Role Models for Handicapped

Disabled teaching assistants model healthy emotional and social development for handicapped learners in a unique program in Albany, California. The program has been highly successful in helping students allay anxieties over their disabilities.

The "Responsive Education Program for Special Needs Kids" is based on three principles: cognitive growth is supported by development of problem-solving skills, affective growth is fostered by healthy self-concepts, and social growth is prompted by recognizing and accepting differences.

Discussion by disabled teaching assistants of how they adapt to the "functional nuisances" of their handicaps adds a new dimension to mainstream classrooms. The project demonstrates that, almost automatically, the presence of disabled adults in the classroom opens the curriculum and encourages different ways of learning—for students and teachers.


High School for Engineers

A magnet High School for Engineering Professions in Houston attracts 400 gifted and talented students to the campus of predominantly-black Booker T. Washington High School. The HSEP program offers science and math courses with concentrations in computer use, engineering drawing, creative design, engineering laboratory, engineering analysis, and electronics.

Students attend seven classes each day by remaining in school for an extra hour. Their heavy work load emphasizes problem solving and analysis skills. Student enthusiasm is a source of pride as is the student body make-up: 40 percent are female and in ethnic make-up 50 percent are Black, 35 percent White, and 15 percent Hispanic.

In three graduating classes, all students have gone on to college and follow-up studies show that HSEP graduates do well there.

HSEP courses balance theoretical with manipulative experiences designed to provide functional understanding of engineering principles in each content area. Rather than pull down and put together mechanical components, analysis and correction of problems is emphasized.


Minnesota Computer Consortium

Minnesota's 433 school districts now receive both educational and administrative computer services through the Minnesota Educational Computer Consortium (MECC). The consortium brings together the resources of the University of Minnesota, the State University System, the Community College System, and the State Department of Education with computer hardware that can serve up to 400 users simultaneously.

Schools teach computer programming through the system to students of all ages as a tool to strengthen reasoning and problem-solving skills. The system contains a library of over 400 instructional applications that teachers select for use at convenient times. Students and teachers often share programs they develop and such programs are available to all users through a simple transaction at the donor's terminal.

Some 2,000 on-line terminals and another 2,000 microcomputers are used for instruction with about half a million hours of use logged on the MECC timeshare system alone.


Motivation in the Middle Grades

Astronauts, mountain climbers, authors, naturalists, and aquanauts recount their adventures for students in the middle grades in Henrietta, New York, to motivate students toward personal and career exploration. Students eagerly interact with these celebrities in ways that assembly programs or video access cannot duplicate.

The program, "Encounters in Excel-
Women in Education

NANCY S. OLSON

• MOVING UP
The American Council on Education's Office of Women in Higher Education has set up a National Identification Program to establish contacts among academic women and between these women and educational policy makers and employers. The goal of NIP is to help qualified women move into top positions in academic administration.

Through the program, state and national panels of leaders in higher education identify, refer, and support women who show administrative promise. Now operating in 42 states and two metropolitan areas, NIP also sponsors national forums that enable women to discuss important education issues as well as personal advancement.

For more information, contact the American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036. Phone: (202) 833-4700.

• A WOMAN'S YELLOW PAGES
A national directory of more than 500 up-to-date listings of organizations concerned with women's issues, A Woman's Yellow Pages, has been published by the Federation of Organizations for Professional Women. Included in the listing are government agencies, research institutes, clearinghouses, publishers, and other groups.

To order, send a self-addressed mailing label and check for $5 to the Federation of Organizations for Professional Women, 2000 P St., N.W., Suite 403, Washington, DC 20036.

• SCHOLARLY WOMEN
In Female Scholars: A Tradition of Learned Women Before 1800, J.R. Brink sketches the lives of ten women who attained remarkable levels of scholarship and learning in Western Europe and the Americas. The book presents the achievements of these women and the difficulties they encountered by attempting the unusual.

Available from Edin Press Women's Publications in Montreal for $17.95.

• YOU ARE HOW YOU EAT
Children learn a great deal about sex roles from interactions they observe at mealtime, according to research psychologist Michael Lewis of Educational Testing Service.

The family—specifically the dinner table—as a learning environment was researched by ETS's Institute for the Study of Exceptional Children by videotaping 50 families at mealtime.

The families consisted of two parents and one to four children and represented a heterogeneous group. "From working poor to Princeton aristocracy," says Lewis, "We use dinner to tell our kids what to do," he says. "For example, regardless of class, the mother was most likely to bring the food to the table. Even if children know that Mommy is a lawyer, what they see is traditional behavior at home. So that's what they learn. We saw no differences in sexual stereotyping between the children of women who work and those who don't."

"Some American Families at Dinner," will be a chapter in a forthcoming ETS book.

• NONSEXIST IMAGES IN THE CLASSROOM
The Women's Action Alliance, a national center on women's issues, has pioneered the development of non sexist, multicultural, multicultural early childhood classroom materials through their Non sexist Child Development Project.

The Alliance also sponsors Project Reed (Resources on Educational Equity for the Disabled). The first national conference on issues of educational equity for disabled women and girls (scheduled for Berkeley, California, in June 1982) will highlight Project Reed's second year in existence.

A major goal of the Project is to incorporate the images of children and adults with disabilities into the early childhood classroom.

For more information, contact Woman's Action Alliance, Inc., 340 Lexington Ave., New York, NY. Phone: (212) 532-8330.

• FIELD EXPERIENCE HANDBOOK
The recently published Women's Studies Service Learning Handbook is a compendium of essays and course materials offering an overview of current practice, models, and concerns in feminist field experience education.

The Handbook is published by the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA), an organization that supports teachers, administrators, and students in women's studies programs as well as those involved in feminist education in the community. Members receive the Women's Studies Quarterly.

For more information, contact NWSA at the University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742. Phone: (301) 454-6195.

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Note to Readers: The authors of these columns welcome feedback and contributions. Address items to Editor Educational Leadership, 225 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314.
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