

***Privileged Thinking in Today's Schools:
The Implications for Social Justice***

A Review by
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Sometimes we forget that schools really aren't made of brick and mortar; they are actually built from the actions, ideas, words and hearts of people. In their book ***Privileged Thinking in Today's Schools*** David Barnett, Carol Christian, Richard Hughes and Rocky Wallace delve into the attitudes and beliefs that negatively affect the most fragile children in our world—students who are disenfranchised by socioeconomic and/or racial differences, cultural experiences, extraordinary learning needs, or difficulties navigating within social institutions. They examine how this lack of consideration fosters greater social injustice and can impact more than just a child's school experience, but their future, as well.

The authors have a clear understanding that the best way to address these issues of social justice within schools is not with simple data or even references to research findings, although they offer both to support important points. The approach they use is much more effective. They rely on the power of storytelling to draw the reader into the context of each chapter. By making the abstract concrete, in much the way parables do, they provide the reader with an emotional and experiential doorway into important ideas. Once inside, the reader is connected with "Questions for Reflection" that serve as springboards even into the issue and into what each of us as educators can do to address privileged thinking and its effects inside our classrooms, schools and districts.

Ultimately, the authors challenge educators to recognize and own the power we possess and to see how our ideas, attitudes, rules, words and even the things we don't take time to consider define and deny justice for so many children we serve. They ask us to be intentional in our interactions with kids. Consequently, we can make decisions that create a culture of equity where everyone is met with kindness and educators with a profound understanding of what children need to no longer stand on the fringes, but to be embraced and included in all that education has to offer.

Anyone reading Wallace, Hughes, Christian and Barnett's book will recall the reason many of us became teachers in the first place—to make the world a better and more just place for our children.