

Book Review Section

Section Introduction

Naturally, one might hope, or otherwise expect, that like the diversity of complexity-inspired theorists and practitioners, a diverse range of book reviews on a number of different topics of interest to the journal's readers will appear here in the journal's Book Review Section. Certainly, my predecessor, Kris Wells, did a marvelous job to encourage and help bring forth much of the fine material that has appeared in previous issues. Kris has set the bar rather high for the consistent quality and number of book reviews that have appeared here; it will be a challenge to follow in his footsteps. Nevertheless, we will try.

Bradford McCall, from Regent University (USA), offers his review on *In the Theater of Consciousness: The Workspace of the Mind* by Bernard Baars. As McCall writes, Baars, who is a Senior Fellow in theoretical neurobiology at The Neurosciences Institute in San Diego, California, "brings the reader to the frontlines of the consciousness debate, offering an expansive overview of how top scientists currently understand conscious experience." His original work, from 1997, is a continuation of the work and early thought on human consciousness by American philosopher William James. In particular, Baar presents a model of consciousness based upon the metaphor of a theatre—a metaphor with "considerable heuristic value."

While the literature on leadership appears to be rather vast, as any trip to the section in your local bookstore will suggest, school leadership is found to be somewhat scarce—from a complexity perspective anyway. In this issue of *Complicity*, Brian Beabout from the University of New Orleans reviews Keith Morrison's *School Leadership and Complexity Theory*. As Beabout notes, reviewing a book that has been in circulation for a few years can be a challenge when such works have already been reviewed. Still, the redundancy of another review for the readers of this journal is probably not a bad idea. Surely, we will all benefit from additional or other insights into Morrison's thoughts on leadership and the governance of self-organizing systems. In particular, Beabout offers some thoughts on possible gaps and contradictions in Morrison's own work—especially the role on school-wide planning and the paradox of leadership in self-organizing systems.

Rachel Moll of the University of British Columbia (Canada) considers two different, and yet overlapping, texts in this issue of *Complicity: Joseph Tainter's The Collapse of Complex Societies* and Jared Diamond's *How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*. Moll's review is an extended review of Tainter's and Diamond's work and notes that their work is often referenced most extensively for their detailed studies of a range of past civilizations that have succeeded and come and gone. In this review, Moll considers how a complexity framework might inform a particular understanding of Tainter's and Diamond's work on the life and death of great complex civilizations.

In every case this far, our reviewers have considered books that have focused upon particular scales of phenomena—certainly phenomena different in substance, but not necessarily structure. In the review of *Questioning Technology: Electronic Technologies and Educational Reform* by Karen Ferneding, Valerie Triggs from the University of British Columbia (Canada) takes up another phenomenon—the consideration of technology in light of educational reforms. Speaking from the personal perspective of teaching for 15 years in Canada, Triggs considers Ferneding's work which describes how technologies function as social structures and as background features that have defined and regulated patterns of human interaction.

As the Book Review Editor, I hope that the readers of this journal will continue to help inform the larger community with further readings and reviews of classic and contemporary texts. If you should happen to know about a new or forthcoming text please let me know. Finding someone to review these works can be arranged for the benefit of us all.

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