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culty, is the book important and valuable? Because, as Hirsch would say of his own preferential theories, its benefits clearly outweigh its faults.

The Philosophy of Composition first of all contains descriptions of some of the very latest work in the field, and for all its missionary zeal, does project an admirable sense of work-in-progress. Second, in its striving to give unity to a confused and confusing field, it is symptomatic of the frustration and dedication that teachers of all viewpoints feel as they slowly begin to realize that the "field" is many fields. The inevitable suggestion for prospective teachers is that they become interdisciplinarians. Third, the book is evidence of what teachers of composition should do—and that is, write: not just diagnose and gather up measurements already made, but search again into primary and secondary texts and risk the censure that inevitably accompanies any positing of a new idea in prose of one's own.

—Joan Baum

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Lessons of Terlingua: Small Can Be Tough

Where the Rainbows Wait by Trent Jones and Carlton Stowers. Chicago: Playboy Press, 182 pages, \$10.

Terlingua is a scruffy, semi-abandoned mining town in the desert between El Paso and Laredo, near the Rio Grande. The way you get there, according to a possibly apocryphal Tex-Mex cowboy, is to "go south from Fort Davis until you come to a place where the rainbows wait for the rain, and the big river is kept in a stone box, and the water runs uphill. And the mountains float in the air, except at night when they go away to play with the other mountains."

Trent Jones, his wife Olga, and their two small daughters got to

Terlingua by car and trailer, which they parked a few yards from the town's entirely inadequate one-room schoolhouse. Jones had forsaken a conventional public school teaching job in San Antonio to become principal-teacher-janitor of Terlingua Common School, grades one through eight, for \$4,500 a year. The book, written with the help of a journalist named Stowers, chronicles Jones's first rocky years in that unlikely spot; if the account at times seems exasperatingly romantic, it is at other times remarkably instructive. As the story unfolds, we see Jones's efforts to disperse quality education to Terlingua's few dozen schoolchildren imperiled by two familiar predators: first by the town's feudal-like leadership, which appreciates neither his newfangled notions nor his independent spirit; then by the state's education bureaucracy, which takes the view that one-room schoolhouses are obsolete and ought to be liquidated.

In both instances, Jones successfully employs the tools of democracy to turn away the beasts in the desert. By summoning friendly parents to his aid, he manages to transform a secretly scheduled board of education meeting—one clearly aimed at his dismissal—into something of a love-fest in his honor. The chairman of the board and his anti-Jones sidekick are compelled to resign.

The fight with the state bureaucrats in Austin is not so easily won, but Jones and the townspeople are finally equal to the task. The difficulties begin when an inspector from the Texas Education Agency pays the school a visit and discovers an appallingly long list of defects. These range from inadequate plumbing and wiring to lack of a library and sloppy bookkeeping. "Your report isn't going to be very favorable, is it?" Jones asks the inspector. It is a safe prediction. A few weeks later the state presents Terlingua citizens with an ultimatum demanding that they either correct all officially designated flaws by the following September or else suffer the consequences.

The consequences would be consolidation into a larger school district. No one in Terlingua wants that; it would make their children strangers in an alien town. Besides, they admire Jones and his teaching ways. So they clean up as many of the defects as they can, increase their own taxes to insure decent long-term maintenance of the school, and send a delegation to the state capital to ask for an extension on the consolidation deadline. The hearing in Austin is pure soap opera (Jones's lawyer father, who had formerly looked askance at his son's renegade tendencies, is on hand to support him), and the obligatory triumph comes right on schedule: The town is allowed to keep its school. "You know," says one of the bureaucrats to Jones after the hearing, "I went to an eight-grade school myself up in Grayson County—and it wasn't half bad. But let's face it, the one-room schoolhouse is a dying thing, something for the history books."

It is a familiar assertion, but one that Jones never seriously confronts. Throughout the narrative he seems eager to supply us with successful instances of his teaching efforts (he pays the kids a lot of individual attention; he never puts them down; he *cares*), but he fails to give us a clear picture of what goes on every day in that single, all-purpose classroom, where children reaching puberty learn side-by-side with children only a few years out of diapers. One suspects, but can't prove, that education wasn't always such a hot item in Terlingua—that it is Jones and not the one-room school concept that makes things there come alive. After all, those Austin officials had a point: The taxes earmarked for education *were* shockingly low; the school facilities *were* depressingly shoddy. If consolidation was not the answer, neither was the citizens' continued neglect of their children's needs.

It seems clear, in any case, that children will learn wherever bureaucracies—be they large or small—allow humane and diligent teachers like Jones to do their thing. Jones was twice compelled

to defend his pedagogical franchise, and he did so each time by promoting direct action, exhorting parents to speak out rather than give in. In consequence, they and their school have survived long enough for him to tell the tale. But

elsewhere there is a great silence: Terlingua's is the last remaining one-room school in all Texas.

—Richard J. Margolis

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Books in Brief

CHILDREN OF THE REVOLUTION: A YANKEE TEACHER IN THE CUBAN SCHOOLS by Jonathan Kozol. New York: Delacorte Press, 245 pages, \$9.95. "The Great Campaign of 1961" was Fidel Castro's attempt to bring reading and writing skills to a Cuban population which then included more than one million illiterates. The effort brought over 100,000 volunteers, aged 10 to 17, and 140,000 men and women into the countryside, where they lived and worked for a year with the *campesinos* they taught. Kozol calls the campaign "the untold education story of the century." Whether it was that or not, the campaign certainly was an attempt at mass education on a grand scale: After 10 days of training in a camp at Vareadero, the uniformed young teachers, known as *brigadistas*, devoted a year "risking their lives, working like fanatics, living on little more than six hours' sleep in the same house and often the same room (their hammocks slung above the same dirt floor) as some of the poorest *campesinos* in the land." After nine months, when it realized that only 500,000 illiterates were being reached by the program, the government closed down the country's regular school programs and drafted teachers who had not volunteered for the campaign. On December 22, Castro declared the country free from illiteracy.

Kozol visited Cuba in 1976 and 1977, interviewing *brigadistas*, their peasant students, and government officials as well as examining the current programs of secondary education in Cuba. He tells the story well, and while clearly sympathetic to the Cuban social exper-

iment is skeptical enough to ask the right questions. In truth, he reports, the campaign of 1961 enabled about 707,000 former illiterates to "read posters, poems, and songs." No more. More important, the program sought to do far more than instill some basic literacy skills. Occurring as it did in a very early stage of Castro's rule—the year of the Bay of Pigs invasion—the campaign had an overriding political goal: to help consolidate the recent revolution by forging a farmer-worker-student coalition. Kozol's interviews with youths and adults show that it certainly succeeded in building close ties between generational groups and among urban and rural populations. The follow-up efforts continue, with the country's adult education program enrolling more than 600,000 people, most of whom are now attaining the sixth-grade skills level. The book includes an appendix of examinations and other materials used in the Great Campaign. (The final test was to write a letter of thanks to Fidel.)

GROWING UP AMERICAN: SCHOOLING AND THE SURVIVAL OF COMMUNITY by Alan Peshkin. University of Chicago Press, 256 pages, \$12.95. What role does a high school play in the life of a small town? Alan Peshkin, professor of comparative education at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, decided to find out by spending two years in Mansfield, a commonplace midwestern town. The resulting case study is an interesting look at a place where most people think alike—and the high

school keeps them thinking that way. "God and country, sports, pep, voluntarism, romancing, drinking, and cruising—these are some of the major dimensions of growing up American in Mansfield," Peshkin writes, adding that Mansfield High School reinforces these beliefs and behaviors. From teachers to school board members to the Mansfield man in the street, everyone in town shares pretty much the same values. Drawing on visits to classrooms and school board meetings and interviews with students, teachers, and townspeople, Peshkin reaches some uncertain conclusions about the resulting quality of life. On the one hand, he finds, Mansfield provides a strong sense of belonging lacking in other kinds of communities. On the other, students may well be deprived of educational opportunity by an attitude that rejects teachers "too intelligent for this community" and fails to stress high academic performance. Peshkin refuses to judge either the school or the town, except to note that by having a high school that fits "like a good shoe" Mansfield is paying a certain price so that a close-knit community can survive.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR BLACKS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A REPORT. Washington, D.C.: Institute for the Study of Educational Policy, Howard University (2935 Upton St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008), 96 pages, no charge. Established several years ago to act as a national clearinghouse for information on minority participation in higher education, the Institute for the Study of Educational Policy has found that "present requirements and programs for achieving a bias-free employment process have been minimally and irregularly successful. Moreover, both the public commitment to the goal of equal opportunity made in the 1960s and the strategy of affirmative action in particular are wavering." To put it another way, "Blacks were outside the mainstream of American society in 1865 and for the most part remain out-