William Glasser has aged well. He has worked hard at developing a simple but exacting approach for fighting coercive relationships and creating more joyful and successful educational systems. If simplicity involves removing the unnecessary so the necessary may speak, his two new books necessarily speak to our educational hearts, heads, and hands. It is necessary that we take them to heart of our educational concerns.

References


The Disciplined Mind.

Reviewed by Ted McKeigan, Graduate Student, Brock University.

What is true, beautiful, and good? Using the theory of evolution, the musical genius of Mozart, and the horrors of the Holocaust, Howard Gardner, in The Disciplined Mind successfully assists students' and teachers' cultural understanding of their educational process as it relates to truth, beauty, and goodness. He does this by emphasizing that we should teach less but in more depth. By probing important issues in depth, we will be teaching much more.

In pursuit of truth, Gardner links Darwin's development of systematic classification of living organisms to the understanding of topics that effect human beings today. In doing so, he manages to find common ground between the scientific and religious communities, despite the controversies surrounding the theory of evolution. He uses the power of music to depict the human condition in Mozart's work, "The Marriage of Figaro," in search of beauty as it appears in music and human relations. And, in pursuit of the good (and the ugly), Gardner uses the Holocaust and the atrocities associated with it, as a way to understand, not only the Holocaust, but also the human motivation behind such a horrific and elaborate endeavour.

Gardner walks a fine line between the age old rivals of traditional education and progressive education. He lauds John Dewey and his progressive stance toward a humanistic, connected educational curriculum, while, at the same time, supports the notion of national standards and a national curriculum - with limits! He does reject the preoccupation with standardized tests and feels that in the wrong hands, the results could be used to foster non-
educational objectives. Gardner does, however, feel there is a vital need for accountability for the institutions that are publicly funded and that educational language should be easily understood by parents and students, alike.

Gardner embodies the best of both approaches in his description of the disciplines. He acknowledges the need for a multi-disciplinary approach to education, especially in the early years, until an "intellectual core" is established. Gardner questions, however, the value of studying certain disciplines in order to achieve a specific end. He states, "Rather the rationale and the reward for studying the disciplines should be enhanced access to, and stronger purchase on, the major questions of human life" (p. 218). Curriculum should not confine one's experience, it should expand it. Once again, Gardner walks the line between tradition and progressive education, by approving of disciplinary studies but supporting the "progressives" by encouraging interdisciplinary work that would enrich "answers to essential questions."

Ultimately, Gardner wishes to convey the value of gaining a deep understanding and connection to the issues of being human. Such a stance creates tension with the business driven, educational reformers of Ontario, as the probing human element of education seems to be legislated away. All the emphasis is being placed on money and profits, as well as teacher proof curriculum.

Gardner would like to create a public that can think scientifically about new discoveries; think historically about society and politics; and identify what is moral and beautiful in their daily lives. He suggests six pathways through which to do this. These pathways are: the canon pathway, outlining historical and artistic values; the multicultural pathway, examining ethnic and racial culture; the progressive pathway, outlining democratic values; the technological pathway, defining the attainment of a competitive edge; the socially responsible pathway, looking at human development; and the understanding pathway, referring to continuous questioning and learning. By following any of these pathways, Gardner feels that people could make informed personal choices about what is true, beautiful, and good. Such a vision, would, in Gardner's opinion, better enable our society to take advantage of the opportunities presented in life, enriching both the present and our future.

This type of education for understanding offered by Gardner would be useful to educators who are in teaching for the long run. The multitude of approaches to education are brought together and synthesized into a workable, creative plan. From a teacher's point of view, there is much guidance for extending perspective and influence. Teachers are encouraged to challenge their students and explore beyond the curriculum in search of truth, beauty, and goodness. Gardner states that, "Learning need not occur only within the four walls of the classroom. Parents, school board members, and key citizens of the
community are all factors in the equation that yields a curriculum" (p.136).
This message is also directed to the reformers who would have all "learning"
confined to a standardized curriculum that would stifle enrichment and
experience.

Gardner encourages teachers to empower students by giving them a
voice in their educational experience. At the same time, he charges students
with the task of taking responsibility for their education, using all the
opportunities that technology has to offer. Teachers, students, and
administrators should be "part and parcel of the envisioning and planning
process" (p. 229), which is another distinct message to reformers that learning
is better accomplished when all involved parties are connected to curriculum,
rather than having a forced curriculum written by "experts" at a distance.

Despite the inevitable changes that will occur in our notions of what is
ture, good, and beautiful, The Disciplined Mind provides teachers and students
with the tools to grasp the opportunities for deeper understanding and identify
the visions that will enhance our education now and in a more desirable future.
Gardner once again has invited educators to focus their efforts and extend their
reach.

The Construction of the Self: A Developmental Perspective.

Reviewed by Sandra Leanne Bosacki, Brock University.

Within the fields of educational and developmental psychology, interest has
grown concerning the question of how cognitive and socioemotional processes
work together to construct pathways for the self. In particular, researchers and
educators have become increasingly interested in the role that the school plays
in children's self-development. According to Jerome Bruner, "the single most
universal thing about human experience is the phenomenon of the 'Self'' (1996,
p. 35) and advocates that education is crucial to its formation. However,
despite the strong theoretical claims linking a child's sense of self to school
experience, there has been a lack of systematic research on the self within the
school context.

Developmental psychologist Susan Harter in her recent book entitled,
The Construction of the Self: A Developmental Perspective, has addressed such a
topic. Harter lends her expertise in the field of self-development and gender
by examining the development of the structure and content of self-
representations from the preschool years through late adolescence. Harter
provides a comprehensive analysis of the cognitive and social processes