

A Lifetime of Learning

The Wisdom of Practice: Essays on Teaching, Learning, and Learning to Teach by Lee S. Shulman
edited by Suzanne M. Wilson

Teaching as Community Property: Essays on Higher Education by Lee S. Shulman
edited by Pat Hutchings
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Lee S. Shulman is widely acknowledged as a pioneer in the field of research on teaching and learning. Two recently published volumes of Shulman's work—*The Wisdom of Practice: Essays on Teaching, Learning, and Learning to Teach* and *Teaching as Community Property: Essays on Higher Education*—pull together, for the first time, his most interesting essays. While the publication of these books is significant enough, it is the care with which this compilation was executed that makes the sum greater than the parts. Thoughtful, illuminating introductions, for example, situate each essay within the collection and provide a context for it within the dialogue on public education in which it was first written. Readers new to these topics are thus provided the opportunity to read each essay by itself and as part of an ongoing discourse.

The Wisdom of Practice: Essays on Teaching, Learning, and Learning to Teach, a collection of 23 essays edited by Suzanne M. Wilson, traces Shulman's work from

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researching methods of medical problem-solving to his ground-breaking work with K–12 teacher education and, ultimately, his research addressing the subject-specific nature of teaching and learning. What marks these efforts is his commitment to pushing education researchers to use multiple modes of investigation and to undertake collaboration with classroom teachers. Shulman has dedicated much of his career to helping teachers articulate what they know works and then to cajoling researchers to listen closely to these reports from the field. Shulman tackles such questions as, “What are the most effective approaches to teaching?” “How can we enable schools to become institutions in which teachers, as well as students, are learners?” And, “How do we construct school reform efforts successfully?” Throughout his career, Shulman repeatedly asks “What makes teaching so difficult?”

In the second volume, *Teaching as Community Property: Essays on Higher Education* edited by Pat Hutchings, Shulman in a sense “comes home” to address the substantial issues embedded in current practices of teaching and learning in higher education. Here, he offers a historical perspective and sharp analysis of how higher education came to the false but insidious divide between research and teaching. He brings a new analysis and fresh perspective to the pressing issues of faculty roles and rewards and the future of liberal education and its relationship to professionalism.

Collected together, the essays in this two-volume set provide an absorbing introduction to Shulman’s intellectual biography. Through these works, we witness Shulman’s efforts to model that, first and foremost, teaching and research on teaching is best seen as a complex social endeavor. Readers see the evolution of his ideas in relationship to his intellectual and practice-based mentors and colleagues, and are able to follow how the values manifested in his current work relate to, and depart from, earlier pioneers.

Future scholars and historians will benefit from this documentation of Shulman’s many contributions to education. These essays continue to provoke, stimulate, and sharpen our aspirations for public education. In his apt revision of the George Bernard Shaw quip, Shulman says, “Those who can, do. Those who understand, teach.” Lee S. Shulman is just such a teacher. 