

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.

They also planned to investigate and contextualize some larger theoretical questions of interest to them as a way of evaluating their own courses and the way their subjects were being taught, and to make links between the theoretical and the practical. The lecturers conducted a series of empirical studies in elementary schools in Lancashire, Cumbria and the Isle of Man that had partnership agreements with the college and received student teachers. In these studies, over a period of two years, they conducted structured interviews or semi-structured conversations with children between 5 and 11 years old, and, in some cases, looked at video clips and pupils' drawings.

After an introductory section called "The big picture," the book is divided into sections that describe individual case studies. These case studies address children's perceptions and responses to student teachers; factors that influence whether children learn from student teachers; the innovations that student teachers can bring to the classroom; and finally, cross-curricular issues such as class management and the impact of the sex and race of the trainee on the children. To make the findings useful to the student teachers, most chapters end with suggestions for further reading and investigations, and discussion topics for the student teacher to use with in-school mentors and college lecturers. It encourages reflective practice by giving them something to reflect on.

Marion Blake (described as an "editorial advisor") and Florence Samson were invited to write an "Afterword" to place the book in a larger context by comparing the situation in the UK with that in Ontario. I'm not sure how it does this, since, in three and one half pages, there is not enough detail about Ontario to allow any real comparisons, although there is personal reminiscence about mutual friends.

A particularly interesting premise is the way that the faculty of St Martin's College, both education and subject matter lecturers, have conducted empirical studies and collaborated on the task of writing a book. The 20 contributors have each brought their own particular interests to their chapters, which has produced a great variety and added to the book's general appeal. It has also produced an unevenness, so that some chapters are better written than others, and some will be more interesting than others to individual reader. For example, I was disappointed in the chapter proposing to identify how children perceived the mathematics they had been taught by the student teachers, delighted by the one that dealt with classroom management. Other readers would certainly react differently. It has also introduced some contradictions. Are children able to distinguish a student teacher from a supply teacher or regular classroom teacher or not? I believe with most of the authors that they certainly can, otherwise why ask solicit their opinions, although several chapters imply that children could not

identify a “trainee teacher.” The fact that a group of college lecturers with different backgrounds and interests could be persuaded to work towards a common product of this sort is a demonstration of collegiality that many could learn from.

What could a student teacher from elsewhere in the world gain from reading this book about the British context? There are certainly subject-specific ideas that would apply anywhere, and most of the suggestions for further activity would also be useful. Most of the suggested readings and references come from Britain, and would be a valuable new perspective for North American students. Finally, all student teachers, and many practicing teachers would benefit from knowing how children perceive them, and this, of course, is at the heart of the book. There is great perceptiveness and a sophistication demonstrated in the quotations from children. Do all student teachers already know that children do not object to hard work as long as the teacher “makes it clear and exciting?” that Year 2 children recognize – and appreciate – a teacher who “helps us do things. She doesn’t make us,” and that an 11 year-old child can recognize that: “He couldn’t control us. He never kept his word on punishments. He was only nice to us when we were nice to him.” Given these – and many other – observations by the children, student teachers should be especially proud of “the tenacious loyalty to the trainee” observed by the writers of one chapter.

This was an ambitious venture. It may be that the book occasionally falls short of its goals, but it comes close enough that it would certainly be a worthwhile addition to a professional library for student teachers, practicing teachers and teacher educators. If we agree with one of the authors that “being an effective and efficient teacher is more about what the pupils think of the teacher than the other way around,” this book has taken the first step in asking the pupils what they think, and the second step in helping us to listen to them. It is left to the readers to respond appropriately.

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RAM MAHALIGAM & CAMERON McCARTHY (Eds.). *Multicultural Curriculum: New directions for social theory, practice, and policy*. New York: Routledge (2000). 310 pp. US\$34.99. (PB ISBN 0415920140). Library Edition US\$80 (HB ISBN: 0415920132).

Since the 1970s multiculturalism has made significant headway in politics, society, and culture, particularly in ‘western’ democracies such as Europe, north America, Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand. While its impact can be witnessed in a range of activities throughout these societies (e.g. government policy, the media, advertising, sport), it is in schools and, more