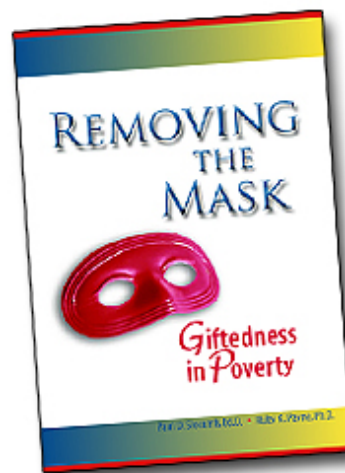




Removing the Mask: Giftedness in Poverty

By: Dr. Paul D. Slocumb and Dr. Ruby K. Payne

Our educational culture typically categorizes students based upon identified needs. When the mainstream program does not appear to meet students' needs, they generally are categorized and aligned with a special program that more closely addresses those needs. The placement of gifted/talented students in special programs has generated identification processes that emphasize fairness, ignoring the very discrepancies that have created the differences in the students. Under the guise of fairness, students are treated equally, but equity is compromised in the process.



In *Removing the Mask: Giftedness in Poverty*, Paul Slocumb and Ruby Payne present an identification model that is based on a new paradigm. They maintain that environmental factors often mask giftedness in students from poverty, making their gifted attributes unrecognizable in schools that operate by middle class's hidden rules.

Paul and Ruby propose that equity, not equality, needs to be at the heart of any gifted assessment process. Without equity, students from poverty will never be judged fairly, and disproportionate numbers of affluent students will continue to be identified for gifted services while excluding the non-affluent students. "There is nothing so unequal as the equal treatment of unequals" (Felix Frankfurter, U.S. Supreme Court Justice).

Removing the Mask is a highly instructive book, providing dozens of practical suggestions for teachers and administrators of gifted students. The book offers an equitable identification process to find the gifts in students from poverty. It also offers suggestions for teachers and administrators on how to help gifted/talented students from poverty be successful and remain in the program once they have been identified.