



Chase, Clifford, editor. (1998). *Queer 13: Lesbian and Gay Writers Recall Seventh Grade*. New York, NY: Rob Weisbach Books.

Even without reading this book the average person would guess that the transition to adult sexuality would be a difficult one for homosexual students. Despite this self evident fact, the details provided in this book will provide insights for most readers, straight and gay. Be warned that this is not upbeat reading. There are few stories of the teacher who provided an oasis or the friend who accepted me as I am. For these writers, seventh grade was a year at the extreme without the team building and camaraderie that usually go with such rites of passage. The editor states that he solicited this collection because he felt it could help gay adults see themselves in a stronger, more positive light. It will also offer food for thought for teachers and parents who deal with adolescents on a daily basis.

Pages: 270 Price: \$23.00 ISBN: 0-688-15811-0

Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University

Dorn, Linda J., French, Cathy and Jones, Tammy. (1998). *Apprenticeship in Literacy: Transitions across Reading and Writing*. York, Maine: [Stenhouse Publications](#).

Reading Recovery is a program developed in New Zealand to help at risk children in kindergarten through third grade learn to read. All three authors of this book are practitioners of this approach to literacy and "Apprenticeship in Literacy" seeks to explain both the philosophical underpinnings on which the program is based and how to implement its prescribed activities in the classroom. In an easy to read and understand style, the authors discuss the fundamentals of Reading Recovery, which includes daily individual tutoring sessions, a focus on the child as an active participant in instruction (students are "apprentices" in their learning), instructional scaffolding and teaching for independent learning and reflection. Chapters cover the basics of learning to read, the more sophisticated techniques of grouping and guided reading, assisted writing, and independent writing. Each chapter contains practical suggestions for applying Reading Recovery theories to the classroom, as well as authentic classroom examples of the program in action, such as writing samples and transcripts of discussions, to illustrate how these suggestions can be implemented and work in real life. While research has not conclusively shown that Reading Recovery is as successful as the authors claim, many teachers will be intrigued by this alternative method of teaching reading and writing. Dorn et al. have created a thoughtful, useful, very practical and applicable text that will appeal to educators interested in reaching those at risk readers present in every elementary school.

Pages: 177 Price: \$20.00 ISBN: 1-57110-088-1

Reviewed by Shellie Jeffries, Wayne State University

Hershman, Dyan M., McDonald, Emma S. (1998). *Survival Kit for New Teachers: A User-Friendly Handbook*. Plano, TX: Inspiring Teachers Publishing Group.

This book is what is sometimes referred to as a "practical guide." Teacher Education professionals will find little to value here, but new teachers may well find a lifeline. There are lots of checklists and detailed instructions for specific activities, sample letters, games for the first day of school, assessment suggestions, even details of how to organized a vertical file.

Most of the material is clearly presented and easy to follow. In many sections the authors offer several alternative suggestions, often recommending that teachers pick the one that seems most comfortable for their teaching style. A new teacher, especially one feeling unsure or intimidated by a new job, will find much comfort and aid. The one drawback that needs to be raised about this book is it's total lack of theory. There is no overarching concept that these suggestions are supposed to embody, no one philosophy, that gradually unfolds for the reader via the examples. Many of the suggestions would place power squarely in the teacher's hand and contradict much of what students have been taught in current teacher education programs.

Pages: **218** Price: **\$40.00** ISBN: **0-9667145-0-4**

Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University

McCulloch, Gary. (1998). *Failing the Ordinary Child? The Theory and Practice of Working-Class Secondary Education*. Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.

One of the major fascinations of books written for a British audience is the culture shock about American educational assumptions that they inspire. Americans tend to think of the British as very similar, so the substantial differences in our education systems can lead American readers to reexamine their thinking. This book may be too British for many readers, but it offers some valuable discussion.

Using the rise and fall of the "secondary modern school" as a backdrop for his analysis, McCulloch begins with an historical overview of education at the secondary level. It began as, and in many ways continues to be, an explicitly class differentiated system. While decision makers were uniformly from the upper classes, education at the secondary level sought to prepare the "ordinary" child for routine jobs and domestic efficiency. By limiting the possibilities for children enrolled in these schools the system has effectively cheated the country of the contributions they could make. Unable to learn the skills they will need for a good job, the students drop out in high numbers and swell the rolls of the unemployed.

McCulloch points out that this class based system is deeply ingrained. It will be a challenge for British schools to break from this mold and offer advanced

vocational and academic opportunities to all children.

Pages: **202** Price: **\$89.00 cloth, \$32.95 paper** ISBN: **0-335-19788-4 cloth, 0-335-19787-6, paper**

Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University



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