



education review // reseñas educativas

editors: gene v glass gustavo e. fischman melissa cast-brede

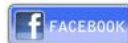
a multi-lingual journal of book reviews

March 3, 2011

ISSN 1094-5296

Education Review/Reseñas Educativas is a project of the National Education Policy Center <http://nepc.colorado.edu>

Follow Education Review on Facebook



Hill-Jackson, Valerie and Lewis, Chance W. (Eds.). (2010)
*Transforming Teacher Education: What Went Wrong With
Teaching Training and How We Can Fix It*. Virginia: Stylus
Publishing.

Pp. 266 ISBN 978-1-57922-436-3

Reviewed by Kerry Kretchmar
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Many enter the realm of academia in hopes of ultimately using their knowledge to improve schools or classrooms. Thus, it is always inspiring to read work that is framed around transformation. As the title implies, *Transforming Teacher Education: What Went Wrong with Teaching Training and How We Can Fix It* focuses on possibilities for teacher education. This volume, edited by Valerie Hill-Jackson and Chance W. Lewis, examines a wide-range of change-orientated ideas for teacher education and asks readers to consider diverse approaches, such as analyzing missed historical moments to reveal possible future opportunities, defining a vision for professional practice to shape teacher education, altering current practices around

Citation: Kretchmar, Kerry. (2011 March 3) Review of *Transforming Teacher Education* by Hill-Jackson, Valerie and Lewis, Chance W. (Eds.) *Education Review*, 14. Retrieved [Date] from <http://www.edrev.info/reviews/rev1055.pdf>

teacher recruitment and selection, and holding teacher education programs and school districts accountable for graduates. Although the authors may not uniformly agree on proposed strategies or priorities, there is a shared belief that teacher education must be reinvented and, a shared commitment to beginning the conversation.

Teacher education is not insular—discussions about how to educate teachers are connected to larger social and political debates over visions for our schools and for America. *Transforming Teacher Education: What Went Wrong with Teaching Training and How We Can Fix It* attempts to situate teacher education amid larger debates and structures, recognizing that teacher education is not solely responsible for the success or failure of schools and is heavily impacted by greater structures and issues, such as poverty and inequity. The authors acknowledge and analyze these constraints, however they do not consider them impediments to transforming teacher education. This book is premised on the notion that teacher education—while not the lone key to improving schools—is a crucial component that must undergo radical changes to meet the changing needs of students and schools. Hill-Jackson and Lewis repeatedly remind us that what we are currently doing is not working for teachers or students. They argue small modifications to teacher education, combined with ineffective micro and macro level policy reforms that compete with and confuse each other, have had the opposite of the desired effect and have resulted in negative consequences for teacher education and teachers. Just as teacher educators strive to develop reflectiveness in pre-service teachers, this book asks teacher education programs to be honest in examining and understanding their strengths, weaknesses, constraints, and potential so that they may move forward.

Part I of *Transforming Teacher Education: What Went Wrong with Teaching Training and How We Can Fix It* reflects on the historical and philosophical roots of teacher education. Jennifer Milam examines the history of teacher education and focuses on four missed historical moments, arguing that understanding and analyzing these moments can help us recognize further opportunities for change and for “(re)claiming a unified voice as informed and committed educators” (p. 33). In chapter 2, Nathalia E. Jaramillo asks us to consider a critical philosophy of

teacher education which historically and epistemologically examines the dominant ways of knowing and being of Western thought. She suggests teacher educators and pre-service teachers can draw on this critical philosophy to gain a deeper understand of the relationship between society, schools, and their classrooms, thus bringing doing and thinking closer together.

Part II explores the selection, training and development of teachers. In chapter 3, editors Valerie Hill-Jackson and Chance W. Lewis assert that teachers' dispositions matter. Drawing from extant literature, the chapter outlines five dispositions of advocates and resisters in the multicultural classroom. In conclusion, Hill-Jackson and Lewis contend the teacher education community needs to be engaged in a more serious study of dispositions in order to understand how to promote positive dispositions. Second, they argue that "only teachers with a social justice ideology should teach" (p. 77). Hill-Jackson and Lewis deduce that attention to dispositions in selection and coursework is vital to improving teacher education and ensuring the best teachers are in the classroom.

Chapter 4 looks at who is currently enrolled in teacher education programs and how they are selected, recruited and supported. In a thorough literature review, F. Blake Tenore, Alfred C. Dunn, Judson C. Laughter, and H. Richard Milner examine who is enrolled in teacher education programs and subsequently, who is teaching in P-12 schools, how programs select and recruit, and how teacher education programs, districts, and states induct and provide support for their teachers. As a result of their findings, the authors recommend that programs add some qualitative data to the selection process and engage in aggressive community recruiting to ensure a more diverse teaching force. Further, the authors suggest making induction programs a school-wide effort, and creating a more strategic matching process for mentors and new teachers.

Part III focuses on accountability and evaluation. In a provocative chapter, Martin Haberman is highly critical of teacher education programs and dysfunctional urban districts, noting issues such as the high level of teacher burnout in urban districts, the ways in which universities are disconnected from practice, and the lack a defined

knowledge base in teacher education. Haberman reasons that successful teacher educators, in university or alternative certification programs, need a history of being an effective teacher and must “start acting as if the children and youth in schools are their clients” (p. 134). As a result, Haberman proposes that university teacher education and educational leadership programs should be held accountable for their graduates by basing university budgets on the number of education graduates who take jobs in schools serving students in poverty, the number of university graduates who stay in the profession for three years, and academic achievement of graduates’ students. Finally, Haberman contends that alternative certification routes and school districts should be held accountable by making specific employees responsible for hiring specific teachers. Haberman argues that transformation requires accountability of teacher education programs and school districts.

In contrast to Haberman’s chapter, chapter 6 explores the unintended negative consequences of accountability, particularly analyzing issues of teacher quality that have been brought to the forefront of dialogue with the passage of No Child Left Behind. In a multilevel case study that investigates the ways that states, districts and schools approach issues of teacher policy, Jennifer King Rice concludes NCLB is undermining efforts to increase teacher quality and has placed a particularly high strain on districts which struggle to staff their schools, noting widespread accounts of administrators and districts reporting they turned away candidates they deemed more qualified to hire those who held the required qualifications. Consequently, Rice’s data indicated “highly qualified teachers are not always highly qualified teachers” (p. 169). Further, Rice connects NCLB’s high-stakes accountability to uniform curricula which damages the professionalization of teaching and drives good teachers away from low-performing schools. In conclusion, Rice recommends investing in providing low-performing, high-intensity districts with additional resources and support, better working conditions, and incentives to improve teacher quality rather than restricting teacher hiring and recruitment with tight policy definitions.

Kris Sloan builds off of Rice's critiques of NCLB and high-stakes accountability, but dissects the test-centric culture through the lens of teacher education. Sloan argues that regardless of teacher educators' critiques and resistance to the current culture of accountability and high-stakes testing, teacher education programs must prepare teachers "for the rigors, both personally and professionally of teaching *with*, and if necessary *around* or *against*, high-stakes standardized tests" through revising current content to explicitly address the test-centric culture and promoting culturally relevant assessment and evaluation practices (p. 192). In chapter 7, Sloan proposes a culturally relevant assessment literacy and describes developing course content to help pre-service teachers feel prepared to learn and teach with data and develop assessment literacy.

Part IV examines the "discourse of possibility." Jeanita W. Richardson hones in on the continual critique of a division between policy and practice. Richardson asserts that teachers could have more of a voice in public policy if they understood the roles and ways in which local, state, and federal bodies regulate public K-12 education. Therefore, this chapter thoroughly examines the role of the state, federal and local governments in policies, and the impact of NCLB on teachers. In conclusion, she encourages teachers to understand the system so they can find ways to impact it.

Finally, Linda Darling-Hammond presents her vision for 21st-Century teacher education, evincing that, despite public perceptions, teaching is a highly challenging profession which requires complex decision making skills. She argues teacher education programs need to coherently integrate the following intersecting areas of knowledge into both coursework and field experiences: 1) Knowledge of how learners learn and develop within social contexts, including knowledge of language development, 2) Understanding of curriculum content and goals, including the subject matter and skills to be taught in light of disciplinary demands, student needs, and the social purposes of education, 3) Understanding of and skills for teaching, including content pedagogical knowledge and knowledge for teaching diverse learners because these are informed by an understanding of assessment and of how to construct and manage a productive classroom. She highlights aspects of teacher education that are effective

including a clear, coherent vision of good teaching, well-defined standards, strong core curriculum, extended clinical practices, applying learning to real problems of practice, explicit strategies to help students confront their own deep seated beliefs and assumptions about learning and those different from themselves, strong relationships and shared beliefs among school and university based faculty.

Transforming Teacher Education: What Went Wrong with Teacher Training, and How We Can Fix It provides a thorough and complex consideration of possibilities for reinventing teacher education. Diverse, research based chapters approach transformation in teacher education from a vast range of perspectives and ask the reader to analyze and question how to transform teacher education. What With issues of teacher preparation and quality on the forefront of public discourse, there is need for the teacher education community to reflect on their practices in order to begin a challenging and necessary action-based discussion about how to better prepare teachers. This volume does not provide a single vision or easy answer, but it is an essential step forward. As Hill-Jackson and Lewis state, “This is our moment” (p. 252).

About the Reviewer

Kerry Kretchmar is a PhD student at University of Wisconsin-Madison in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Her research interests include examining teachers, teaching and teacher education.

Copyright is retained by the first or sole author, who grants right of first publication to the *Education Review*.

Education Review/Reseñas Educativas is a project of the National Education Policy Center <http://nepc.colorado.edu>

Editors

Gene V Glass

glass@edrev.info

Gustavo Fischman

fischman@edrev.info

Melissa Cast-Brede

cast-brede@edrev.info