

# REVIEWS

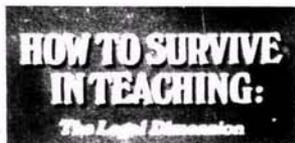
**How to Survive in Teaching: The Legal Dimension.** M. Chester Nolte. Chicago: Teach 'em, 1978—  
Reviewed by Perry A. Zirkel, Dean and Professor, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

In this practical paperback, Nolte has applied the complexities of school law to the realities of school lore. The result is a readable, understandable, and enjoyable book that fits nicely on one's "Education Law" bookshelf between the section for weighty texts and reference books and that for journals and looseleaf services.

The "survival" emphasis of the cover and the prefatory pages are a regrettable reflection of the PYR (protect your rear) mentality of many professional educators today. The odds of being directly involved in litigation seem to be overestimated. The difficulties of clearly determining the state of the law are underestimated.

The content is compact yet comprehensive. The focal group is teachers although the traditional administrator audience is not neglected. In the five core chapters, rights are emphasized more than responsibilities. These core chapters deal with employment security, collective bargaining, academic freedom, tort liability, and student control. The introductory first chapter follows the format it describes. The anticlimatic final chapter is on selecting a lawyer.

The forte of the book is its format. Each chapter consists of a brief explanatory narrative, the condensed fact situations of five representative cases, a series of questions and answers arranged by subtopic, and the actual decision in each of the five "caselets." The introductory narratives are lucid and direct in Noltean tradition. The cases are wisely chosen and concisely summarized. The question-



By M. CHESTER NOLTE



teach em

and-answer section is generally well done. The task of reducing the material into frequently asked and sequentially ordered questions with direct, succinct answers should not be underestimated, as my recent experience preparing a school law handbook for Connecticut has taught me. My only concern with the format is to question the separation between the facts and decisions of the representative caselets. The juxtaposition of these two subsections would reinforce the question-and-answer format of the succeeding section and would reduce the inevitable page-flipping to find the decision. If separation is desirable to protect against peeking, then the decisions might better be placed at the end of the book in a specifically coded section.

On a micro level, one could pick nits until the author's hair is pulled out. For example, case citations are omitted in some spots. Legislation and administration

regulations are largely neglected—for example, P.L. 94-142 and Title IX. Jurisdictional differences are not emphasized enough.

However, on a macro level, the good points of the book far outweigh the inevitable minor imperfections. The language is admirably nontechnical. Nolte employs legal terms only when essential, and then he provides clear parenthetical explanations. The Table of Cases not only facilitates the reference value of the book, but also reveals its extraordinary readability. Nolte has blended over 250 cases into the simple question-and-answer dialog.

In an age of inflation, Nolte's school law primer for teachers should not be undervalued.

**School Discipline Desk Book.** Eugene Howard. West Nyack, New York: Parker Publishing Company, Inc., 1978.—Reviewed by Carol M. Simmons, Doctoral Candidate, Seattle University, Seattle, Washington.

Howard provides an exciting, relevant, practical, timely, readable challenge to educators who are willing to risk modifying the nature of schools in order to more effectively serve their clientele. This book may be considered controversial, as it puts out to pasture many of the sacred cows held dear by traditional educators. The author has collected examples of nearly 100 schools where unconventional principals and principles have been effective in reducing

absenteeism, violence, and vandalism; improving academic standing; promoting community support; and raising self-esteem of both students and staff members.

Because many educators are continually searching for "cook-book" approaches to practical pedagogy, this book provides easy references. From the administrator who is looking for a "no-cut" policy to implement in athletics to those interested in the discussion of specific problems such as the ego-satisfactions of student leaders; revision of student rights; the grading, grouping, and gratifications of the educational process; and so on, this book is a viable and productive treatment of current educational concerns and practices.

While the text does not specifically address "desegregation," many of the approaches suggested contribute to a successfully integrated school, as evidenced by an illuminating discussion in Chapter I. In this chapter, Howard describes a high school in Seattle that serves multiethnic, urban, low socioeconomic students, and that practices many of the humanistic approaches he advocates. Results have included reductions in violence, van-

dalism, and absenteeism; improved academic achievement; and increased positive social relationships among all students and staff members. I am able to confirm what he says because I am presently serving as vice-principal (disciplinarian, if you will) of the school.

I strongly feel that applying the approaches Howard has so carefully compiled in this book will assist us as educators. The success inherent in these techniques is definitely worth the risk of being labeled "soft, permissive, liberal, conned, manipulated" by those educators who are unwilling to afford learners within our charge a humane, caring relationship. Howard's text supports this thesis by reporting in a responsible manner the successful implementation of such caring practices throughout our nation.

**Community Control in Education: A Study on Power Transition.** *Thomas E. Glass and William D. Sanders.* Midland, Michigan: Pendell Publishing Co., 1978. Reviewed by John



*Correction: On page 417 of the March issue of EL, we pictured the wrong Frank Gray as author of the article "Does 'Management by Objectives' Work in Education?" The correct photo of Frank Gray is pictured above. EL sincerely regrets this error.*

*R. Madden, Superintendent of Schools, Williamstown Public Schools, Williamstown, Massachusetts.*

The title of this book sparked my interest immediately. I looked forward with some anticipation to reading a study that applied concepts from the disciplines of political science and sociology to analyze a specific phenomenon that had taken place in Detroit. I felt that as a nonurban school administrator I would come away from the book with a deeper insight into power realities in an urban setting. Regrettably, the book fell far short of my expectations. The breadth and depth of analysis I found wanting, and the writing was less than interesting; it seemed disjointed, and it was lacking in conceptual structure, having little thread to hold the fabric of the analysis together.

Three chapters of the book (5-7), which report the raw data collected in the study, make up the best part of the book. From the responses to the survey, the reader can draw his or her own conclusions. In balance, however, the price (\$9.50) is, in my judgment, too much to pay.

If you would like to review books or other media for *Educational Leadership*, write to us, listing your interests and areas of expertise. It will be especially helpful if you enclose a sample of your writing.

## Reviewers



Perry A. Zirkel



Carol M. Simmons

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