

output and address broad reading audiences. Another author, Catherine D'Aoust, talks in "Portfolios: Process for Students and Teachers" about mundane, but important practical issues. She touches on the actual folders, and what types could be most practical for collecting writing in progress. She discusses where to store the folders and how to make them available to students.

Two essays focus on the important question of who "owns" the portfolios. In "Portfolio Reflections in Middle and Secondary Schools", Roberta Camp suggests that students themselves should choose what goes into the folder, and which pieces the teacher should read. Sandra Murphy and Mary Ann Smith go further in "Looking into Portfolios" by suggesting that the students should not only choose their own pieces for evaluation, but should justify those choices in writing. Evaluation, in fact, is an issue dealt with in almost all the essays. James Newkirk, one of the converts to portfolio assessment, spends a great deal of time in the article "Portfolio Practice in Middle School: One Teacher's Story", discussing the concept of assessment as collaborative, holistic, and goal-oriented. He gives excellent examples that elaborate on these ideas.

Though I have only mentioned a few contributors, the others also shared their personal experiences and practical advice. They suggest ways that teachers could move towards portfolio pedagogy. However, even though teachers will gain many new ideas from the whole text, they may find that the essays tend to repeat themselves. I discovered that I could read three or four of the essays and be familiar with almost all the ideas presented in the book. Nonetheless, this book addresses an important issue in current educational practice in a readable and practical manner.

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**D. Greenberg.**  
**A NEW LOOK AT SCHOOLS (1992)**  
**Sudbury, ON: Sudbury Valley School Press**  
**142 pp., \$7**

This three-part document focusses on value systems and education with a projection on what we could accomplish if we were able to incorporate the necessary changes to reach a "free democratic" education. Greenberg emphasizes social and educational transformations, presenting a new concept of schooling. In part one, which comprises five chapters, the author

presents his perception of the role played by the culture and value system in regard to cultural pluralism in the United States. In part two, chapters six through ten, he describes the way culture inhibits learning and how to overcome cultural barriers. In his re-examination, Greenberg analyzes the main factors involved in literacy development: school, education, teaching, and learning.

The introduction denounces the present literacy crisis in the United States and lists the parameters responsible for such a state. He says: "It would appear obvious that what has been needed for some time is a fresh view of the educational enterprise and its role in the overall cultural setting." Within such a framework, the author introduces the Sudbury Valley School experimentation. The foundations of the Sudbury Valley School are based on a new assessment of the "world scene," a complete revision of the fundamentals of educational theory. Greenberg's motto is to let the child discover through "play, rest, and meditation" the elements which will be incorporated in the creation of his/her building blocks. Parts one and two are devoted entirely to Greenberg's notion of culture, in all ten chapters covering eighty-three pages of explanation, setting the ground for his vision of the new school in a post-industrial age. The reader would have equally benefitted from a more in-depth exploration of Greenberg's propositions concerning education beyond schools and the type of schools that are vital for future trends. In his final note, the author urges members of society to actively seek alternatives. He perceives educators as promoters of a new vital force within society and whose role is to enlighten parents, leaders, and members of society-at-large about the need for improvement. For Greenberg, the future holds great promise in terms of freedom, absence of control and direction, and, above all, a lack of restrictions and barriers. This new form of education promoting creativity, "free model building," and where instruction is initiated by the learner, is not a new concept. Today's classroom pedagogy acknowledges the role of "play" in learning and conceptual development. Games have been playing a large and important role. Besides, human intervention in learning is less adult-centered presently. The innovation, however, rests in the free choices a learner has at his/her disposal, and the fact that there is no compulsory subject or curriculum. There is no mention in the book of students' options for a different type of curriculum. (People vary in learning and cognitive styles.) This approach seems to be more oriented for a particular type of child, those children who could learn independently without supervision or direction. Greenberg states that this new type of school needs to be multiplied and encouraged because it is what he calls the "transition school." These transition schools represent the in-between element, a sort of "buffer zone" which will lead us to the post-industrial schools of tomorrow, with their technology, open-mindedness, and curiosity, to enhance learning and exploration.

This approach to post-industrial education supposes the existence of a superculture according to which the basic social unit is a "clan", the cultural system of which is assured to be stable and the values of which are transmitted without conflicts. This is certainly an interesting concept, yet it appears to be idealistic and perhaps utopian. Indeed, "clans" must interact in a subsuming economic and political context, and this alone might create disparity; thus, bringing conflicts between them. Therefore, the stability and the existence of "clans" culture might be in jeopardy. Furthermore, this view has not fully taken into account processes such as assimilation and acculturation which are ineluctable when "clans" come into frequent contacts.

Greenberg's book, *A New Look at Schools*, presents an original vision of future generations. He takes us in a spiral fashion into the future, from his notion of culture, up to the point where he deploys how this cultural concept is embedded in education, and, finally, to his presentation of the arguments on how the establishment controls and limits learning for the purpose of protecting value schemes of the dominant culture. This notion of schools as a controlling agent and filtering system has been analyzed by Bourdieu (1977), Giroux (1980-82), and other educational sociologists. Not only does Greenberg disapprove of the present educational system, but he brings to our attention the harms the present practices are doing to millions of children in the United States. The need to conform, the psychological and social pressure exercised on them by peers and members of society with their imposed norms of acceptable behaviour in learning situations, their concepts of reward and punishment, all create a disruptive lifestyle that seems to tear apart individuals from within. Thus, tension and resistance to learning are the logical consequences of such a situation. Resistance to the "musts" and "oughts" pervades the American school system today.

Although easy to read and comprehend, Greenberg's book requires a previous reflection on the role of the educational system, the present state of the literacy crisis, social tensions and intolerance, and, more so, the national identity crisis — all of which are evident signs of a society in crisis at the end of the twentieth century. With such a reflection one is able to capture the essence of what the author wants to develop. He proposes a new model that would enable children to seek knowledge freely and become the architects of their own creativity at their own pace, at their chosen time and place, having the freedom to turn ideas upside down and explore the nonconventional in a daring and creative way.

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