Hong Kong are but two examples of the changing landscape for higher education, though different in scale.

East Asia is a huge geographical area encompassing a population of almost 2 billion. With the variety of cultures and traditions, it would be impossible to inclusively document higher education issues. Instead, Yee identified "native scholars . . . when feasible" (p. 14) and commissioned chapters "to deal with leading issues and trends" (p. 15). This approach has worked well and, on the whole, has produced a useful and agreeable volume.

Novak, John M. (Ed.). *Democratic Teacher Education: Programs, Processes, Problems and Prospects.* Albany, NY: SUNY Press. 1994. Pp. viii, 262 including notes and index.
Reviewed by Ken Osborne, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba.

Perhaps the best way to describe this book is to use the words of its editor, John Novak of Brock University. It is "a deliberate attempt to focus attention on the creative work and struggles of democratic teacher educators" (p. vii). It contains thirteen chapters, most of which describe an approach, a programme, or a project, in pre-service or in-service teacher education, all except for one in the United States, and all of which have some claim to be democratic.

To say this, of course, is to raise the question: what is democratic teacher education? Is it a way of incorporating democratic principles into teacher education programmes? Is it a way of organizing teacher education so that its graduates incorporate democratic principles into their own teaching? In either case, what are these principles and what entitles them to be called democratic? Is it a way of organizing teacher education so that in some way it contributes to the greater democratization of social and civic life? Or is it a combination of all three possibilities?

This last position is the one taken by all the contributors to this book. They are agreed that that contemporary American society, and by extension liberal capitalist society generally, represents at best a weak form of democracy, and that schools do not do nearly enough to prepare the young for democratic citizenship. They are also agreed that schools can and must make a vital contribution to democratic life. As Novak puts it: "If democracy is to become a way of life in contemporary North American society, we certainly need to have schools with strong democratic commitments" (p. 1). As this quotation suggests, the contributors to this book all follow, sometimes explicitly, the path pioneered by

John Dewey. Like Dewey, they believe that schools and universities can and should be democratized, and that a democratized education will contribute to a more democratic society.

They, however, do not say enough about what democracy and democratic education are. Or, to put it more precisely, one finds different emphases and priorities among the contributors. Novak, in his introduction, equates democracy with participation in "the self rule of all in their society" (p. 1), thus giving democracy a suitably political dimension. He elaborates on this definition by following Dewey, especially the version of Dewey to be found in Robert Westbrook's recent biography, in seeing democracy as a combination of participation, community, and self-development.

One or two contributors focus specifically on the notion of democracy as community and take it, in fact, to a point that worries at least this reviewer. Thus, one contributor describes democracy largely in terms of the "caring community", which is defined as "one that centers first on the development, sustenance, and health of the community itself." This is justified on the grounds that every member of a community needs to feel "safe and trusted, and trusting." Furthermore, "Together, a community can achieve anything. This community is what a democratic, consensus-driven ecology must be about" (p. 131). One can certainly agree that we could do with a greater sense of community, in both schools and society, but the viewpoint represented by these quotations seems rather to underplay the coercive, authoritarian potential of community in forcing its members into its all-encompassing embrace. This worry becomes stronger when one goes on to read of an "organic" community: "A community that is viewed as organic fosters the elements needed for survival because as it lives and evolves. A social transformation is created that provides both personal and communal freedom" (p. 131). Perhaps so, but it is well to bear in mind the liberal worries about the possibility that community might not in fact promote individual freedom so much as stifle it, as voiced in the liberal-communitarian debates of the last few years.

Some other contributors share this belief in the democratic potential of community. As one of them writes: ". . . out of our collective intelligence comes a peculiar kind of democracy made of trust, passion, attentiveness, justice, and caring support. This kind of democracy works for us because the elements of community are what bind us, not laws, or power, or convention" (p. 26). Personally, however, I cannot shake off the fear that this kind of communitarian democracy might work for 'us' only by excluding whoever is defined as 'not us.' I am not so willing to shrug off the ties of law and convention as foundational elements of democracy. We have seen too much in this

century of people riding rough-shod over law and convention in the name of some supposed community. Despite all the talk of community in the flood of recent writing about citizenship and democracy, there are many ambiguities in the concept that need to be clarified. It cannot be used as a simple talisman to ward off the problems that now confront us. It is is not enough to speak of community, *tout court,* without further nuance or qualification.

Other contributors speak of democracy not in terms of community but rather of participation and empowerment, but at times in a worryingly value-free way. One of them writes: "When we take seriously the democratic mission of schooling, it means . . . ensuring that all engage in developing a sense of school community and that what is learned is used to make a difference in the world outside the school" (p. 16). What, one wonders, is to happen to those who do not want to belong to the kind of community that the school seeks to create? More fundamentally, surely everything depends on what kind of community is envisaged and what kind of difference is intended in the world beyond the school. Empowerment and participation are not ends in themselves, but rather means to other ends. Years ago, for example, when I underwent military training, a good deal of emphasis was placed on participating and on feeling empowered, but it was done in the interest of military efficiency, not of democracy. Another contributor lists the "critical skills" required by democracy and describes them as "problem-solving, decision-making, critical thinking, creative thinking, community, organization, cooperation, collaboration, management, leadership, independent learning, and documentation" (p. 155). They describe the more enlightened kind of military training perfectly, as they do the spate of recent rhetoric about training for the the workplace of the future. In other words, such skills, like the concepts of empowerment and participation, are value-free. It is too easy to see them as somehow distinctively democratic.

This sort of taken-for-grantedness about the concept of democracy shows itself also in the discussion of democratic education, which the contributors overwhelmingly equate with capital-P Progressivism. They see democratic education as resting solidly on a foundation of whole language, cooperative learning, authentic assessment, community service, student-centred learning and the rest. Thus, one of the contributors describes the process by which she and her colleagues chose schools as settings for student-teachers to learn and practise the principles of democratic education: "Our first priority was to identify several elementary schools engaged in democratic education, defined by us as practicing such strategies as whole language, cooperative learning, authentic assessment and other techniques that ensure equitable learning opportunities in classrooms" (p. 105). Later, this same contributor lists some of these other techniques. They

include "... integrative curriculum, developmentally appropriate non-graded primary classrooms, team approaches to intermediate grade level teaching, and an increasing movement toward site-based management" (p. 108). Another contributor writes: "... we believe democracy is best taught as a process and best learned through active participation in decision-making, as well as active participation in classroom work" (p. 13). Or again, "... democratic education can best be ensured by empowering students at all levels" (p. 103).

There is, of course, a certain truth to this notion of democracy as process, but it takes us only so far. It is obviously true that a richer and more powerful democratic life will depend on a higher level of civic engagement than now exists. However, it is equally true that democracy involves more than simply empowerment and participation, for fascists, racists and assorted other anti-democrats can, and often do, feel highly empowered and participative, and also feel highly committed to a certain sense of community. The fundamental question must be this: once students are empowered and are ready to participate, what will they use their skills and powers to do? What will ensure that they will use them in the interests of democracy?

Teaching strategies that give more power, choice and responsibility to students might well build students' self-confidence and autonomy, but they do not in and of themselves build democracy. The most powerful democratic theorists did not themselves have a democratic education. One thinks, for example, of John Stuart Mill, of Jean Jaurès, of Rosa Luxemburg, of G.D.H. Cole, of Harold Laski, of C.B. Macpherson, of R.H. Tawney, of Jefferson and his contemporaries, even of Dewey himself — all had what can only be called a decidedly non-democratic education. What their education did give them however, was a solid grounding in history, literature, philosophy, and the essentials of liberal learning. They came to democracy, not because they had experienced democratic classrooms, but because of the problems they confronted and the ideas that they thought about — ideas that arose from and were embedded in a rich and intensive knowledge.

The projects described in this book, however, say little about the role or kinds of knowledge that are needed in democratic education. They emphasize process rather than knowledge. But it is surely true that citizens in a democracy do not only have to be empowered; they also need to think, and to think about issues and choices and courses of action. And none of this can be satisfactorily done without knowledge and ideas. It could be, for example, that a close study of a book such as David Held's *Models of Democracy,* or Bowles and Gintis's *Capitalism and Democracy,* or Ann Phillips' *Engendering Democracy,* not to

mention the old philosophical classics, will do more for democratic education than any amount of whole language teaching or activity-based learning can do.

The role of knowledge and ideas is addressed specifically in two contributions to this book. Thomas Kelly of John Carroll University describes an approach to teacher education which treats student-teachers as "emerging subject matter scholars" who "know and love their discipline in depth" and who "exemplify and appreciate the benefits of a liberal education" (p. 69), though he does not explain just what form this liberal education should take. Keith Hillkirk, of Ohio University, takes us further in describing the Teacher Education for Civic Responsibility programme, which is organized around the "civic mission of teachers to educate their students about the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy" (p. 90). The programme contains a liberal arts core that is designed specifically to lead students to think about issues of "public responsibility and democratic government." In addition, students have to take a sequence of courses in Democracy and Education, where they explore the "writings and ideas of people like Jefferson, Madison and Dewey" (p. 93).

Kelly and Hillkirk remind us that democratic education is more than a matter of process. One of the contributors to this book quotes Maxine Greene to the effect that "When people cannot name alternatives, imagine a better state of things . . . they are likely to remain anchored and submerged even as they proudly assert their autonomy" (p.27). It is difficult to name alternatives or imagine a better state of things if one does not have a rich store of knowledge and ideas. And if teachers are not introduced to them, they are unlikely to pass them on to their students, no matter how student-centered and empowering their classrooms might be.

All this said, however, this is a book that should be read by anyone concerned with teacher education. Its case-studies will be of interest to anyone looking for alternative approaches. More important, it reminds us that teacher education has an important part to play in the education of democratic citizens, and that democratic citizenship is or should be the concern of us all.