

and assistance. If the child has not had this support, the early years of schooling must provide the tutors and the models, and the early intervention teacher has to be exceptionally helpful if the child is to gain control over the writing system. There also has to be an active, constructive child working on the challenges (with an observant teacher at his or her elbow)" (p. 35).

Change over Time in Children's Literacy Development is a tribute to Marie Clay's illustrious career. Her work "over time" should find its way into the hands of everyone involved in and concerned with the future of the printed word. In the upcoming French adaptation of Reading Recovery, let us hope that we can finally deny the age-old French saying, "plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose."

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PAUL SARGENT. *Real Men or Real Teachers: Contradictions in the lives of men elementary school teachers*. Harriman, TN: Men's Studies Press, (2001), 248 pp. \$24.95 (ISBN 0-9671794-3-2).

We all have a starting point from which we build our awareness, experience, and analysis of gender. This, although many would have us believe otherwise, does not begin at birth (or conception if you are of that belief) as either a male or female. Rather, the awareness of gender as a social construct begins when others' opinions and expectations regarding our masculinity and/or femininity contradict all experiences leading up to that moment. For those men aspiring to be elementary school teachers and those who are already practicing teachers in the early elementary grades, gender boundaries and sex-role stereotyping would have become blatantly conspicuous through a similar kind of disruption in their everyday social experiences: whether it be in the form of suspicion or unfounded concern from the parents of students in the classes in which they teach, where as Paul Sargent suggests in *Real Men or Real Teachers* there is a "men don't belong stereotype," or as a result of the isolation of being the only male staff member other than the custodial staff in an elementary school. Working through the problematics of sex-role stereotyping and the hegemony of socially sanc-

tioned gender roles are the focus of this critically astute yet approachable first book by Sargent.

Real Men or Real Teachers is presented as journey of discovery on the part of the author. Each chapter progressively unravels more of the gendered network in elementary school teaching, exploring issues related to: gender roles and occupational stereotyping, the demographics of gender in elementary schools, male teachers as the (reluctant) role-models for (male) children who are positioned as requiring gender specific guidance and support, the culture of teaching as a gendered space, and a discussion of Sargent's approach to conducting the research supporting this text. In so doing, and with due regard for his readership, Sargent engages in periodic theoretical analyses with a view to extending the ideas and insights taken from the interview transcripts that are prevalent in *Real Men or Real Teachers*. Sargent provides opportunities for us to (re)consider the traditional definitions of masculinity within the context of a specific group of men: male elementary school teachers.

Readers of *Real Men or Real Teachers* who are themselves male elementary school teachers will appreciate Sargent's treatment of one of the more troublesome and concerning outcomes of sex-role stereotyping and hegemonic heterosexual masculinity: namely, issues arising out of the appropriateness of physical touch in teaching and interacting with students. As he reveals through first hand accounts, teachers touching students is generally not considered a good or safe idea for either male teachers or students. The complexities of social touch in the school setting are in one regard obvious, while in another – in the demonstration of caring and respects for others – muddled. Sargent's examination of men as nurturers in teaching, who in the same instance can be perceived as caregivers or as potential abusers, is progressive and contributes to the discussion of men as nurturing, caring, and emotionally complex and competent beings. Sargent provides us with the opportunity to read/listen first-hand to how students who may need or want "hugs" "don't get [them] if they are in a man's [class-]room." This is none more clearly evidenced by the comments of one of the participants in Sargent's research who remarked:

Female teachers at school can have a child sitting on their lap during class time, and very few people would give it a second thought. It's natural; it's common. . . . But is someone walked into this room, and I had someone, a child, sitting on my lap, immediately some red flags would go up in most peoples minds.

Indeed, male teachers working in an environment in which they can at any point be positioned as abusers is problematic: for the teachers, the students, and in the reinforcement of gender/sex-role stereotyping with respect to legitimate (or not) adult-child/student socialization.

Sargent suggests at the outset that *Real Men or Real Teachers* is for “the many men who would be wonderful teachers, parents, or caregivers but have experienced negative sanctions whenever they have attempted to lead gender atypical lives.” I believe that Sargent offers much in this regard. For all those who teach, read, debate and have an interest in re-evaluating gender roles within the institutions of child care – including schools, the home, and the other institutions of care-giving – I highly recommend this book. It is more than merely a placard for the controversies in gender and teaching. It is written, I believe, with an intent to inform its readership of the social, cultural, and historical implications of hegemonic gendering in schools and in societies. *Real Men or Real Teachers* challenges us to consider our own everyday social practice and most importantly our actions as educators.

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HILLARY COOPER & ROB HYLAND (Eds.). *Children's Perceptions of Learning with Trainee Teachers*. London: Routledge Falmer (2000). 200 pp. US\$25.99 (PB ISSN: 0-415-21682-6). US\$85.00 (HB ISSN: 0-415-21681-8).

“Student teachers are half teachers and they help people. In a few years they are real teachers. They go to teachers university.”

“*Student teachers look about the toilet's and go to classe's with Mr Fraser.*”

Reading the introduction to this book is enough to make a teacher educator slap her head and say: “Of course! Asking children what they think of student teachers. Why hasn't somebody done this before?” The faculty of St Martin's College in the North of England interviewed children about their perceptions of the student teachers who have spent time in their schools and about what they have learned with these student teachers. While I would not want to pass or fail student teachers on the basis of children's evaluations – even young children have learned how to be good at being pupils and have strategies for dealing with the adults around them – the children have fascinating things to say about the student teachers and about the way those teachers are prepared.

Inspired by comments like the ones quoted at the beginning of this review, the lecturers at St Martin's College decided to investigate pupils' perceptions of student teachers in a more principled way than they had previously done. They identified a number of objectives, both practical and theoretical. They hoped to provide information to student teachers that would help them avoid some mistakes during their field placements, and to provide student teachers with case histories that could be used as a basis for self-reflection and discussion with in-school mentors and in-college lecturers.