

4. James Kilpatrick, *The Daily Oklahoman*, 21 December 1981, p. 14.
5. "Educators Disagree Over Whether Private Schooling is Better," *Birmingham Post-Herald*, 7 January 1993, p. A 6.
6. James G. Carter, "An Institution to Prepare Teachers," in *The History of American Education through Readings*, eds., Carl H. Gross and Charles C. Chandler (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1964), 153-154.

Tomorrow's Schools of Education The Holmes Group. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, 1995.

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As might be anticipated, the reaction to the Holmes Group's latest publication, *Tomorrow's Schools of Education*, was immediate.¹ Representing 88 research universities and having previously published two prescriptive books on the education of teachers, *Tomorrow's Teachers* (1986) and *Tomorrow's Schools: Principles for Design of Professional Development Schools* (1990), interest in the latest volume was peaked since the Holmes Group would be critiquing its own procedures within departments, schools, and colleges of education. Indeed, the Holmes Group has delivered a candid internal assessment of its schools of education in relationship to the needs of teachers and children in K-12 schools.

Situating the education faculty working in collaboration with practitioners in professional development schools is where the Holmes Group sees practice becoming "the locus of inquiry" (p. 92). *Tomorrow's Schools of Education* is unflinching in its assessment of policies within universities that discourage education professors from becoming involved in K-12 schools through professional development schools, the cornerstone of the Holmes model for teacher preparation. A specific action plan for reforming higher education policies, though, is not forthcoming here because the Holmes Group does not consider it "the proper forum for thrashing out the details of the many policies that will affect field-based faculty" (p. 71).

Nevertheless, congruity exists between the kinds of scholarship policies *Tomorrow's Schools of Education* proposes and Ernest Boyer's recommendations for four discrete levels of scholarship.² Boyer sees a fundamental scholarship level being teaching, where knowledge is transformed for students. Continuing along his spectrum of scholarship, Boyer proposes the categories of application, knowledge used to solve "consequential problems"³; integration, "work that seeks to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight to

bear on original 'research' "4; and, finally, discovery, "closest to what is meant when academics speak of 'research.'"5 More equally distributing the promotion and tenure criteria for education faculty along Boyer's lines would offer the Holmes Group a way out of the kind of quandary they describe.

This particular Holmes report moves beyond the common concerns over faculty reward systems and into disturbing practices of education faculty members. While recognizing that examples of excellent preparation of teachers may be found, the Holmes Group acknowledges in its opening pages, "Others provide shoddy preparation that angers and embarrasses those who care deeply about the minds and welfare of America's young" (p. 1). The Holmes sentiment echoes John Goodlad's study of schools of education where he encountered

countless incidents of indifference and neglect on the part of individuals who have it in their power to make a difference, and of thoughtlessness among individuals casually perpetuating tired practices of yesterday that should never have been resorted to in the first place.⁶

The Holmes Group, too, encountered tired practices: "Regretfully, we found in our case studies that education school faculty resist the prospect of altering the traditional pattern, a stance that surely poses an obstacle to the reforms we wish to introduce" (p. 76). In his analysis of ancient Greeks and their respective desire to act on their beliefs correctly, classical scholar Roberto Calasso notes that "there is nothing so sad as a sacrifice made to the wrong god."⁷ Likewise, the Holmes Group is suggesting that education professors have been sacrificing their professional energies for the wrong social purposes.

The metaphors of "tired" and "shoddy" create an image of bankrupt ideas peddled to preservice and experienced teachers within insular environments. Tired practices are noteworthy mainly for their avoidance of perspectives that acknowledge the inherent conflicts and contradictions of the learning and schooling process that teachers face each day. Under these conditions, teacher education professors perpetuate inflexible notions of "official knowledge"⁸ that belie the actual struggle over the school curriculum, policy, and teaching. Tired in their fragmentation and rarely grounded in multiple interpretations, closed systems of teacher preparation deny the meaning-making that teachers and students construct from their own experiences and essentially reinforce status quo hierarchies of knowledge, learning, and work relationships. These same preparation programs are often the ones whose graduates claim that their preservice training was irrelevant to the actual nature and demands of teaching.

Tomorrow's Schools of Education explores these concerns throughout their report. The Holmes Group focuses on the knowledge base educators need in

the domains of “children and their learning” (pp. 29–33), “knowledge needed by the next generation” (pp. 33–35), “educational systems” (pp. 35–38), and “culture and young people’s learning” (pp. 38–41). The specialized knowledge for which they advocate would be transmitted through professional development schools that would be compassionate about the issues of equity and diversity:

Among the issues on which the TSE [tomorrow’s schools of education] should focus its expertise are those having to do with race relations, cultural diversity, inclusive education for students with disabilities, improved ways of providing bilingual education, sensitivity to gender inequities, and implementation of new guidelines for Chapter 1. (p. 46)

With schools of education aligned with professional development schools “founded on the premise of equity and diversity” (p. 46), useful policy development for public schools would be forthcoming. To meet this goal, the ideal professional development school would “be a de-tracked institution that can provide living examples of what happens when a school extends respect to all children for their ability to learn” (pp. 47–48).

Tomorrow’s Schools of Education concedes that considerable barriers exist for realizing their social reform vision. In the context of making schools of education accountable to the aim of the model professional development school, the Holmes Group expresses deep concern over the outcome if universities do not exert a “collective will” (p. 100) in developing “a critical mass of faculty” (p. 106) who will work in “alliances with partners outside the universities” (p. 111). The urgency of the Holmes Group comes through as universities are told that they “can tarry no longer” (p. 115), because

the collapse of public education will be at hand in the absence of action to address the failing of educators—both those who work in and carry out research in elementary and secondary schools and those who educate them and carry out research and development in the colleges and university. (p. 115)

Despite the grave reservations expressed, *Tomorrow’s Schools of Education* offers limited guidance for the actual transformation of the teacher preparation curriculum itself in developing the kinds of dispositions so desired by the Holmes Group. Implied throughout the report is an assumption that a coherent foundation in professional education is a necessity: “Free-standing studies in the foundations of education should be included in the initial core, but with an eye toward deepening the treatment of the various topics as part of ongoing professional development” (p. 84). This posture is an apparent shift for the Holmes group because, according to Kathryn Borman in the *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*, earlier orientations of the Holmes Group

“largely ignore the role of educational foundations in education.”⁹ Borman’s concern had stemmed from what she saw as a Holmes Group apprentice model with a narrow emphasis on technical classroom skills while ignoring educational practice that “involves teachers in critical evaluations of the web of cultural, political, and social structures that surround them.”¹⁰

Tomorrow’s Schools of Education grants the importance of Borman’s foundations approach, but fails to unequivocally make the social foundations of education the conceptual center piece of the curriculum. Although important, more attention is given by the Holmes Group in their proposed curriculum core to psychological issues pertaining to the individual child examined in the context of actual schools. “Because university-based education schools have not given sustained attention to some of the most pressing educational issues of the day,” the Holmes Group states in their current report, “students of education tend to learn only part of what they need to know” (p. 103). Teacher education programs not embracing the professional development school approach are considered to “inhabit a make-believe land, a Potemkin village of reassuring facades” (p. 103).

A background monograph for *Tomorrow’s Schools of Education*, however, had made a critical social foundation key to the goal of teacher education. The strong curricular tone of the Holmes Group’s earlier framing of their social program¹¹ is somewhat muted in *Tomorrow’s Schools of Education*. The background paper stands as a more serious response to Borman’s fears of a limited vision of teaching than does *Tomorrow’s Schools of Education*. The Holmes 1992 monograph explores more in detail the curriculum content that ought to infuse both the psychological and social foundations of education, creating a more holistic social psychological orientation to foundational studies. Backed by an extensive bibliography missing from *Tomorrow’s Schools of Education*, the study paper was clear about the need to emphasize the foundations, envisioning itself as “a statement of proposed principles for the curriculum that should be the core in the professional studies.”¹² For example, the background paper examines what it means to be “reflective” and includes a positive examination of social reconstructionism as a means for education students “to study education in political and social context [and] to develop an understanding of its institutional features as a basis for social action.”¹³ The strength of *Tomorrow’s Schools of Education* resides in its willingness to take on serious structural and philosophical obstacles that prevent the enactment of foundations studies grounded in a critical perspective, not in a deep analysis of the social foundations curriculum.

Societal expectations have historically called on teacher education to socialize teachers away from being the kind of moral voices that might result in public conflicts. The Holmes Group seeks to institutionalize a demonstrative shift away from this silence. *Tomorrow’s Schools of Education* implies

throughout that schools of education must emphasize “educational ethics” (p. 84) and be “fundamentally committed to supporting education that promotes rights, equity, and access” (p. 46) “by showing [education] students how the content relates to conditions that confront educators in the schools in which they work today” (p. 84). Without making a critical social perspective a priority for teacher education, no coherence nor hope of renewing schools will be available in the direction *Tomorrow's Schools of Education* desires despite its professed belief in the liberating potential of professional development schools.

Teacher preparation programs, on the whole, are now failing to develop for future educators “the skills of discourse, debate, analysis of conflicting views, compromise, and the like required by faculties engaged in school renewal,” turning out beginning teachers with “little interest in or vocabulary for discourse regarding moral issues and norms.”¹⁴ If the educational foundations do not instill a critical voice in future teachers and in dialogues within schools of education, teacher education will continue to be reduced to fragmented techniques, disconnected from the social ills that impact on elementary and secondary schools. Without a critical social grounding, the call in *Tomorrow's Schools of Education* for reflection on existing schooling practices will simply leave the social conventions of schools unquestioned. This clearly is not the vision of *Tomorrow's Schools of Education*, but may be the result unless the challenge to move to more cohesive, social approaches are embraced by the leadership within schools of education.

Tomorrow's Schools of Education is an important addition to the literature on teacher development. The Holmes Group has raised thorny issues that need to be addressed openly, not only by major research-oriented universities but also by all educators committed to improving working and learning conditions in public schools. However, as a resource for the foundations curriculum of future schools of education, readers are advised to return to the wealth of resources that are already in our libraries waiting to be implemented.¹⁵

Notes

1. Julie L. Nicklin, “Education-School Group Issues Scathing, Self-Critical Review,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (1995, February 3): A17; Joost Yff, “AACTE Endorses Recommendations for Education Reform,” *AACTE Briefs* (1995, January 30): 2–3.

2. Ernest L. Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (Princeton, NJ: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990).

3. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

6. John I. Goodlad, *Teachers for Our Nation's Schools* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), p. 67.

7. Roberto Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), p. 319.
8. Michael W. Apple, *Official Knowledge: Democratic Education in a Conservative Age* (New York: Routledge, 1993).
9. Kathryn M. Borman, "Foundations of Education in Teacher Education," in W. Robert Houston, ed., *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1990), p. 393.
10. Ibid.
11. Gary Sykes (with Harry Judge and Kathleen Davaney), *The Needs of Children and the Education of Educators: A Background Paper for Tomorrow's Schools of Education* (E. Lansing, MI: The Holmes Group, 1992). Curiously, the inside cover of the monograph holds a different subtitle—"Social Responsibility in the Learning Society" (p. 1)—which is the actual emphasis of the paper.
12. Ibid., preface.
13. Ibid., p. 40.
14. Goodlad, pp., 255, 256.
15. Besides the powerful collections of articles in W. Robert Houston's (ed.), *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1990) and the Sykes monograph, such collections of essays as found in Steven Tozer, Thomas H. Anderson, & Bonnie B. Armbruster (eds.), *Foundational Studies in Education: A Reexamination* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1990), and B. Robert Tabachnick and Kenneth M. Zeichner, eds., *Issues and Practices in Inquiry-Oriented Teacher Education* (New York: Falmer Press, 1991) continue to provide a rich storehouse for the educational foundations to draw upon.

Higher Education

Mission of the University. Jose Ortega Y Gasset. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Press, 1992. Pp. xxvi, 84. \$21.95 (Paper).

Politics By Other Means. David Bromwich. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992. Pp. xvii, 257. \$12.00 (Paper).

The Idea of the University. Jaroslav Pelikan. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992. Pp. x, 238. \$10.00 (Paper).

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The appearance of three books in the same year, all of which consider the mission of the contemporary university, warrants our interest. Certainly there is something timely about a trio of books that calls us to a reexamination of

