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Two Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS

Crowley, S. (2003).
***Getting the Buggers to Behave* (2nd ed.).**
NY: Continuum.

At a time when research indicates that behaviour management is a significant issue confronting teachers, *Getting the Buggers to Behave* is a valuable addition to existing literature. The book does not concern itself with discussing or developing a theoretical platform from which to examine behaviour management, but along the lines of work undertaken by researchers such as Kounin and McKeachie, focuses on exploring the key elements of a didactic pedagogy. In terms of this emphasis, it provides valuable insights for teachers struggling with classroom control issues.

The content is conceptualised around six topic chapters, with the penultimate chapter delivering the most original material. This chapter presents case study exemplars useful for facilitating discussions on the topic of student behaviour management, even though for an Australian audience, many of the examples are idiomatically 'British' in flavour. Further, not all of the material classified as "good examples" struck me as being persuasively so, with some in fact (e.g. pp 191ff; 200ff) appearing to contradict the principles articulated in previous chapters. Overall though, the case studies give insight into issues regularly encountered by teachers and as such provide valuable discussion starters.

The title serves well the purpose of being catchy but in so doing, is in danger of presenting a somewhat disparaging view of troublesome children. I acknowledge that this may be a particular humanistically underpinned bias of mine, where I prefer to see the problem as the behaviour rather than the child. However, this is a minor point and in no way detracts from the otherwise overall positive content.

In accord with current best practice, the book advocates a 'whole school' approach to managing behavioural problems, stating that "if it is effective and well thought out, your whole-school behaviour policy will be an invaluable aid in helping you control behaviour in your classroom" (p. 147). I concur. Research has consistently shown that such an approach is highly efficacious in facilitating positive behavioural shifts.

This book provides solid, common sense pointers, on how best to facilitate positive student behaviour. As such, it would be a valuable resource for those engaged in school-based pedagogy.

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McLeod, J., & Reynolds, R. (2003).
Planning for Learning.
Tuggerah, Australia: Social Science Press.

Social Science Press is well known for publishing quality, practically-based Australian pedagogical literature. *Planning for Learning* is no exception. This text is an appropriate companion to McLeod and Reynold's (with Weckert) *Enriching Learning*, published in 2001, again by Social Science Press. Whereas the 2001 book sets the scene for the skill of effective teacher planning, the current book, and the one under review, examines planning issues in greater detail and does so from within the context of a learning motif.

The first three chapters of *Planning and Learning* tend to adopt a coordinated systems approach to learning. If one was to construct a three-celled Venn diagram with the cells titled 'the nature of learning', 'the context of learning' and 'the facilitation of learning', this would adequately describe the content of the first three chapters. The area of intersection, which forms the organising theme, is *learning*, with the different facets of this construct being developed in a purposeful and practical fashion in each chapter.

After a discussion of the nature of learning, the final three chapters deal with the question of planning *per se*. Programming is investigated, followed by time-relevant planning and finally by lesson planning. Although the content covered in each chapter is sound and generally helpful, the order of topic presentation seems strange. Inverting the order and commencing with lesson planning may have been more appropriate, the logic being that one normally moves from simple to more complex forms of organisation.

As a teacher educator, what I found to be of particular value was the bibliography at the end of each chapter. The authors have not capitulated to the current obsession of citing only literature produced within the last ten years. The bibliography set spans some fifty years and includes much formative and critical planning and learning literature.

The bulk of the material presented interfaces nicely with the national curriculum platform of outcomes-based education. The section on outcomes-based assessment and reporting (p. 61 ff), although short, is useful in that it clearly articulates contemporary understandings as they pertain to the evaluation of learning.

The book is a useful resource for both preservice and inservice teachers.

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