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## Teaching—The Imperiled Profession

Daniel L. Duke

Albany:

State University of New York, 1984

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—Reviewed by Robert McNergney, University of Virginia, Charlottesville.

If Dan Duke is right, there is "a set of powerful disincentives for employed and prospective teachers" that is plunging the profession into a deepening downward spiral. Who would doubt him? These days even the intellectually inert cannot escape the widely disseminated perception that teaching is a tough way to make a living. Not communicated as often or as clearly, however, are reasoned and reasonable ways to break this spiral. In *Teaching: The Imperiled Profession*, Duke, a creative observer of educational life—as evidenced by his earlier books on student behavior problems, classroom management, and the cooperative efforts of teachers and researchers—tries with some success to correct this deficiency.

Written for people interested in improving teaching as a profession, the book draws on a variety of research results and on press reports of schooling to suggest that "public school teaching has never before been so close to being an impossible profession." In ten chapters Duke would convince the ardent disbeliever by describing: (1) symptoms of the profession's sickness, such as teacher weariness and frustration, high turnover, decreasing test scores of both teachers and their students, and lower teacher salaries; (2) changing conditions of the workplace (confusion about goals, job reduction, and mind-numbing job simplification juxtaposed with greater job demands and insecurity); and (3) abortive attempts to assist teacher per-

formance mostly by professors and administrators. A little depressing? Yes. Hopeless? Never.

Duke would have us take some risks to rejuvenate the teaching profession. With just a hint of sloganeering he outlines "Eight R's" to encourage the process of educational reform—some of which are already under way, most of which are eminently reasonable.

Available from State University of New York Press, State University Plaza, Albany, NY 12246, for \$8.95 paper, \$29.50 cloth.

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## The Elementary School Principals: Leadership for the 1980s

Robert J. Krajewski, John S. Martin, and John C. Walden

New York:

CBS College Publishing, 1983

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—Reviewed by Mildred G. Ness, James P. B. Duffy School No. 12, Rochester, New York.

It would be difficult to find a better guide for on-the-job self-improvement than *The Elementary School Principals*. Although other volumes cover many aspects of this leadership role, few are as readable, practical, and up-to-date as this. Virtually all basic functions of principalship are covered: management, professional development, curriculum design, student needs, parent communication, legal regulations, and teacher performance evaluation. The book is replete with checklists, models, case studies, and resource material.

This is no cookbook of recipes for successful leadership. From the introduction to the closing pages, there is a clear and strong commitment to sound educational theory. Insisting that decisions should be based on an

articulated philosophy, the authors repeatedly emphasize the importance of maintaining a reasonable balance between what one believes should happen and what reality demands.

Truisms that might sound simplistic and patronizing in another setting serve here as foundations for logical steps to good practice. Conceptual models on innovation, role clarification, teacher self-improvement, clinical supervision, and performance appraisal are presented as instruments for problem solving. Sample forms, key questions, and factors to consider have immediate and practical use. Selected case studies like "The Busy Principal," "Hobson's Choice," and "Late Again" combine wit and humor to make strong statements to raise awareness levels on significant issues.

Elementary school principals will value this sourcebook as they prepare for a monumental challenge: leadership for the 80s.

Available from CBS College Publishing, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 383 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10017, for \$27.95.

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## Growing Minds: On Becoming a Teacher

Herbert Kohl

New York:

Harper and Row, Publishers, 1984

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—Reviewed by William Martin, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia.

Herbert Kohl's family was in the construction business. He claims never to have left it. Teaching, to Kohl, is learning how people construct themselves (grow) and helping them do the job better. He delivers his message in four parts, from his personal evolution into an artful teacher, through his thoughts on the craft and content of teaching, to his answer to "why teach?"

One forgives it being a kind of period piece (the idealistic 60s); it is skimpy on curriculum for putting his ideas into practice, offers little discussion of the troubles and problems of the profession, and takes the obligatory shot at education courses and administrators. It is, overall, personal and upbeat, written with humor and ideas that make sense. It should help both new and experienced teachers savor what it means to stick to a craft, do it well, and be shaped by it over time.

Available from Harper and Row, Publishers, 10 East 53rd St., New York, NY 10022, for \$13.95.

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## The Renewal and Improvement of Secondary Education

Herbert J. Klausmeier, James M. Lipham, and John C. Daresb

Lanham, Maryland

University Press of America, Inc., 1983

—Reviewed by Dustin A. Peters, Principal, Elizabethtown Area High School, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania.

Inservice education is the name; renewal and improvement of secondary education is the game. Organized around ten major components of secondary education, this research-validated model contains a tremendous amount of information for the university student as well as the school practitioner.

A comprehensive objective introduces each chapter. All chapters are followed by extensive reference sections, and many include annotated suggestions for further reading on the topic. Brief descriptions of a number of schools successfully modeling the objective are also an important aspect of the volume. Key topics covered in the book include educational and instructional programing, curriculum, career

education, student decision making, evaluation, administration, teacher-advvisor programs, and home-school-community relations. Ten filmstrips and nine audiocassettes are also correlated with this book.

The book can be used as a major text or resource work for a university course. It would also have some appeal for the practitioner who plans to focus on a specific area of inservice at the secondary level. To this end a single chapter could go a long way toward the preparation of an outline and process for a faculty inservice effort.

Available from University Press of America, Inc., 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD 20706-9990, for \$12.95 paper and \$24.75 library binding.

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## Measurement-Based Evaluation of Teacher Performance

Donald M. Medley, Homer Coker, and Robert S. Soar

New York

Longman, Inc., 1984

—Reviewed by Bill Ernest, Professor and Acting Dean, College of Education, University of Montevallo, Montevallo, Alabama.

Medley, Coker, and Soar attempt to move the field of teacher evaluation beyond the subjective rating scales that have dominated it for the past 70 years. The authors feel that no matter how completely and correctly we define the dimensions of effective teaching, we will never adequately evaluate teaching with rating scales. *Measurement-Based Evaluation of Teacher Performance* describes an approach based on structured observations, which the authors believe can yield valid evaluations of teaching.

The book defines four necessary steps in the evaluation process: defining the task to be performed, securing a permanent record of the teacher's behavior while performing it, scoring the record, and comparing the scores with a set of standards. It is very detailed because the implementation of a measurement-based teacher evaluation program is not a simple undertaking. What is described is not an easier way to evaluate teacher performance but an alternate way. I enthusiastically recommend it.

Available from Longman, Inc., 1560 Broadway, New York, NY 10036.

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## How Teachers Taught

Larry Cuban

New York

Longman, Inc., 1984

—Reviewed by Murray Nelson, Associate Professor of Education, Pennsylvania State University, University Park.

One of the shortcomings of curriculum research and teacher education studies has been the lack of knowledge concerning what really happens in classrooms. In recent years, Goodlad's study of schooling has received a great deal of commentary because of its depth, breadth, and classroom-based observational research. Phil Jackson's *Life in Classrooms* has also been important in providing a better picture of what classrooms really are like. Larry Cuban, in *How Teachers Taught*, illustrates why more studies of classrooms have not been made and emphasizes the importance of such studies to our knowledge of classroom life, curriculum change, and teacher education.

Cuban examined enormous amounts of data—school reports and surveys, photographs, newspaper and journal articles, interdistrict memos, interviews—and combined these with his own ob-

servation and interpretation. The result is a picture of teachers and students in classrooms through many eras and environments, including New York, Washington, Denver, and various rural outposts from 1920 to 1940 and from 1965 to 1980.

Particularly unique is Cuban's examination of classroom photos from school reports, the Library of Congress, and other archives. These he analyzed for what they could tell us about class arrangement, group instruction, classroom activities, and stu-

dent movement. For example, a photograph of students at a blackboard all doing the same assignment indicated teacher-centeredness, large-group instruction, and a limited degree of student movement. If fixed seating was represented in the photo, Cuban interpreted more limitations on student movement. He notes how subjective this assessment is, but argues that the photographs were used to augment other data, not to provide conclusions derived solely from a photograph or two.

Cuban notes that teachers are frequently blamed for poor schooling, but recognizes the limitations on teachers in making *real* decisions about such issues as class size and length of the school day and year. He shows how historical research can be used today and what a rich variety of historical data is available.

Available from Longman, Inc., 1560 Broadway, New York, NY 10036.

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