

*Book Review:*

*Inspiration and Innovation in Teaching and Teacher Education*

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**Abstract:**

*Inspiration and Innovation in Teaching and Teacher Education* is an edited book by Karen Goodnough, Gerald Galway, Cecile Badenhorst, and Rob Kelly (2013) presenting a collection of 13 chapters, with three overview chapters in sections titled: "The Essence of Teacher Education," "Innovative Practices in Teacher Education," and "Emerging Issues in Teacher Education." The book serves to remind readers of the history of teacher education as a landscape for new and future endeavors in the field, and it offers current research to address provocative questions related to a profession in which first responsibilities are presented as both political, in terms of the future of democracy, and personal, in terms of students who demonstrate particular values such as a sense of responsibility for themselves, others and the land through sustainability, as well as the skills to live those values. This text is a comprehensive and contemporary read and, as such, is highly recommended for Canadian curriculum scholars and students as well as others interested in the field of education.

## Book Review

Goodnough, K., Galway, G., Badenhorst, C., & Kelly, R. (2013). *Inspiration and Innovation in Teaching and Teacher Education*. Toronto, ON: Lexington Books.

**I**n *Inspiration and Innovation in Teaching and Teacher Education*, editors Karen Goodnough, Gerald Galway, Cecile Badenhorst, and Rob Kelly (2013) offer overviews of a collection of 13 chapters in three sections titled: "The Essence of Teacher Education," "Innovative Practices in Teacher Education," and "Emerging Issues in Teacher Education." This is a timely text, as teacher education in Canada, while historically a site for change, has become in many contexts a flash point for debate and reform. Dialogue has been particularly forthcoming in recent years related to the positioning of particular sub-disciplines within the field of Education and the dialogue between these sub-groups is resonant as interdisciplinary possibilities emerge to create new and interesting yet controversial relationships between content knowledge and pedagogy.

In his chapter "Bridging the Grand Chasm," John R. Wiens addresses what he describes as a crisis in education and democracy that is catalyzed by the division that exists between school systems and faculties of education. Wiens uses metaphors of chasms and bridges to invite the reader into possibilities for change where each side—teachers and schools, faculty members and colleges—ventures towards the other in favor of the welfare and future good of the education system.

The next chapter, "Reorienting Postsecondary Education Toward Sustainability," offers Garth Pickard's notions of a necessity to return to the high seriousness exemplified by academic programs of the past. An effective articulation of the journey towards teacher certification is described as an opportunity to focus attention on three key conceptual elements which are not always recognized as necessary traits of postsecondary education: sustainability, community, and humility. In addition, Pickard reminds readers that active learning through integrality at the post-secondary level requires that adult teacher-educators recognize the collective value of these topics.

Clive Beck and Clare Kosnick present a focus on departmental initiatives in their chapter "Giving Higher Priority to Subject Content and Pedagogy in Pre-Service Education." Longitudinal research in the form of interviews with teacher candidates, alongside the results of other related studies, offered the following results: subject content and pedagogy are crucially important; particular challenges seem to commonly stand in the way of acquiring both subject content and pedagogy; and selection with related goal clarification is necessary when it comes to delivering subject material although integration may narrowly support particular outcomes across two or more subject areas. Finally, while in-service education can move teachers further in their respective journeys, both pedagogical knowledge and subject knowledge should be targeted here, just as they should be covered in teacher education programs. Beck and Kosnick's discussion elaborates further on how pre-service education programs might consider the above findings through program design.

The last two chapters in this first section deal, respectively, with supporting exceptional children and youth and teacher candidates' perceptions of effective teaching at

the university level. In terms of the latter topic, Jerome Delaney, Albert N. Johnson, Trudi D. Johnson, and Dennis L. Treslan outline nine characteristics of effective teaching drawn from student feedback in their chapter titled “Students’ Perceptions of Effective Teaching in Higher Education.” Carla DiGiorgio’s discussion of the former in “Preparing Future Teachers for Inclusive Education” involves findings from her original research study exploring how actions and beliefs are closely connected and the idea that positive experiences supporting inclusion lead to internally motivated inclusive philosophies of education—an important point as pre-service education programs are developed and revised.

The second section of the text deals more directly with innovation in education contexts. Ron Tinsley and Kimberly Lebak’s “Video-centred Communities of Practice” presents some intriguing statistics, including the idea that in countries such as Finland, South Korea, Japan, and Singapore, teachers spend 50 percent or less of their workday teaching pupils, leaving time open for collaboration. In Canada, where teachers have less time during the day for collaboration, the authors suggest video-centred communities of practice (VCCOP) in order to vicariously participate in one another’s classrooms towards professional development. A detailed model of VCCOP is presented alongside two case studies of veteran teachers who experienced the model in action.

The idea of teaching partnerships is extended in “Making a Difference with a First Nations School and University School of Education Collaboration” by authors Dianne Glasby-Debassige, Gayle Payette, Karen McColman, David Buley, Jan Buley, and Patricia Danyluk. This chapter is a narrative description of a long-term partnership developed in 2006 between Laurentian University’s School of Education and Lakeview School in M’Chigeeng, Manitoulin Island. Perusal of this chapter is particularly recommended for any faculty or school personnel interested in partnerships across cultural spaces.

Karen Goodnough and Pam Osmond’s “Critical Friendship Self-Study” describes the experience of delivering and evaluating classroom experiences based on a hybrid of web-based assignments and face-to-face class time. This chapter contributes to self-study research through an exploration of the role of a *critical friend*. The last chapter in this second section of the text is Katina Pollock and Sue Winton’s “Innovation in Graduate Education”—another kind of hybrid class taught as a course collaboration between two different universities, one in Canada, the other in the United States.

The third section of the text invites thinking related to the future of teacher education. Tom Russell’s chapter “Inspirations and Challenges for Innovation in Teacher Education” warns that a tendency of “looking without rather than within in the search for progress” (p. 171) will continue to stand in the way of true innovation in teacher education. Self-study and the support of a critical friend are practices Russell also foregrounds in his call that particular principles of learning and teaching be considered carefully. He concludes with the provocative statement that “*We, the teacher educators, are the ones who must innovate and change our teaching practices if genuine innovation is to occur in teacher education*” (p. 184; emphasis in original).

Ken Stevens’ chapter “Using Technology to Expand Teaching and Learning Opportunities in Rural Canada” offers a discussion of school networking that comprehensively reviews particular technological innovations currently in operation although not consistently in use across Canada. Louise Watson, Jim Woolnough, Iain Hay, Lynne Hellyer, and Darryl Stuckey’s chapter “Challenging the Theory/Practice Divide in Higher

Education” also reviews innovations, in the form of work-integrated learning, where university lecturers are embedded in workplaces with their students. Key in the latter chapter is the idea that simply “exposing preservice teachers to more time in school settings is unlikely to lead to any significant change in the learning outcomes of teacher education programs” (p. 198). Finally, Shun-wing Ng’s chapter “An Induction and Mentoring Framework for Student Teachers’ and Beginning Teachers’ Professional Development” explores the role of teacher training in student teachers’ and beginning teachers’ ongoing learning post-graduation, with references to frameworks proposed by the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications in Hong Kong.

This is a text worthy of researchers interested in the field of teacher education, faculty members engaged in teacher education at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, and other education stakeholders including teachers and administrators. While not a title conducive to perusing at one sitting, it is a well-organized and thought-provoking opportunity to return again and again to subjects of interest, in particular, ways that lenses both new and traditional may help us conceive a forward trajectory that honours and promotes teaching and learning in the Canadian context and beyond.