



Hart-Hewins, Linda and Wells, Jan. (1999) *Better Books! Better Readers! How to Choose, Use and Level Books for Children in the Primary Grades.* York, Maine: [Stenhouse](#).

Canadian authors Hart-Hewins and Wells have drawn on their combined 50 years of working with young children to write a very helpful book for preservice and beginning inservice teachers. Although much of the information in the book can be found in many resources dealing with literature based reading programs, this book lays everything out in a logical and understandable way. The authors describe how and why they have organized their reading program based solely on children's trade books. It is a program that they have developed over a number of years, constantly adapting and fine tuning it.

The strength of this book and what makes it stand out from others on the same topic, is how well the authors present their ideas. They are straightforward with definitions and give many practical examples of how they implement each step. The book is loaded with rubrics and lists that help the reader make decisions about books and teaching methods. It has a wonderful bibliography that will help the new and veteran teacher alike choose quality books for their classroom. I plan to recommend this book to the preservice students at our university because it does such a good job at explaining how to manage the reading process.

Pages: 151 Price: \$17.95 ISBN: 1-5711-305-8

Reviewed by Judy Walker, CIMC/Atkins Library, UNC Charlotte

O'Brien, Thomas V. (1998). *The Politics of Race and Schooling: Public Education in Georgia, 1900-1961.* Lanham, MD : Lexington Books.

O'Brien has tackled a complex subject very well. He offers readers an in-depth review of the desegregation battle in Georgia from the turn of the century until the day in September 1961 when the first black students entered a previously white high school. As the title implies, his analysis is largely political, and necessarily looks at economic conditions and political events outside Georgia as they impact decisions within the state. O'Brien does a particularly good job of integrating all the players into a single narrative so that the reader gets a sense of how the various politicians and special interest groups interacted. He also pays special attention to public opinion and shows how savvy leaders attempted to sway opinion, but also how, on occasion, public opinion became the tail wagging the dog.

Readers unfamiliar with southern education history and the desegregation effort

will find surprises here. Georgia, (and the South generally) was late to offer public schooling and due to the economic demands of the reconstruction period, never developed a tradition of support for public education on the level of many of their northern neighbors. For a major segment of the power structure, the first response to desegregation orders was to try to close the public schools entirely. O'Brien states in the introduction that he wrote this history, not only for historians and political scientists, but also for education practitioners. He feels that a deeper understanding of the process that took us to desegregation will help shape the course of current policy. Certainly many in education will find this interesting reading. Much has happened since that day in 1961, we now find ourselves abandoning busing, dismantling affirmative action policies and trying to find ways to reach African American youth. Today's African American students, north and south, challenge educators with attitudes far removed from those of the education starved African American youngsters who tried to learn their lessons in inadequate Georgia schools at the turn of the last century. Perhaps O'Brien should continue his narrative a few more decades forward.

Pages: **229** Price: **\$45.00** ISBN: **0-7391-0060-2**

Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University

Ohanian, Susan. (1999) *One Size Fits Few: The Folly of Educational Standards*. Portsmouth, NH: [Heinemann](#).

This book was a major disappointment. Although I agree with Ohanian's premise that the educational standards movement has gotten out of hand, I found very little of substance in her book that would help to defend this position. To find the few bits of information that were insightful you had to wade through a lot of inciteful writing. Ohanian is as opinionated as those she is attacking. She complains there is no evidence to support the standards movement. However, she does little to support her position except to present very heart wrenching stories about kids who are not helped by standards (and we all know there are many of them) or count the number of times a word is used in a standard.

Someone who has been in the teaching field for a long time might find this book encouraging, but they won't find any suggestions on how to combat the standards issue. The book does nothing to help a preservice or new teacher understand the complex problem of standards, and the issue is very complex. In fact her unsubstantiated argument could drive some of them into the wrong camp. Ohanian certainly offers nothing to parents, the ones who really need to be convinced about the effects of over-dependence, sometimes even sole dependence on quantifiable standards.

Pages: **154** Price: **\$16.00 (paperback)** ISBN: **0-325-00158-8**

Reviewed by Judy Walker, CIMC/Atkins Library, UNC Charlotte

Tooley, James. (1999). *The Global Education Industry: Lessons from Private Education in Developing Countries*. London: [Institute for Economic Affairs](#).

Educators who have looked with interest at the rise of such American for-profit ventures at the University of Phoenix, may find this book interesting as well. Tooley looks at private education initiatives in a number of developing countries at all education levels. He is careful to look at the numbers, both heads and dollars, but he is also interested in program quality, equity, and the research basis of pedagogy.

The widespread development of brand name education is Tooley's emphasis. He looks at how chains of schools create brand awareness through advertising and protect their good names through the use of new technology and intensive training and oversight of instructors. For example he discusses an Indian chain that assesses instructors based on the student test results, ratings of instructors, retention, and fee payment rate. He points out that in some systems classroom presentations are controlled down to the length of exposure to each overhead!

In highly competitive markets, Brazil is one example Tooley mentions, chains strive to make the latest technology available to their students. Some have research staff distinct from the instruction staff that devise the curriculum including detailed lesson plans. Tooley is less clear about equity issues, pointing out that most developing economies are not able to offer equal access to education whether the education is public or private. He feels that making student loans available for education will do a great deal to help assure equity.

The book is brief and fairly readable, although the British origin shows in the vocabulary choices.

Pages: **136** Price: **\$13.50** ISBN: **0-255-36475-x**

Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University



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