knowledge is then illuminated. Ways in which schools can be structured and re-structured

in order to invite an optimal educational experience are suggested. Finally, the symbiosis between invitational schools and their communities is discussed. The third section of the book, entitled “Dare to Lead for Education”, summarizes the book’s contents and exhorts the reader to strive for the realization of the potential of Invitational Education.

In Novak’s book, prominence is given to the importance of caring, democratic relationships or ‘doing-with’ relationships as opposed to ‘doing-to’ relationships. The style of the book embodies this principle: each chapter is preceded by an overview of the chapter, and concluded with conversational-style question and answers that expands the topics addressed in the chapters. Novak makes a point of indicating that his book is neither the panacea for leadership problems in education, nor is it the final authority on educational leadership. Instead, the emphasis is on discussion and encouragement of the reader to think in new and optimal ways about leading invitationally. Even the language of the book is invitational: the book is easy to read and readily comprehensible. In these stylistic aspects the reader is cared for and taken into consideration in the same manner as which Novak urges educational leaders to treat other stakeholders of education.

Ultimately, *Inviting Educational Leadership* is an inviting conversation about the merits of human interaction for educational purposes. In true Invitational style, it is incomplete: the reader needs to respond to the novel approaches outlined and think further. As such, it is an irreplaceable tool for every educator wishing to do more than merely teach or manage.

Linda MacFarlane is a Senior Lecturer at University of Potchefstroom (for Christian Higher Education) School of Educational Sciences.
opwlcmm@puknet.puk.ac.za

Guidelines for Authors

The *Journal for Invitational Theory and Practice* is published once a year and promotes the tenets of invitational learning, self-concept theory, and perceptual psychology. Articles that examine and expand the theory of invitational learning and development, investigate the efficacy of invitational practices, and relate these beliefs and findings to other theories of human development and behavior are encouraged.

The journal uses an anonymous review of articles and final decisions regarding publication are made by the Editor. On publication, authors receive two copies of the journal. Authors are asked to follow these guidelines when submitting articles for publication:

1. Prepare manuscripts in APA style. Refer to the Publication Manual, 5th Edition of the American Psychological Association.
2. Include an abstract of 50-100 words.
3. Double space everything, including reference, quotations, tables, and figures. Leave generous margins on each page.
4. Use tables and figures sparingly, and place them on separate pages. All artwork and diagrams should be camera-ready.
5. Place authors' names, positions, titles, mailing addresses, and email addresses on the cover page only.
6. Lengthy quotations require written permission from the copyright holder for reproduction. Authors are responsible for obtaining permissions and providing documentation to the journal.
7. Avoid the use of the generic masculine and feminine pronouns.
8. Please do not submit material that is currently being considered by another journal.
9. Authors are requested to provide a copy of the manuscript on a 3.5" computer disk, preferably IBM formatted. This will facilitate the review.
10. Please include email address, home phone number, and business phone number so that the editor may contact you quickly.
11. Send one copy of the manuscript and an electronic file on 3.5" computer disk to:

Phillip S. Riner, Editor Phone: (904) 620-2610
College of Education and Human Services FAX: (904) 620-2522
University of North Florida email: priner@unf.edu
4567 St. Johns Bluff Road, South <http://www.prenhall.com/riner>
Jacksonville, FL 32224-2645