

EDUCATION

Education in the Community (*Life-Long Learning*)

Focus on Literacy

- Hosseini, Khaled. *Kite Runner*.

- Steinberg, Theodore. *Down to Earth: Nature's Role in American History*.

"This book will try to change the way you think about American history," writes Ted Steinberg in the opening line of *Down to Earth*. That's an ambitious claim, but not far off the mark. His fascinating book is essentially an environmental history of the United States, with the author paying particular attention to how elements of nature became commodities and thereby isolated Americans from the natural world. Readers don't have to subscribe to this neo-Marxist concept in order to appreciate Steinberg's observations about everything from the old-time urban problem of horse excrement ("the nineteenth-century equivalent of auto pollution") to the massive amounts of garbage produced by fast-food chains (McDonald's, he says, requires "an area equivalent in size to more than 450,000 football fields" to supply its paper needs). He also tells what may be the first-ever natural history of the Civil War. This may sound idiosyncratic, and to some extent it is, yet Steinberg weaves it all together and makes the underappreciated point that "it is quite simply wrong to view the natural world as an unchanging backdrop to the past." It changes all the time, he writes, and it has shaped Americans in ways that few of them understand. --John Miller --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly

Steinberg, an environmental historian at Case Western Reserve University, examines the dynamic interactions between America's economic, political and cultural institutions and its geography, plants, animals and natural resources. He presents two predominant themes. The first is that the ecological balance is precarious and can be undermined, even completely destroyed, by unintended changes that flow from the smallest of events. The second is that the capitalist impulse to treat everything within its horizon as a commodity, and the corollary compulsion to assign a dollar value to every commodity, is fundamentally at odds with the existence of the diverse and healthy ecosystems that existed prior to the country's settlement. Steinberg makes a strong case, choosing examples that range from the environmental changes that followed the mysterious extinction of the carrier pigeon to the ecological effects of the mundane garbage disposals, lawns, highways, pesticides and even the salt spread on roads to melt snow to demonstrate his points. He is a historian with strong opinions, and in later chapters political commentary is increasingly prominent. Much of his commentary will offend conservative readers, who will disagree with Steinberg's harsh attacks on American business. For example, he chides the meatpacking industry for "corporate slaughterhouses [that] dehumanized workers" and the biotechnology industry because "feeding the malnourished has never been the driving force behind [it]. Profits, more than people, motivated this bold new science." Interestingly, he is also critical of mainstream environmental groups, who he believes have been coopted by contributions from corporations.

- [Noddings, Nel. Happiness and Education.](#)

"Happiness and Education is especially commended to the attention of public and private school teachers, and administrative policy makers as informed, thoughtful, and thought-provoking reading." Library Bookwatch, The Midwest Book Review

"Happiness and Education is ultimately a critique of American culture, not just its educational system. But Noddings shows how the narrow curriculum found in most classrooms helps shape a culture with misguided priorities. Perhaps today's educational leaders would benefit from reading her book and exercising some critical thinking of their own." Greater Good

"With her special combination of tenderness and sharpness of vision, Noddings makes us look squarely at some not so obvious truths. Happiness as a goal is much derided, except when it comes to our own lives and our own children. The painful contradictions that we force on our children and their families in order to avoid asking what truly matters are obvious as we confront children in their daily eagerness to find both happiness and meaning--in schools carefully designed not to answer either. Growing up and being educated today takes a very different look when seen through Noddings's careful perspective. Those of us trying to create schools that respond to her questions will read this book carefully many times." Deborah Meier, Principal, Mission Hill School, Boston

"Nel Noddings's beautiful book Happiness in Education is an incandescent joy to read. The educational landscape of the past ten years would be a very different one if voices as humane and wise as hers had been more widely heard. I have been hungering for a book like this and am grateful to Nel Noddings for providing it." Jonathan Kozol, author of Savage Inequalities and Ordinary Resurrections

"The most important and influential philosopher on the concept of caring in education, Noddings beautifully synthesizes her admirable corpus in this new book.... In sum, reading Noddings is akin to earning a condensed, invigorating form of liberal education in philosophy, psychology, literature, and theology. Highly recommended." Choice

"Noddings' thesis and argument that happiness and education not only can but should coexist must be taken seriously by everyone concerned about preparing children and young adults for a truly satisfying life in our democratic society." Catholic Library World

Product Description

When parents are asked what they want for their children, they usually answer that they want their children to be happy. Why, then, is happiness rarely mentioned as a goal of education? This book explores what we might teach if we were to take happiness seriously as a goal of education. It asks, first, what it means to be happy and, second, how we can help children to understand it. It notes that we have to develop a capacity for unhappiness and a willingness to alleviate the suffering of others to be truly happy. Criticizing our current almost exclusive emphasis on economic well-being and pleasure, Nel Noddings discusses the contributions of making a home, parenting, cherishing a place, the development of character, interpersonal growth, finding work that one loves, and participating in a democratic way of life. Finally, she explores ways in which to make schools and classrooms

cheerful places. Nell Noddings is Lee L. Jacks Professor of Education, Emerita, at Stanford University. She is past president of the Philosophy of Education Society and of the John Dewey Society. In addition to twelve books, she is the author of more than 170 articles and chapters on various topics ranging from the ethics of care to mathematical problem solving. Her latest books are *Starting at Home: Caring and Social Policy* (University of California Press) and *Educating Moral People: A Caring Alternative to Character Education* (Teachers College Press), both published in 2002.

Go Put Your Strengths to Work: Six Powerful Steps to Achieve Outstanding Performance

(Life Long Learning) Marcus Buckingham jump-started the Strengths movement that is now sweeping the work world with his first two blockbusters. Now, he answers the ultimate question: How can you actually apply your strengths for maximum success at work? Research data show that most people do not come close to making full use of their assets at work. *Go Put Your Strengths to Work* will reveal the hidden dimensions of your strengths through a six-step, six-week experience that will tell you:

- Why your strengths aren't "what you are good at" and your weaknesses aren't "what you are bad at."
- How to use the four telltale signs to identify your strengths.
- The simple steps you can take each week to push your time at work toward those activities that strengthen you, and how to cut out those that don't.
- How to talk to your boss and your colleagues about your strengths without sounding like you're bragging, and your weaknesses without sounding like you're whining.
- The fifteen-minute weekly ritual that will keep you on your strengths path for your entire career.

As part of the program you'll take an online Strength Engagement Track, a powerful gauge to measure the level of engagement of you or your team's strengths. *Go Put Your Strengths to Work* will open up exciting uncharted territory for you and your organization. Join the strengths movement, and thrive.