

Perspectives and Imperatives

A WEDGE IS STILL MISSING: REACTIONS TO HAWKINS

BRENDA BENSON-BURRELL, *Glassboro (New Jersey) State College*

While we spend time and effort trying to find solutions for reform in our public schools, we continue to focus on past writings without giving thought to their meanings for future generations. From my point of view, the social-reconstructive wedge, as reviewed by Hawkins, does not include the multi-ethnic and multicultural realities at the core of social reconstruction today.

As I read and reread George Counts and William Kilpatrick, I smile when I use their ideas to review today's educational shortcomings. Most of our educational reforms of teacher empowerment and site-based management do not address the real needs of today's minority students and tomorrow's majority students. Our social order is crumbling all around us, and we continue to develop models that neglect to include social issues and concerns for building a unified society for all our citizens.

Jacobs's *Interdisciplinary Curriculum. Design and Implementation* presents a social-reconstructive notion that incorporates many facets of cognitive structures and affective behaviors.¹ Banks and Etlin both continue to influence the advancements for multicultural and multiethnic inclusion into the mainstream curriculum, but their thoughts are always relegated to the section of texts labeled *special needs* or *students with differences* or our new term, *students-at-risk*.² When will we add the real wedge? When will we recognize the missing wedge? Right now, we keep pushing the wedge into side dishes; soon it will emerge as a part of the main course, and we won't be ready because we failed to develop a model for social reconstruction.

BRENDA BENSON-BURRELL is Assistant Professor of Secondary Education and Educational Foundations, Glassboro State College, Glassboro, NJ 08028.

¹Heidi Hayes Jacobs, ed., *Interdisciplinary Curriculum. Design and Implementation* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1989).

²James A. Banks, *Teaching Strategies for Ethnic Studies*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1984); M. Etlin, "To Teach Them All Is to Know Them All," *NEA Today* 6 (May-June 1988). 10-11.

Copyright © 1991 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.