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## Book Reviews

Jay C. Thompson, Jr.  
Book Review Editor

### To Motivate or Not to Motivate?— A Question, Not an Option

Professional educators often encounter learners who are not motivated to learn—at least this may be our perception. We live in a society that expects immediate gratification, yet the complicated nature of learning usually requires considerable work and effort to develop skills.

Why is motivation so important? Why is it so difficult to motivate learners? On a more personal level, how can we motivate our students? Our colleagues? Ourselves? Such questions constitute a challenging subject for inquiry—especially when the national Office of Educational Research (OERI) lists motivation as the most pressing problem in education.

The development of teaching and learning effectiveness and professional growth depends upon motivation, both our own and that of the learners with whom we work. To fail to motivate is unacceptable for those of us who work with learners; motivation simply must occur. We must shift the focus of the effort to the most effective means to help learners become self-motivated.

The books we review here provide insights into such topics as educational opportunity, leadership, change, drug-use prevention, choice, vouchers, charter schools, and teenage runaways. Discovery of the keys to motivation is an imperative for our profession.

#### *In the Shadow of "Excellence": Recovering a Vision of Educational Opportunity for All* by Gregory J. Fritzberg

San Francisco, Calif.: Caddo Gap Press, 1999

Reviewed by Jayne R. Beilke

Foundations of Education, Ball State University, Muncie, Ind.

The aims of educational excellence and equality of opportunity have historically produced tension in American educational policy. Although many Americans practice a belief in the Protestant work ethic, individualism, and personal initiative, there is also a persistent belief in the *ideal* of giving everyone the opportunity to become socially and occupationally equal. Implementing equality of opportunity becomes problematical, however, when it requires redistributing wealth and resources (e.g., property taxes) to sustain public schools. In other words, we cannot have both excellence and equal opportunity—or can we? Fritzberg seems to think that we can.

Educational reform occurs in cycles. The reform attempts of the 1960s and 1970s focused on equalizing educational opportunities by mitigating the adverse effects of race, class, and gender bias. Operationally, this approach used federal compensatory-education programs such as Head Start and Chapter I. The "excellence" in Fritzberg's title refers to current reform philosophy (begun

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with the Bush administration's "America 2000" proposal), which attributes a federal role to curriculum design, performance standards, and assessment strategies. The components of excellence within this context include higher graduation requirements, a core curriculum emphasizing math, science, and foreign language, frequent achievement testing, and longer school days.

The heart of Fritzberg's book (which is adapted from his doctoral dissertation) is the discussion of "opportunities-to-learn standards" (OTL) as a means of bringing about equality of educational opportunity. He traces the roots of OTL from the compensatory-education cycle through the back-to-basics movement of the 1980s and the present emphasis on critical thinking and problem-solving skills. In the current incarnation of OTL, both students and schools are held accountable for meeting the standards, and success continues to be measured by achievement tests.

The "Goals 2000" legislation of the Clinton administration, though weakened at the federal level by politics as well as by the American tradition of local control, has persisted at the state level in various forms. The author presents a case study of the OTL initiative in New Jersey as an example. Fritzberg believes that OTL, despite setbacks, has the potential to contribute to both excellence and equality of educational opportunity. He concludes by making five policy recommendations for the implementation of OTL:

- 1) produce teachers who are multiculturally literate;
- 2) re-assess ability grouping and tracking practices;
- 3) reduce K-3 class size as well as elementary and secondary school size;
- 4) expand and improve federal compensatory-education programs; and
- 5) incorporate school reform into broader social reform.

Given the earlier caveat about the obstacles presented by politics and local control, the reader is left to ponder the details of how any of these recommendations could be implemented.

This book should prove highly useful for undergraduate courses in foundations of education as well as introductory graduate courses in philosophy of education and multicultural education.

### *Teaching as a Reflective Practice: The German Didaktik Tradition*

Edited by Ian Westbury, Stefan Hopmann, and Kurt Riquarts

Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2000

Reviewed by Peggy Shaffer

Department of Educational Studies, Ball State University, Muncie, Ind.

Much recent discussion of educational reform has centered on students' need to learn a specified content in a specified manner—i.e., curriculum. Very few voices have suggested a fundamentally different perspective. *Teaching as a Reflective Practice* is one such perspective. This volume is a collection of essays that define the German *Didaktik* tradition of education in an effort to foster a dialogue with the American curriculum model. Educators from such countries as Germany, Norway, Switzerland, and the United States bring a wealth of experience to the discussion of the German *Didaktik* tradition.

*Didaktik* is a tool for planning teaching activities. Like curriculum theories, it contains the three basic elements of content, learner, and teacher. This last element—the teacher—best illustrates the way in which the *Didaktik* model differs from the curriculum model. Although the curriculum model sometimes seems to assume that teachers are mere tools for applying the content delineated in the curriculum, the *Didaktik* tradition operates on the assumption that teachers are both intellectuals and professionals. It expects teachers to immerse themselves in content and, more important, to bring their own interpretations, experiences, and understandings to that content as they share it with students—who will in turn contribute their own experiences and understandings. The *Lehrplan*, the state-mandated curriculum model, "does lay out prescribed content for teachers; but this content . . . can only become educative as it is interpreted and given life by teachers" (p.16).

The *Didaktik* model has its philosophical roots in humanism, emphasizing the unlimited capacity of the individual in both the student and the teacher. This philosophy is evidenced in *Bildung*, a philosophical perspective primary in the *Didaktik* tradition. *Bildung*, which loosely translates into "being educated," can also mean "to form"; it thus seems to encompass "spiritual formation" as an essential part of the educative experience. There is, then, a strong emphasis on the

reflective and transformational opportunities that interaction with content can bring to both teachers and students.

*Teaching as a Reflective Practice* can and should be useful to anyone involved in designing and implementing learning activities for students. The book's chapters are organized so that the first half of the book focuses primarily on the history and philosophy of *Didaktik*; the second half focuses more on *Didaktik* as praxis, with specific examples of its application to mathematics and science.

The authors correctly observe that these ideas are difficult to translate into English not just because of language differences but because of "fundamental cultural differences in understandings of teaching, schooling, and the teaching profession" (pp. 3-4). This book, though, is a strong and successful effort to translate these ideas, thus opening a dialogue between the traditions of curriculum and *Didaktik*.

### ***Changing Leadership for Changing Times***

**by Kenneth Leithwood, Doris Jantzi, and Rosanne Steinbach**

Buckingham & Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1999

Reviewed by Georgiana Luecker  
University of Wisconsin, Whitewater, Wis.

*Changing Leadership for Changing Times* is a valuable volume for practitioners, student scholars, and teachers of educational-leadership courses. The authors assert that the previously popular "instructional leadership" model has failed to make significant changes in our schools, especially at the high school level. They begin by searching for alternative models in the leadership literature. Chapter 1 provides an interesting "menu" of six leadership approaches used in business and not-for-profit settings; the presentation includes scholarly references to the work of major researchers and a useful comparison of the characteristics of each model.

Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach settle on transformational leadership (plus their own post-transformational additions) as the preferred leadership model to accomplish meaningful changes. The preference makes good sense given the professional culture schools will require if reforms are to take root and flourish.

The second section of the book describes the application of the transformational leadership

model. The authors emphasize building a positive school culture through shared decision-making; remedying specific, local problems with policy developments; and building relationships with the community. The main site the authors describe is a Canadian secondary school in Ontario, a school that faces many of the same challenges common in more urban settings in the United States: namely, high absenteeism, a nonacademic culture, dysfunctional families, and violence. The interventions at the school are well-described; comments by participating staff members are included.

The third or "post-transformational" section of the book contains a helpful section on fostering teacher leadership. Readers will find both compact reviews of what research has to offer and practical advice from the authors. The examples of recommended practices in this section are from both elementary and secondary schools. The authors' "post-transformational" label may be unnecessary, however; most of the practices described are in fact educational adaptations of practices regularly included in discussions of transformational leadership in the business-management literature.

*Changing Leadership for Changing Times* also has value to teachers, administrators, and graduate students through its concise summaries of research designs used by the authors and others. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were presented. One particularly interesting study of teacher leaders was based on a two-stage design: a questionnaire to identify teacher-nominated teacher leaders, followed by interviews to determine what these designated leaders did. The results delineate teacher traits, practices, and capacities that can contribute to desired outcomes in our schools. The design could easily be applied in additional settings. Additional designs could be starting points for reflective practitioners who are ready to undertake research into the change process.

Other chapters deal with building teacher commitment to change, stimulating teachers' professional growth, and fostering organizational learning. To effect whole-school learning, the authors advise leaders to learn to think as organizational designers.

There is also a helpful chapter on teacher burnout. Although burnout has been a frequent topic in the organizational-behavior literature for several years, I have rarely seen it included in

books on educational leadership. The topic is important, and the authors assert that prior research has tended to underestimate the effect that leadership can have on burnout. [Editor's note: *The chapter is included in this issue as the feature article "Maintaining Emotional Balance."*]

This well-written book makes transformational leadership meaningful in the school setting. It is an approach that would seem to have considerably more potential for strengthening the professionals in our schools than the instructional-leadership model, which has failed in most cases to produce the results promised by its advocates. The book is a worthy addition to an administrator's or administrator-in-training's bookshelf.

***The Great School Debate: Choice, Vouchers, and Charters***

by **Thomas L. Good and Jennifer S. Braden**

Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 2000

Reviewed by Barbara Graham

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In *The Great School Debate: Choice, Vouchers, and Charters*, Thomas Good and Jennifer Braden untangle the complex issue of choice in American public education. They provide evidence to support their claim that the current rhetoric surrounding educational reform is motivated not by the desire to improve the quality of the American public school for all students, but rather by the desire to maintain the economic advantages of particular groups of society.

The debate about school choice is part of a much larger question facing the American public: what kind of society do we want? Any attempt to answer this question must include discussions about the role of the public education system in achieving and sustaining this society. Good and Braden focus their discussion on three issues: the quality of American schools, the control of American schools, and the design of American schools.

The authors situate current discussions about the quality of American public schools within a historical context spanning fifty years of reports on a crisis in American public education. From the launching of Sputnik to the dawn of the year 2000, they examine the prevailing political, social, economic, and ideological forces that contributed to each educational crisis. Their analysis of student achievement demonstrates that reports of

the current crisis in public education are unfounded. They acknowledge the great variability in both student achievement and in funding allocations for public schools and link differences in student achievement to differences in funding.

The authors include tables that provide data on the scores of American students on achievement tests as well as recommendations from two reports, *A Nation at Risk* and *Prisoners of Time*, and the National Education Goals. They also include an appendix of research on charter schools for the chapter entitled "Charter Schools: Investment or Experiment?"

The idea of school choice has received support from parents, politicians, business leaders, corporate executives, and professional educators. Few could argue against parents' having the right to choose what schools their children attend. However, the meager research conducted on charter schools does not provide the information parents need to make informed decisions about their children's schools. Most of the research has dealt with magnet schools—schools within the public system that have a curricular or teaching theme such as fine arts or science and technology.

Good and Braden do not dwell on whether all parents actually have equal opportunities to exercise choice. Obstacles, such as restricted English language proficiency, family illness, or economic difficulties, militate against parents' timely access to accurate information about possibilities for their children.

Nevertheless, Good and Braden do challenge the claims of those who support charter schools by asking readers to consider these questions: Do charter schools offer more choices to parents? Do they create opportunities for innovative administrative and pedagogical practices? Do they hold themselves responsible for student achievement? Do they respond to the interests and needs of the community?

In this clearly written, carefully researched, and well-organized book, Good and Braden include questions for parents to consider when choosing schools for their children. They discuss case studies of selected states' charter laws and examine how the needs of special students are being met in charter schools.

*The Great School Debate* provides explicit policy recommendations for improving charter schools and charter school legislation. The authors offer suggestions designed to support stu-

dent learning and teacher efficacy within the public school system. These recommendations attempt to balance the educational needs of all children with the rights of local school districts to both administer and design effective educational experiences for the children in their schools.

***An Ounce of Prevention, A Pound of Uncertainty: The Cost Effectiveness of School-Based Drug Prevention Programs***

**by Jonathan P. Caulkins, C. Peter Rydell, Susan S. Everingham, James Chiesa, and Shawn Bushway**

Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Drug Policy Research Center, 1999

Reviewed by Lois Frels  
Hillsdale, Ill.

For those interested in drug prevention, drug-related research, or the cost effectiveness of drug-related prevention programs, this book is a must. It describes research supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Substance Abuse Policy Research Program and by the National Science Foundation. Additional support was provided by the Carnegie Mellon University and by the Rand Drug Policy Research Center with funding from the Ford Foundation.

The research focuses on the use of cocaine because that is considered the "country's most problematic illicit drug" (p. 2). It is a quantitative study that looks at questions such as "How effective is prevention? How much does it [prevention] compare, dollar for dollar, with other approaches to drug control such as enforcement or treatment? Would it be fiscally feasible to put every American youth through a cutting edge drug prevention program. . . ?" (p. XIX).

"The emphasis in prevention research has so far (appropriately) been on establishing statistically significant effects" (p. 8). The goal of *An Ounce of Prevention, A Pound of Uncertainty* "is to translate, extend, and interpret those results in terms of the magnitude of effects on lifetime quantities of drugs consumed, and to estimate the value of the resources the program utilizes. Then from those two factors, compute a cost effectiveness ratio and the costs and benefits of national implementation" (p. 8-9).

Chapter 6, "Conclusions and Policy," restates the central findings of school-based drug-use pre-

vention programs. Some of the study findings were:

1. To the extent prevention is cost-effective, it is because it is inexpensive, not because it is so effective. For a given amount of money, prevention may be able to achieve as much reduction in cocaine use as enforcement (p. 82).
2. A program need not work for every participant for it to be effective in total (p. 83).
3. A national program is affordable but will not end the cocaine epidemic. National-scale drug prevention would cost about \$550 million per year, about 1.5 percent of current national drug-control spending (p. 84).
4. It is best to begin prevention programs about fifteen years before it is clear that there is a serious drug problem that should be, or should have been, prevented. One possible response to this problem is to run prevention programs continually, even when there is no evidence of a pending epidemic. Another alternative would be to invest in improving the early-warning signs of an impending epidemic, thus reducing the delay factor (but not fully eliminating it) (p. 86).
5. Prevention could also be viewed as a possible aid to easing the current drug epidemic, and possibly other undesirable social trends, while simultaneously serving as a form of inexpensive insurance against further epidemics (p. 97).

The appendix contains an excellent analysis of the various methods employed in conducting the study as well as additional results. There are excellent references for those interested in drug prevention.

***Runaways: Broken Hearts and "Bad Attitudes"***

**by Laurie Schaffner**

Binghamton, N.Y.: The Haworth Press, 1999

Reviewed by Nancy Saunders

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*Teenage Runaways* is a sympathetic and insightful exploration of the world of youths on the run. Drawing on interviews with twenty-six runaways in a New England shelter, Laurie Schaffner explores motivations for running away. She describes the youths' search for connection, attachment, and safety. She shares with us their emotions of anger, fear, loneliness, and hope.

Schaffner invites the reader to eavesdrop as runaways describe their experiences on the streets, with their families, and in the hands of social service agencies. She urges us to delay judgment and listen to their stories.

Roy, frightened and tired of being beaten by his mother: "I couldn't handle it, so I ran away." Jean, sick of her stepfather's sexual attacks: "I was in there and disgusted. . . . That's why I didn't stay there. . . . I'm like 'To hell with you!' and so I ran. . . ." Gregg, relieved to have found a safe place: "I went to a foster home three or four months ago. . . . I feel much better because I was mad and I almost killed myself. . . . Now my friends tell me to hang in there because I'll be fine." And Princess, confused by her relationship with her mother: "I had totally no respect for her 'cause . . . I'd never hit her, there's that respect, but—I love her, but—I didn't like her. . . . My respect for her is down to a .3, you know?"

As we listen, Schaffner helps us to hear the youths' underlying plea for healing relationships, free from abuse and manipulation. She analyzes and interprets for us the anger and resentment fueling their rebellion. She challenges us to understand how these teenagers' emotions and experiences have driven them to run.

Educators are called to serve all our students—those who thrive, those who struggle, and those who run. Laurie Schaffner's work gives voice to those who run. May their voices stir us to action and propel us toward new and creative solutions.

### ***A Casebook for Exploring Diversity in K-12 Classrooms***

**by George L. Redman**

Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1999

Reviewed by Benjamin H. Welsh

Department of Educational Studies

Ball State University, Muncie, Ind.

According to the preface, *A Casebook for Exploring Diversity in K-12 Classrooms* is intended to serve as a "text supplement for use in courses on multicultural/inclusive/urban education, as well as in foundations and methods courses in which course goals reflect concern for cultural diversity" (p. v). It is composed of thirty-three case studies in ten major sections. Among the major sections are Socioeconomic Status, Language, Ethnicity, Gender, Affectional Orientation, and Technology and Multiculturalism. An introductory section, appendices, and bibliogra-

phies are also included. In my multicultural education course, in accordance with the preface, I used the Redman book to supplement a theoretical text of my own choosing.

The field of multicultural education seems to be choked with theory and opinion. Thus, a good collection of case studies can be a breath of fresh air. At their best, case studies make theory relevant to students by challenging them to apply theory to realistic classroom-based problems. And it is for such relevance that I selected Redman's book. Although many of the case studies serve their purpose adequately, structural problems limit the book's overall effectiveness and usefulness as a reference text.

The section headings are part of the problem with the book. Upon first encountering the table of contents, a reader well versed in multicultural theory might be tempted to reject the book. Multicultural theory states that cultural differences (and similarities, or both) often overlap and rarely, if ever, occur in isolation from one another. Yet the headings that group the case studies are characterized by isolated cultural differences, such as "ethnicity" and "socioeconomic status." However, one need only read the case studies to discover that they are, in fact, quite complex and multifaceted, as indeed they should be.

Case 1, for example, describes Mr. McDonald, a teacher who works in a school in a poor, urban neighborhood, giving to Peter, a new African-American student, government-subsidized lunch tickets and suggesting that Peter walk home like the other students in the school. Because Peter *looks like* the rest of the students, Mr. McDonald assumes that Peter *is like* the rest of the students in other ways. At the end of the case study, Mr. McDonald accidentally discovers that his assumptions about Peter are false. Peter lives not in the school neighborhood but in a middle-class suburb five miles away. Case 1 ends like all the case studies, with support questions and activities intended to challenge the reader to think more deeply about the issues raised by the case study.

Case 1 is found in the major section labeled "Socioeconomic Status." Yet the fact that Peter shares ethnicity with the rest of the students in the school is just as important to the case study as the fact that he differs from them socioeconomically. Clearly, the section heading conceals the complexity and significance of the case study and makes it difficult for the reader to locate a

case study illustrating the relationship between ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

Another problem with the book is its attempt to make every case study appropriate for every grade level and subject area. The preface states that the case studies are made “generic . . . [to] make them relevant to teachers and prospective teachers in grades K-12 and throughout the full range of subject matter areas” (p. v). Not only is this unrealistic from the point of view of child development and existing arrangements of schools and curricula; the quality and depth of many case studies suffer as a result.

Case 13, for example, describes students making jewelry in the style of the Navajo. Unfortunately, the closest the case study gets to including instruction from a multicultural perspective is in the following statement: “Mr. Merritt [the teacher in the case study] gave . . . information about the culture of the Navajo people and the design and production of Navajo necklaces” (p. 54). The description of instruction seems to be abbreviated to avoid becoming grade level or subject specific. As a result, the case study runs the risk of reinforcing Native American stereotypes that may be embedded in the reader’s worldview. The follow-up question—“What related lessons might you use prior to or following Mr. Merritt’s lesson to include higher levels of multicultural curriculum according to Banks’ model [of multicultural education]. . . ?” (p. 55)—is too

little, too late. Furthermore, the question is too broad, presupposing a working knowledge of multicultural education theory and the ability to construct lessons from that theory. If readers could do this prior to reading Redman’s book, they would not need the book in the first place.

On a general level, *Exploring Diversity in K-12 Classrooms* attempts to serve many purposes simultaneously. As a result, it fails to serve any one purpose well. From a theoretical perspective, the book tries to touch on all the dimensions of multicultural education without identifying which dimension is being addressed where. From developmental and curricular perspectives, the case studies try to serve all teachers and all grade levels simultaneously, running contrary to how practicing teachers and teachers-in-training have been taught to think. An arrangement that would begin to fix both problems would be to separate the case studies that focus on *interpersonal interaction*, such as Case 1, from those that focus on *curriculum*, such as Case 13. Then, within each major section, the case studies could be further divided according to level of schooling: K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. In short, with greater care and a more thorough application of educational theory to its organization and structure, the Redman book could become an important addition to the library of students of multicultural education, whether university professors, practicing teachers, or teachers-in-training.