

Boothe, D. & Stanley, J. (Eds.). (2004). *In the eyes of the beholder: Critical issues for diversity in gifted education*. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press. ISBN: 1-59363-004-2

"Diversity" is a major buzzword in many educational circles. Some of those individuals involved in the field of gifted education historically have demonstrated an embarrassing neglect of issues of diversity. With the volume *In the Eyes of the Beholder: Critical Issues for Diversity in Gifted Education*, Diane Boothe and Julian Stanley have created an important book for gifted education. They demonstrate an appropriately broad understanding of the term "diversity" by incorporating varied domains and viewpoints into one large, satisfying work.

Of the three sections of the book, Part I is the most cohesive thematically. Titled "Cultural Considerations," this section addresses issues such as race, language, and cultural background. Common themes can be found among the respective chapters on Hispanic, African-American, and Native American students. We are cautioned to remember that even students of the same race/ethnicity will display variable characteristics. The authors of these three chapters also recommend a greater use of collaborative methods like cooperative learning in the classroom, in keeping with each group's cultural value system and preferences.

Jaime Castellano's opening chapter on Hispanic students addresses the extent to which Hispanic students have balanced their home, school, and community worlds, and the resulting implications on curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Included are examples of curricula which address the strengths of these students. The chapter on African-American students, written by Donna Ford, Tarek Grantham, and H. Richard Milner, addresses the cultural, social, and psychological factors that contribute to the underachievement of gifted African-American students. They cover topics from within-group peer pressure against "acting White" to the need for increased teacher training on cultural diversity, and they make recommendations for matching educational approaches to the cultural characteristics of African-Americans. Beverly Klug's chapter brings to light some of the cultural differences that lead to reduced identification for gifted and talented Native American students. Some of this scholarship is not found as commonly as other scholarship on issues of race, so one may find this chapter particularly useful.

In addition, Boothe and Stanley's inclusion of separate chapters on Indian and Chinese students was a welcome decision. Usually, these groups are not included because they are not considered to be "at risk," either inside or outside of the gifted education community. However, appreciating diversity includes understanding

characteristics of various subsets of Asian-American groups. Also, considering that the majority of the world's population is "Asian," it is healthy to see an approach that begins to break up the monolithic "Asian-American" label, which obscures often significant differences among many different groups. Beheruz Sethna's chapter on Indian students probes more deeply into Indian culture, where hard work is prioritized over a sense of innate giftedness, and the stereotype of "pushy parents," compared to Jiannong Shi and Jinghua Zhai's chapter on Chinese students, which focuses more on the interventions for identified students.

Part I also includes other chapters. Claire Golomb's piece on the visual arts includes three case studies tying into the theme that high-level young artists show both accelerated development and qualitative differences compared to their age-mates. Judith Rance-Roney addresses students who learn English as a second language, referred to as secondary English language learners (ELL) or culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. Culture shock may be experienced particularly intensely by those gifted CLD adolescents whose giftedness is defined in part by their emotional sensitivity/intensity. Joseph Renzulli and Sally Reis discuss the benefits of curriculum compacting, particularly in those urban environments where gifted programs are sparse or unavailable, relying instead upon within-class differentiated instruction for students of varying levels of performance.

Part II of the book is titled "The View From the Core Education Community." Linda Brody discusses the processes in developing individualized educational plans (IEPs) to create optimal matches between students and their individual academic needs. She highlights the diversity of the population of students identified as gifted and notes that, even after appropriate placement of a student occurs, further differentiation may well be necessary to meet the student's needs. In the same vein, Joyce VanTassel-Baska's chapter on curricular diversity shows that students deserve appropriate curricular matches for their talents, requiring a diverse, non-uniform approach that frees advanced students from the typical age-grade model of education. The chapter involves an efficient overview of the Integrated Curriculum Model, which synthesizes major curricular approaches in response to the nature and needs of the gifted population.

Diane Boothe contributes her own chapter on gender differences, a hot topic in light of this year's controversy surrounding the comments of Harvard University President Lawrence Summers. Boothe raises important questions about the social, cultural, psychological, and socioeconomic forces potentially limiting the performances of women, particularly in more quantitative endeavors. C. Marie Jackson and Brent Snow address counseling issues in their chapter, including useful lists of recommendations for parents and counselors of gifted students. They also organized another list of common characteristics that gifted students seem to exhibit to a much greater degree than their same-age peers, noting that these characteristics can be exhibited either positively or negatively, possibly requiring different counseling approaches.

One very important and often overlooked aspect of "diversity" is theoretical diversity. In educational circles, "diversity" often is a code word for privileging only those perspectives considered to be alternatives to historically "traditional" ways of thinking. It is rare to find a text that treats multiple viewpoints seriously, without structuring easy "straw man" arguments. Boothe and Stanley have demonstrated theoretical diversity in Part II with their inclusion of authors such as Arthur Jensen and Linda Gottfredson. Jensen looks at racial group differences on reaction time measures, which he found to be significant and, with additive impact over time, possibly explanatory of these groups' differences in cognitive measures. Gottfredson's perspective is that giftedness simply is not distributed equally across demographic groups, and she directly takes issue with the stance of Donna Ford, the co-author of the earlier chapter on African-American students on this issue. I would like to have seen a structured point-counterpoint between Gottfredson and Ford, although the book was not intended to be organized this way. Robert Lerner and Althea Nagai's chapter on affirmative action in Part III of the book also is not what one might call "politically correct." I am not sure that their multiple logistic regressions do anything more than statistically support the open fact that many universities factor race into college/university admissions. In addition, they seem to avoid important questions, such as whether racial preferences in admissions represent socially useful policies and the extent to which SES and second-rate, pre-college schooling place two strikes against people of color in the first place, concerns worth citing in the chapter.

Other chapters in Part III (titled "Pertinent Perspectives on the Challenges of Giftedness") include Mindy Kornhaber's examination of Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and the discussion by Jonna Kwiatkowski and Robert Sternberg of Sternberg's model of successful intelligence. Both viewpoints represent the goal of utilizing identification measures that increase student diversity in gifted programs. Neither article provided particularly convincing empirical evidence supporting either approach, however.

Paula Olszewski-Kubilius discusses the role that talent searches have had in meeting the needs of students. Anyone who wanted to know more about the genesis, growth, and evolution of the talent search would enjoy this chapter. The "off-level" testing that undergirds the talent search model is a necessary break for gifted students from the age-grade model of education critiqued earlier by, among others, Joyce VanTassel-Baska and Linda Brody. Initially, whereas the talent search primarily was a device for identification and selection, now the model increasingly has been used as a diagnostic tool to prescribe appropriate curricula.

The final chapter is an enlightening history of federal education policy regarding gifted and talented students. In addition to citing the various policy milestones, Clifton Wickstrom is skillful at providing an overarching framework of the national zeitgeist concerning attitudes towards gifted students and also at discussing legal specifics in accessible terms. People may respond differently to the notion expressed in the last line in the chapter (and book) - that "the nation's talented children" are "our greatest potential national asset for the future." When making the case for interventions for gifted and talented students, some first put forth the notion of human capital, the notion of gifted students as a national resource. Others resist that approach and will maintain that the more defensible approach is to discuss the issue in terms of students' needs.

A strength of the book is the editorial vision that organized such scholarship in one place. The references for all of the chapters are put into one large list at the end of the volume.

However, an occasional problem occurs when a citation is referenced in a chapter, but the reference is not to be found in the back, either due to an incorrect date or the fact that the reference is simply missing. A subject index would have been helpful as well.

Many different audiences will find this book useful. Any professor of a teacher education course, even outside of gifted education, would benefit from using this book, both for its voluminous information and for its topical coverage that can serve as the starting point for many educational debates. Researchers and other individuals interested in topics such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, and language will find ready reading and multiple citations for their purposes. Those with more applied interests, such as counselors, policymakers, and program managers, will find relevant chapters here as well. Researchers- and professors looking for more historically traditional viewpoints and for some tightly controlled studies will find this volume useful also. Of course, any parent, teacher, educator, or person otherwise involved in the life of a student with significant gifts and/or talents will benefit from this reading by developing a more sensitive understanding of that student's specific situation.

At the end of the introduction, Julian Stanley states his hope that "diversity discussions can now rest on a broader, more fundamental basis than the usual rhetoric." Mission accomplished. Boothe and Stanley have created a broad canvas for fleshing out the topic of diversity, and the contributing authors have continued to carve out their individual areas of scholarship with greater precision. The final result is a more nuanced understanding of an extraordinarily diverse group of students with advanced gifts and talents.

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