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For Goodness Sake: Religious Schools and Education for Democratic Citizenry. Walter Feinberg. New York and London: Routledge, 2006. 272 pp. ISBN 0415953790, $31.79.

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In this volume Walter Feinberg invites us to take seriously the educational practices that occur in the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian private schools located in our neighborhoods and elsewhere. Accordingly, Feinberg aims to convince educational researchers and the general public alike of the value of discussing "the appropriate aims of religious education and about the teaching of religion in liberal, democratic societies" (p. xi). In a nutshell, this book offers readers an opportunity to consider Feinberg's "philosophy of religious education" (p. 189).

The Introduction and Chapter 1 quickly establish the conciliatory tone that characterizes much of the book's discussion of religious education. Feinberg argues that one of the key tasks of educational theory is to enhance the work of educators by "giving expression" to the "new pedagogical possibilities" that emerge when "religious education enters liberal, pluralist societies" (p. xxiii). Notably, Feinberg does not portray the recent growth of religious schools as a threat nor as an indication of increased social balkanization. He instead adopts a tone of possibility and promise. The aim here is to develop a set of "basic principles" (p. xxvi) that the adherents of religious communities and the citizens of liberal, democratic societies can adopt in order to coexist in a productive and mutually beneficial manner.

To this end, the book raises numerous questions that deserve the critical attention of researchers and educators alike. What kinds of understandings, for example, need to be formed in students in order to "sustain and reproduce the basic principles of liberal pluralism" (p. 104)? In what ways does religious schooling facilitate—or contradict—the formation of these understandings in the young citizens of liberal democracies? And, finally, "how can democracy sanction religious education, and how can religious educators develop respect for different religions when, among the stories told by different religions as absolutely and indisputably true, some will be in contradiction with others" (p. 180)?

Part I of the book includes an ethnography of various schools that Feinberg studied over the course of three years. The schools include a Jewish school, a Lutheran school, and three different Catholic schools. He also includes findings from his work in several Islamic schools. No doubt many anthropologists will be surprised by Feinberg's claim that he carried out an ethnographic study at each of these schools. His is a cursory and

methodologically light version of ethnography. The research concentrates mostly on the teachers who work in these institutions; the voices of students, administrators, and parents are generally silent. Despite these shortcomings, the opening chapters offer a fascinating portrayal of how specific teachers try to form a particular religious identity in their students. Notably, Feinberg does not dismiss these teachers' educative work as nonrational or overly sectarian. He instead encourages a "generous reading" (p. 104) of their work in order to consider how the "educational expectations of liberal democracies" (p. xxvi) might be developed in their classrooms.

The tone of the discussion in Part II shifts somewhat to include a more prescriptive analysis of teachers' educative work. In Chapter 5, for example, Feinberg offers his own solution to the contradictions that many of the Catholic teachers face as they attempt to manage their responsibility to provide all students with an "educationally safe" environment along with their obligation to maintain the "religious integrity" of their respective schools (pp. 118–121). His description of how different Catholic teachers "work the margins" in classroom discussions of sexuality is particularly illustrative of these tensions. Chapter 6 critically explores the degree to which religious education can facilitate the development of "moral autonomy" in students, which Feinberg sees as one of the principal objectives of educators who work in a liberal democracy. This is the first chapter in which the author gives lengthy consideration to student perspectives on matters of religious identity and morality. Here, Feinberg interviews different university students regarding their views on abortion in order to illustrate the "different modes of moral reasoning among students educated in the Catholic tradition" (p. 136). In Chapter 7 Feinberg further explores his interesting notion of "religious chauvinism," or the tendency inherent in many religious groups to show "partiality to a particular conception of the good" (p. 154). In one noteworthy example, Feinberg recalls his observations of a student-led prayer in a Catholic school classroom on the one-year anniversary of 9/11. The example ably demonstrates the significant impact that the researcher's identity can have upon the research process.

In the final section of the book Feinberg puts his impressive philosophical acumen into overdrive in order to address one of the key problems of the discussion: specifically, how can the values promoted by specific religious communities and those required by liberal pluralism coexist? Here again Feinberg's overriding concern with compatibility is made especially clear. Both of the final chapters address religious educators by further delineating how they might maintain the integrity of their religious commitment and teach the ideals of liberal pluralism. It is this concluding discussion, moreover, wherein Feinberg makes his strongest case for the public's interest in religious education.

For Goodness Sake offers a very rich theoretical and philosophical starting point for educational researchers who plan to explore the world of religious education. Interestingly, and to my own surprise, Feinberg's discussion offers private and public school educators a great opportunity to critically reflect upon their own "conceptions of the good" and to carefully consider how these notions might influence their own

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pedagogies of civic education.