

OF NOTE

[Re-gifting Potential to Students](#)*Ungifted: Intelligence Redefined*, by Scott Barry Kaufman

Part autobiography, part report on intelligence research, Scott Barry Kaufman's *Ungifted* is a stirring, wide-ranging read for educators. Kaufman acknowledges that schools rely on labeling and standardized testing to sort students, but he rails against the way such practices predetermine the fate of young learners. He looks under the hood of the nature vs. nurture debate, revealing nuances that are much more useful than a binary enforced by journalists. He explains how passion can and should function in schools, walks us back through mindset theory, and shows how "environmental expectancies" influence both. He sings in praise of daydreaming and openness to experience-as prods to creativity-and how engagement can often be a better predictor of achievement than cognitive ability. Ultimately, his book is a celebration of the abundant possibilities for students, beseeching us to find what's present in them, rather than 'counting off' for what's not present. The best gift we can give students, according to Kaufman, is assurance that they do not have to do "everything right" in a "lifelong learning process where bumps and detours are par for the course." Taken as a whole, the book unpacks and clarifies the research behind some of the best instincts present in many independent schools today: meeting students where they are, building inclusive communities committed to social and emotional learning, and educating each whole child in our care.

Stephen J. Valentine, Montclair Kimberley Academy, NJ

Basic Books, March 24, 2015

Klingbrief is a free, monthly publication of recommended articles, books, research reports and media selected by and for independent school educators. The Klingenstein Center for Independent School Leadership provides graduate programs and professional development for independent school educators throughout their careers. For information about submitting to Klingbrief, please click [here](#).

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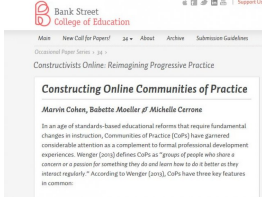
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ARTICLES, BLOGS, AND OTHER MEDIA

[Math and Pajamas: What Could Go Wrong?](#)*Constructing Online Communities of Practice*, by Marvin Cohen, Babette Moeller and Michelle Cerrone

Bank Street College of Education recently invited a group of teachers to join an online Community of Practice (CoP). Called "Math with your PJ's On," the group served two purposes. The first was facilitation of discussion in a flexible, asynchronous timeframe. The group sounded perfect in its inception, promoting the sharing of issues, challenges and solutions among interested math teachers from several different schools. The second purpose was research into the efficacy of such a Community of Practice. The findings identified both potential and problems in such online professional learning groups. Refinements in the second iteration included adding clarity to the facilitator's role, planning some synchronous meeting time, sharpening for relevancy the focus of the group and seeking ways to maintain ongoing interest and participation. The promise of online professional conversations with job-alike practitioners is the richness of building knowledge and understanding together. This article goes deep to find out what strengthens and what threatens a learning setting that could serve as an exciting, continuous, knowledge-creating place for professional growth with low cost and high flexibility-if the conditions that scaffold success are met.

Elizabeth Morley, Kobe Shinwa Women's University, Japan

Bank Street Occasional Paper Series 34, 2015[Technically Adaptive](#)*Overcoming Resistance to New Ideas*, by William Powell and Ochan Kusuma-Powell

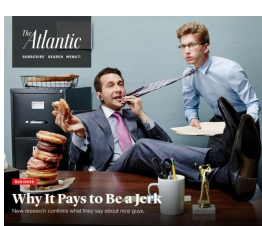
Why do efforts toward change often fail in schools? In this article, William Powell and Ochan Kusuma-Powell outline the two types of challenges that adults face in their professional learning: technical and adaptive. While technical challenges-such as learning how to use a new software package-can be addressed using informational learning gleaned from books, lectures or the advice of colleagues, adaptive challenges require a rethinking of beliefs, culture and assumptions. Most of the professional learning that will transform schools and teaching is adaptive and, therefore, requires a shift in underlying, often subconscious, belief systems. Using a compelling case study about a typical professional learning dilemma-helping "teachers who were resistant to differentiation"-Powell and Powell illustrate how to address adaptive challenges within a school community. Acknowledging that such work requires both patience and time, they offer a model for transformational learning that has far-reaching applications, from improving teaching to developing diversity programs. This short article is a worthwhile read if you are trying to enact change within a school of hardworking and dedicated faculty.

Danielle Passno, The Spence School, NY

Phi Delta Kappan, May 2015 vol. 96 no. 8 66-69[Managing Up](#)*Our Universities: The Outrageous Reality*, by Andrew Delbanco

Sociocultural function is a descriptive term that essentially asks how an institution or endeavor makes the world, as we understand it, better. In our discourse about education, consideration of our school's sociocultural function is usually tacitly present, but rarely is it at the heart of our appraisals. Columbia Professor Andrew Delbanco's recent article, "Our Universities: The Outrageous Reality," puts it front and center. Yes, as the title suggests, the article is a compelling read for the scandal it exposes inside our decadent universities-twelve-million dollar scoreboards, substance-less classes, egregious loan practices, and so on. But Delbanco also lucidly connects the research published in six new books to ask the big, unuttered question: Are our institutions of higher education, on the aggregate, making us better? It's a relevant question for the stewards of independent schools, too. Many of us work in "college prep" programs, and most of our schools have a strong binary relationship with higher education. Andrew Delbanco's article provides a rich context from a trusted source to reexamine and discuss what we want that relationship to look like.

Clayton Gahan, Louisville Collegiate School, KY

NY Review of Books, July 9, 2015[A Subversive Look at Leadership](#)*Why It Pays to be a Jerk*, by Jerry Useem

Appropriately, independent schools pride themselves on shaping cultures that produce leaders whose values will be centered in civic responsibility and ethical decision-making. Useem's unfortunately titled article about leadership goes to the literature, examining research about what leadership is and isn't and how people respond to assertive behaviors. He asks these two questions: "Does it pay to be nice? Or is there an advantage to being a jerk?" The answer is complex. People who violate the norms of kindness, it turns out, are consistently seen as leaders and individuals with some narcissistic tendencies become innovators. As groups form, those who display these tendencies often become dominant within the group, and still it depends: gender issues are always at play. For men and women, levels of assertiveness are perceived differently. Also, traits that work in one situation may not translate well to another, and it is important to know when to be tough and when to be humane. This article can guide educators seeking to help students discern when assertiveness can be a useful leadership tool or when it is likely to devolve into self-aggrandizing aggression.

Bruce Shaw, Bruce A Shaw Consulting, MA

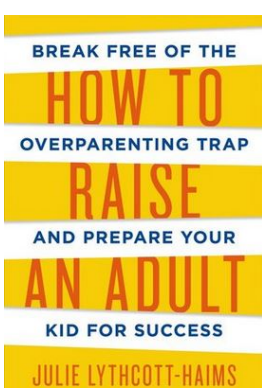
The Atlantic, June 2015[Research Roundup](#)*"Bullying: What We Know Based On 40 Years of Research"*

While educators work on a daily basis to address bullying, there remains a substantial distance between what happens in our schools and the robust and sustained solutions we need in hand to address social aggression. In May 2015 the American Psychological Association published a review of evidence-based findings from the short forty years since research on bullying and its prevention has been done. In conducting this overview, the editors serve schools, parents and policy makers. The introductory chapter offers a comprehensive summary of what we know about bullying. It is a short and accessible foundation for the five papers that follow it, each one tackling a different aspect of bullying. A look at longitudinal data on the long-term effects of childhood bullying into adulthood indicates the skills students need now to overcome the impact of bullying as they mature. There is research on reasons why children bully, the effects of anti-bullying laws and translating research into practice. Helpfully, the final paper provides a critical analysis of how schools can best address the problem of bullying, reviewing evidence for the effectiveness of school-wide, universal anti-bullying programs. The APA has provided a strong, brief and necessary document to bring what is already known into our thinking about the next decades of our work for children and youth and against bullying.

Elizabeth Morley, Kobe Shinwa Women's University, Japan

American Psychological Association, May 15, 2015

BOOKS

[Underparenting by Overparenting](#)*How to raise an adult: Break free of the overparenting trap and prepare your kid for success*, by Julie Lythcott-Haims*How Schools Are Handling An 'Overparenting' Crisis*, by Anya Kamenetz

Julie Lythcott-Haims spent ten years as the dean of freshmen at Stanford University, and in her powerful book, *How to Raise an Adult*, she writes about the steep increase she witnessed in students' rates of anxiety and depression. She attributes this rise to the level of control she sees parents exerting over the lives of their sons and daughters, both in college and beyond. Her belief is that larger and larger numbers of students come to college with few experiences of coping with failure and problem solving because their parents so quickly intervene to take care of every eventuality. Lythcott-Haims draws on research and cites the experiences of a wide array of admission officers and educators to talk frankly about the harm done to young adults when they are prevented from learning how to meet the demands of the adult world as independent agents. She sees a generation of students who lack resiliency and self-confidence, and who feel completely unprepared to make decisions for themselves. NPR reporter Anya Kamenetz adds some interesting bonus footage by bringing together Lythcott-Haims and Jessica Lahey, author of a similarly poised recent book, *The Gift of Failure*. In this brief discussion, both authors lay out the causes of parental over-involvement in their children's lives, the detrimental effects of this phenomenon and what schools and colleges can do to promote a culture of independence and achievement. As they seek to partner compassionately with parents to raise a generation of strong, courageous and resilient adults, educators will find the authors' description of this new generation of parents and students helpful.

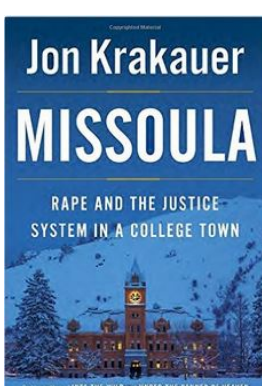
Stephanie Lipkowitz, Albuquerque Academy, NM

Christopher Lauricella, The Park School of Buffalo, NY

Henry Holt and Co., June 9, 2015*nprEd*, August 28, 2015[Further Trauma](#)*Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town*, by Jon Krakauer

In his book, *Missoula*, Jon Krakauer takes on the painful reality of sexual misconduct on college campuses as he describes a series of case studies of date rape at the University of Montana. Krakauer weaves a compelling and unified narrative out of the years when the University and the town of Missoula were shaken by what seemed like a deluge of cases of sexual assault, many of which involved star athletes. With great sensitivity and balance, Krakauer both gives voice to the survivors and describes the ways in which school administrators struggle with conducting investigations that are fair, objective, and get at the truth when, typically, there are no witnesses, alcohol has been present and there is loud public outcry coming from all directions. The ways in which the police and the university interact as they conduct parallel investigations reveal great complication for victims who often find themselves undergoing further trauma as they seek justice. Especially enlightening are Krakauer's descriptions of the expert testimony from psychologists who specialize in working with victims of sexual abuse. Educators seeking to increase their understanding of the handling of sexual misconduct in a school setting will find this book helpful as they think through their own policies and investigative procedures in handling cases of sexual misconduct.

Stephanie Lipkowitz, Albuquerque Academy, NM

Doubleday, April 21, 2015

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The Klingenstein Center
for Independent School Leadership
Teachers College, Columbia University
Box 125
525 West 120th Street
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212-678-3156
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