



## We've All Got Scars: What Boys and Girls Learn in Elementary School

Raphaela Best  
Bloomington, Indiana:  
Indiana University Press, 1983.

—Reviewed by Janet T. Bernstein, ASCD  
Reviews Editor

*We've All Got Scars* is an utterly original work. Author/researcher Best, a reading specialist, set out to discover why so many more boys than girls have reading problems. By observing and befriending a class of students as they move from 1st grade through 6th grade, Best becomes privy to that secret and often cruel process of gender role education that children conduct for each other. She discovers the "second curriculum"—how cultural norms for masculinity and femininity are transmitted out of the sight and hearing of adults.

Best reveals the dynamics of male peer group formation as the boys move from the simple criterion of sheer physical dominance in the first grade to the much more complex and subtle criteria separating winners from losers in the third grade, when caste lines become fixed for the remainder of elementary school. A stark tally of the boys' reading scores, which correspond to the boys' acceptance by the ruling "Tent Club," reveals the devastating academic impact of exclusion. The excluded boys are either "crybabies" or those who fail to get the message that mothers, teachers, and other females are to be either "hated" or "defied."

Instead of making friends among themselves, the boys in the loser group dabble in half-hearted friendships with other loser boys, and are sometimes reduced to the ignominy of playing with girls. In order to neutralize the inevitable teasing from the winner boys, the losers are compelled to talk about their

girls as sexual objects. A teacher is mystified when a boy who had been so helpful and good unaccountably beats up a girl. Another teacher, noticing that some boys don't have friends, tries to help by moving desks around and totally loses control of the class as the powerful in-group simply restores the desks to their original, and exclusionary, formation. Loser boys are more apt to steal, vandalize, or kill animals for fun because, according to Best, they are so desperate to prove their toughness to the members of the coveted inner circle. Their academic achievement takes a beating when they divert so much of their energy into the all-important quest for peer acceptance.

Meanwhile, primary-grade girls are content to please their teachers. Learning to read goes more smoothly for them than for the boys because there is no need to defy the teacher's expectations in order to establish gender identity. But as girls proceed to upper elementary grades, they begin to understand that they are second-class citizens in the dominant culture that has already been established by the boys. Successful girl ballplayers are only allowed to play on sufferance. Not only must they do cleaning chores, they must also quietly endure the boys' taunts about doing lowly work. Best begins to lament the fact that girls and boys cannot be simply friends. "Liking" somebody of the opposite sex is equated with romantic love, which is equated with sex, and therefore to be avoided. The opposite of "liking" is "hating," which has a prominent role in elementary peer group relationships.

Since the kids lack even a vocabulary to express genuine friendship across sexual lines, Best attempts an intervention in the best traditions of a reading specialist—she gets the kids to talk about their feelings about friendship, liking, and hating. At first her efforts seem futile. In the 5th grade, the more "feminine" girls continue to harbor their

romantic dreams of marriage and babies even as their mothers go out to work; the more androgenous girls seem to accept the boys' view that they are odd, even if useful in games and school projects. But in 6th grade, the girls begin to demand, and get, some respect. They challenge the boys' stereotypes without apparent damage to the self-esteem of the boys.

The book tracks this same class of children through their junior high school career. Their more wholesome view of cross-sex friendship is driven underground as they meet students who have never had the chance to talk about these issues with each other and whose view of gender roles remains inside the cultural stereotype of taboo or exploitation. But by the time Best's children reach the 9th grade, they set the tone for peer relationships in the school. To these children, love is not a four-letter word but a feeling that grows out of mutual respect and the capacity to care.

*We've All Got Scars* is an important book. It liberates a kind of knowing that all adults have, but have selectively forgotten. It reminds us that the content of the curriculum is not always uppermost in the minds of our children as they struggle with the all-important reality of friendship, love, and eventual marriage and family life. If schools are to succeed at their appointed task, the dysfunctional aspects of the "second curriculum" need to be fully understood. Raphaela Best has made an impressive start.

Available from Indiana University Press for \$12.95.

## Using the Right Brain in the Language Arts

Richard Sinatra and Josephine Stahl-Gemake  
Springfield, Illinois:  
Charles C. Thomas, 1983.

—Reviewed by Arnold Willems, University of Wyoming, Laramie.

A review and analysis of research concerning the differing functions of the parts of the brain, types of brain research, learning styles, and the influence of the media precede a presentation and discussion of teaching strategies for elementary school language arts. Given that the left hemisphere has been determined to be the more verbal, strategies to teach a right-brain dominant child with a less verbal orientation are rare and urgently needed. The approach is holistic, synthesizing from whole to part rather than analyzing from part to whole. The authors refute the back-to-basics syndrome, with its emphasis on academics and analytical and digital approach, as being unfair and unrealistic for those children with a right-brain orientation.

Educators will find this a most valuable resource for improving the language arts abilities of children.

Available from Charles C. Thomas, 2600 S. First St., Springfield, IL 62717.

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### Paideia Problems and Possibilities

Mortimer J. Adler  
New York:

Macmillan Publishing Co., 1983.

—Reviewed by Charlie Coffman, Fayetteville, North Carolina.

Mortimer Adler has turned the problems of the Paideia Proposal into 31 questions, most of which he attempts to answer in *Problems and Possibilities*. He separates them into four categories: (1) 19 questions on curricular framework; (2) four questions on the application of the program to students and their reaction to it; (3) four questions on teachers and training; and (4) four questions on matters of organization, administration, and finance.

Adler acknowledges the problems of implementation related to subject matter organization, piecemeal implementation of the proposal, selection of didactic materials, foreign language adopted for all to study, years of schooling allotted to each element in the proposal, preschool and supplementary instruction for slow learners, and the

need to completely reconstruct the teacher training programs in this country. This last problem (teacher training) is basic to realizing the Paideia proposal.

The problems can be overcome by those with faith, notwithstanding the political process of decision making—Adler's plea is summed up in his own words:

The plan is not utopian. There is no empirical evidence that it's recommendation goes beyond the bounds of the possible. They (public school officials and teachers) must persist in the knowledge that whatever is within the bounds of possibility can be done. They must proceed with faith in their own ingenuity to cut through Gordian Knots. They must have the courage to stumble through hours of darkness to the dawn of a new day for our public schools (pp. 81–82).

Public education is not nearly so susceptible to change as Adler suggests. Private preschools will find the concepts of the Paideia Proposal more acceptable among their constituents.

Available from Macmillan Publishing Co., 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022, for \$3.95.

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### Evaluating Administrative Performance: Current Trends and Techniques

Elio Zappulla  
Belmont, California:

Star Publishing Company, 1983.

—Reviewed by James Green, Franklin College, Franklin, Indiana.

The public has not overlooked the importance of the administrator in its most recent scrutiny of schools. In fact, increasing attention is being given to the need to evaluate administrators as well as teachers. However, while everyone seems to demand that it be done, few know how to go about it. Fortunately, the editor of this anthology has performed an indispensable service by providing us with an authoritative guide to the process of evaluating administrators.

Ranging from Roland Barth's reflections on leadership qualities to numer-

ous appraisal systems and forms used by various schools, the articles the editor chose to include will give the reader both a theoretical understanding of administrative functions and a wide variety of practical suggestions. Administrators of all levels and school board members will find the book valuable reading and a most useful reference.

Available from Star Publishing Company, Belmont, CA 94002.

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### Unit Teaching: Perspectives & Prospects

William J. Stewart  
Boston:

American Press, 1983.

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### Transforming Traditional Unit Teaching

William J. Stewart  
Boston:

American Press, 1982.

—Reviewed by M. Frances Klein, University of Southern California, Los Angeles

After the barrage of information about direct instruction, it is refreshing to be reminded about unit teaching. The first of these two books is a collection of articles about unit teaching, most of which were originally published over 20 years ago. The second book is a handbook on how to prepare a unit. It is very readable, but written at a high level of generality. Both serve as a good review of the value of unit teaching and the components of a resource unit. The use of the computer in building and maintaining a resource unit as suggested by the author should make the process more feasible and flexible for teachers.

Although suggested as resources for preservice and graduate courses, as well as for staff development, little new information will be found in these two volumes by the veteran teacher. Their real value is to beginning teachers who need help in developing alternatives to direct instruction. The chapters in each book are short and repetitious, but easily and quickly read. The books serve to remind

educators that diversity has a time-honored place in the curriculum as well as the standardization of the back-to-basics push.

Available from American Press, 520 Commonwealth Ave., #416, Boston, MA 02215, for \$12.95.

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### Early Childhood Bilingual Education

Theresa H. Escobedo, editor  
New York:

Teachers College Press, 1983.

—Reviewed by Kathy Fite, Education Department, Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas.

The first bilingual early childhood program in America, a Kindergarten where both German and English were spoken, led the way for a variety of programs and research which precipitated the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 and its revision in 1974. Legislation brought recognition and support to bilingual education, but until recently there have been few studies on how culture and instructional strategies influence children's learning.

This volume, edited by Theresa Escobedo, an associate professor at the University of Texas, was supported by a grant from NIE. Current findings from researchers and practitioners about the education of young Hispanic children are presented in three sections: language, culture, and instructional strategies. All fourteen chapters are original works based on scholarly investigations of existing literature, research findings, and the writers' knowledge of young children.

Detailed reporting may be of most interest to those desiring a Hispanic perspective on research findings in early childhood education. However, those interested in multicultural education, teacher training, and child language acquisition may find the book useful also. Among the areas addressed are: LANGUAGE/language acquisition, bilingual acquisition and language usage; CULTURE/cultural variables that may determine a child's behavior in an

educational setting, and CLASSROOM STRATEGIES/classroom practices during the early childhood period, strategies for enhancing premathematical concepts and premathematical language, and early decoding and reading instruction for Hispanic children in bilingual education.

Available from Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027, for \$19.95.

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### Inviting School Success

William Watson Purkey and  
John M. Novak  
Belmont, California:

Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1984 (2nd ed.)

—Reviewed by Malcolm Evans, Montgomery Township Schools, Skillman, New Jersey.

In this easy-to-read volume the au-

thors successfully present their message of invitation as an aspect of teaching. The appendixes alone are very useful to educators wishing to improve self-concept in students and faculty. Invitational education is placed within a respected professional framework of theory of perception. The book is a very practical guide to using invitational education to motivate, to improve self-concept and to increase achievement. A very interesting comparison of two models of possible schools—the factory model and the family model—illustrate the differences between focus on efficiency and attention to invitation. A welcome addition to the professional library and a suitable text for inservice or preservice education.

Available from Wadsworth Publishing Co., 10 Davis Dr., Belmont, CA 94002.

## INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

This two-day inservice workshop is designed for teachers in higher education institutions who want to improve and reinforce their instructional strategies and techniques through the use of tests. The workshop focuses on a specific institution's faculty and the needs of the client institution and its student body.

Activities include planning tests for assessing specific cognitive skills, developing test specifications, writing and reviewing test questions, and appraising their validity in the construction and assembly of tests of achievement. Participants will write questions in their respective subject-matter areas, and critically review their own and others' questions. These activities will enable teachers to identify and develop more precisely the necessary linkage between instructional and behavioral objectives and evaluation of outcomes. Ways to help students acquire, maintain, and enhance the requisite cognitive skills will be considered.

The workshop director and staff are prepared to assist faculty in a department, a division, or across disciplines in developing and correlating behavioral and instructional objectives, establishing student performance criteria, planning and writing essay and objective tests for classroom use, and interpreting and using test results to improve instruction.

Each workshop is tailor-made to fit the host institution's specific needs, and is conducted at locations and on schedules selected by the client institution. Workshop staff and materials are provided by Educational Testing Service.



For further information about the Instructional Development Workshops, please write to T. L. Spencer, Director, School and College Relations, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey 08541.

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