

# Reviews

## Teachers for Our Nation's Schools

John I. Goodlad  
San Francisco  
Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1990

—Reviewed by John O'Neil, Editor, *Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development*, Alexandria, Virginia.

More than a decade ago, concerned with ethical lapses in the business world, Harvard University President Derek Bok challenged the university's graduate business school to better address the proper role of corporations. The *New York Times* editorialized approvingly about a plan to add ethics courses, convinced that the school's curriculum would have a substantial impact on the conduct of business graduates.

Would others draw the same conclusion about the ability of teacher preparation programs to shape the behavior of their graduates? Not likely, John Goodlad argues in his new book. One of the primary obstacles to the professionalization of teaching is lack of confidence that the knowledge and ethical values undergirding teaching can be conveyed through teacher preparation as it now exists. *Teachers for Our Nation's Schools*, the product of a 5-year study of 29 diverse preparation programs in 8 states, attempts to document the sources of this skepticism and propose a series of principles to transform teacher education.

Most readers will quickly recognize the assorted problems plaguing teacher preparation: the pervading culture of higher education that values research above all else; poorly conceived curriculums that fail to integrate professional methods courses with academic training and field experiences; intrusive state regulations that erode program autonomy; too few links with public schools, and perhaps most telling, the frequent absence of clear mission or goals statements to guide program upkeep and renewal. Here, Goodlad doesn't uncover much that's new, but the depth of the research and

the descriptive comments from site visits provide the backbone for his recommended course of action.

The plan emerges from a set of 19 postulates for transforming preparation programs; its centerpiece is his call for the establishment of "Centers of Pedagogy" within which a team of teacher educators, professors from the liberal arts, and educators from local schools would have such responsibilities as creating standards for program entry and exit, deciding the resources needed for professional preparation, revamping the curriculum, and planning (with local school districts) the educational use of practice facilities. Goodlad's recommendations are intriguing, but many of the assumptions he makes about the climate needed for improved programs seem unlikely. The chicken-and-egg quandary facing those seeking to reform teacher preparation is that the conditions needed to improve—for example, less restrictive regulations and greater institutional support—are unlikely to come until reformers can demonstrate a rigorously researched knowledge base, high standards of practice, and a more skilled product.

The challenge of revamping preparation programs is enormous: for one thing, the growing credence given the idea that teachers need to be reflective practitioners—able to adapt quickly to their students' diverse needs or help make key decisions through school-based teams—means more is at stake than ever. But the likely result of status quo programs—"pedagogical bag ladies and bag men, forever seeking more and more attractively packaged items to stash away," as Goodlad describes them—is hardly a desirable option. The respect accorded Goodlad's work, as well as the support given to follow up on the study's conclusions (the Exxon Education Foundation has contributed \$2.25 million) are a glimmer of hope that teacher preparation can be fundamentally changed for the better.

Available from Jossey-Bass, Inc., 350 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94104.

## Curriculum Reform in the Elementary School

M. Frances Kline  
New York  
Teachers College Press, 1989

—Reviewed by William G. Wraga, *Bernards Township Public Schools*, Basking Ridge, New Jersey.

M. Frances Kline, who served as chair of the curriculum subsection of *A Study of Schooling*, has written a practical book for elementary principals looking for ways to improve curriculum and instruction on the local level. By combining a description of the findings from *A Study of Schooling* with her own professional insights, Kline presents a substantive look into both the realities and the possibilities of elementary education.

Kline offers detailed suggestions for analyzing and evaluating local elementary schools. These suggestions address topics ranging from curriculum guides to student and parent attitudes, from the implicit curriculum to the influence of wider social and political forces on the school curriculum. Throughout the book, Kline advocates the careful application of research to local conditions.

Kline's recommendations are based on two realistic premises. The first is that educational reform (that is, curriculum reform) is most effective on the local level. The second is that the teacher is the most important factor in any effort to improve the curriculum. She insists that teachers must be considered "curriculum makers," not merely "curriculum users." Elementary educators can profitably use this book to create their own agendas for reform.

Available from Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027.

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## Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future

Larry K. Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg,  
and Steve Van Brockern  
Bloomington, Ind.  
National Education Service, 1990

—Reviewed by Doug Kammerer, Director  
of Compensatory Education Programs,  
Marion, Ohio, and John Shank, Coordinator  
of Staff Development, Marion, Ohio.

This book is one of the most important works to date about youth in our culture. The authors have identified the problems facing youth today and provided a conceptual framework for shaping the attitudes and environments essential to preparing youth to live in the next century. The three main sections of the book are interspersed with essential elements of the Native American experience and practices relating to youth and their enculturation. The contrasts between Native American practices and those of Western Europeans were startling.

The authors contend that our efforts to create relationships, establish positive climates for growth, and teach responsibility have resulted in what they describe as a loss of purpose in youth. The opening section of the book accurately describes a level of discouragement that many youth seem to acquire when they are expected to become productive adults.

In contrast, the Native American experience centered on values transmitted to youth by all adults. The spirits of *Belonging, Mastery, Independence*, and *Generosity* all contribute to the circle of courage, a concept central to those Native American values. William Glasser in *Control Theory in the Classroom* describes similar needs—belonging, freedom, power, and fun—as central to behavior on the part of all human beings. For the authors, the circle of encouragement is established through instilling courage, just the opposite of the discouragement that many youth experience today.

The final section of the book is dedicated to building a future for youth at risk. The suggestions in the section titled "Brain-Friendly Learning" ought to be basic to encouraging all youth. Brain-friendly learning is pattern making, nonthreatening, experiential, and social. Everyone should have access to brain-friendly learning, especially our youth. A comment regarding the current emphasis on teaching thinking skills or teaching someone to think is described as "presumptuous as teaching the heart to pump fluid or the lungs to exchange gasses. . . . The brain is a natural learning organ that was thinking eons before schools."

*Reclaiming Youth at Risk* is an exceptional effort to describe an alternative set of values for youth and propose steps for educators to take to structure educational experiences for all youth. Clearly, this book is the place to begin reclaiming our youth.

Available from National Education Service, 1821 West 3rd St., Suite 201, P.O. Box 8, Bloomington, IN 47402, \$18.95 softcover.

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## Educating All Students in the Mainstream of Regular Education

Edited by Susan Stainback, William  
Stainback, and Marsha Forest  
Baltimore

Brookes Publishing Company, Inc., 1989

—Reviewed by William G. Wraga, Bernards Township Public Schools, Basking Ridge, New Jersey.

Early in this century public education in the United States was committed to a dual goal: to provide each student with an education suited to his or her individual background, abilities, and aspirations and to promote cohesion and cooperation within a pluralistic society. Unfortunately, our schools have focused on the first part of this goal at the expense of the latter.

In the process of striving to meet everyone's individual needs, our educational system has separated students from each other, often emphasizing differences rather than similarities. Yet segregation is inimical to the ideals of a democracy.

Most of the attention to matters of separateness and equity in education has focused on segregation in terms of race or socioeconomic status. Little attention has been given to segregation inherent in differentiated programs and arrangements for students classified as disabled in one way or another. Indeed, advocates of the disabled often insist that separate programs are in the best interest of "special" students. But, in fact, a considerable body of evidence suggests otherwise.

Building upon the premise that "it is simply unfair and morally wrong to segregate any students, including those defined as disabled, from the mainstream of education" (p. 4), the editors of this informative book present detailed, workable ways to integrate all students, particularly those considered disabled, into the mainstream. The 19 chapters examine a broad range of theoretical and practical problems associated with mainstreaming and suggest numerous strategies for resolving them, with case studies throughout.

In the closing chapter the editors explore 22 common concerns about mainstreaming in a statement-response format that will help educators answer hard questions posed by those skeptical about the prospect of mainstreaming. Significantly, the authors of an early chapter assert, "Integration is an adult problem" (p. 51).

This volume will serve as an indispensable resource. It will aid educators and other adults seeking methods for merging disabled students into the educational mainstream and benefit all students in the spirit of our highest social ideals.

Available from Brookes Publishing Company, Inc., P.O. Box 10624, Baltimore, MD 21285.

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