

Ending Discrimination in Special Education

Herbert Grossman



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In this new edition, the author goes into more detail about the solutions to the problems identified in the book. The author, a clinical psychologist and special educator, points out the enormous disparities between the school experiences and educational outcomes for poor, non-European American, immigrant, rural, and limited-English proficient students with disabilities and their European American middle- and upper class peers. He also discusses the impacts of race and class prejudice and teacher expectations on the educational outcomes of students from impoverished and minority backgrounds via international comparisons and several case studies that illustrate the manner in which educational placement and support systems affect student outcomes. Grossman challenges all special educators to take the bold steps necessary to end the inequities experienced by low income and minority students in special education. The author makes three strong contentions. The first is that some students who do not need special education are inappropriately placed, whereas others may be overlooked. Second, he asserts that special education strategies are not equally effective across socioeconomic status, English language proficiency, and ethnicity. Finally, he calls into question many of the professional practices of teachers, psychologists, administrators, and professors who serve exceptional populations. The author provides many personal accounts of events and experiences that capture the essence of what he speaks of in this book. The content of this book is information to which all educators working with ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse children should have access. It is informative and presented in a no-nonsense fashion. The reader learns a great deal about practices that do indeed impede the academic achievement and school success of students with special needs from minority and traditionally underrepresented groups. The text can be used as supplemental reading in pre-service courses for general or special education. It is easy to read and cites many examples to reduce any possibility of misinterpretation. Teacher educators will find it especially useful as a tool to generate discussion on the difficult and threatening topics and issues associated with discrimination in public education as a whole and special education in particular. It will be of interest to special educators and administrators at all levels.



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