

How to Prevent Dyslexia

A Book Proposal

By

Samuel L. Blumenfeld

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73 Bishops Forest Drive
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Why This book?

Millions of parents all across America send their perfectly normal children to school expecting that they will learn to read without any problem.

**Like good parents, they have read stories to their children in the preschool years,
bought them the Dr. Seuss books
and many other beautifully illustrated children's books.**

Thus they are shocked and dismayed when they are told by their child's teacher that little Johnny or little Susie has a reading problem and is "dyslexic."

That's as bad as being told that your child is retarded!

"How is it possible," asks the parent, "that my perfectly healthy, normal, and intelligent child can't learn to read?"

**What the parent doesn't know is that this problem could have been prevented.
Dyslexia, or reading disability, cannot only be prevented,
it can also be cured!**

**Dyslexia is preventable if parents know what to do.
This book will give them the knowledge they need in order to save their children
from the life-debilitating condition of dyslexia.**

**What few people know is that faulty teaching methods can
cause the condition known as dyslexia.
And what parents don't know is that dyslexia can be created very easily,
using teaching methods that seem harmless, sensible and delightful.
Thus, parents can easily be persuaded that the source of their child's learning
problem is some fault with his or her brain.**

**The school's usual solution to the problem is to place the child in Special Education,
where the child's self-esteem is destroyed. And the school also recommends that the
child be put on Ritalin, Adderall or some other kind of mind-altering stimulant.**

**Believe it or not, it is estimated that as many as 8 million children are now being
medicated so that they can attend school.**

**And yet, no normal, healthy child need suffer the humiliation of being told that he or
she has a learning disability caused by a defective brain.
As the old adage says, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."**

**The simple truth is that dyslexia can be prevented,
and every parent should know how to prevent it.**

About the Author

**Samuel L. Blumenfeld is one of the world's experts on the teaching of reading.
His books include:**

The New Illiterates
How to Tutor
Alpha-Phonics: A Primer for Beginning Readers
Homeschooling: A Parents Guide for Teaching Children

In researching *The New Illiterates*, Blumenfeld discovered the origin of the whole-word instruction method that creates the symptoms of dyslexia.

It was invented in the 1830's by the Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet, the founder and director of the Hartford Asylum for the Deaf. Gallaudet used a whole-word method of teaching the deaf to read, and he thought that this method could be adapted for use by normal children.

It was used in the primary schools of Boston and proved to be a disaster.

So we have known since 1844 that faulty teaching methods can create disastrous learning problems for children.

It was Rudolf Flesch who said in *Why Johnny Can't Read* that "The teaching of reading—all over the United States, in all the schools, in all the textbooks—is totally wrong and flies in the face of all logic and common sense."

He wrote that in 1955, and believe it or not, things haven't changed much.

The author has taught reading-disabled children and adults to read, thus overcoming their disability.

He has also taught in private schools and as a substitute in public schools. He has lectured in all fifty states, as well as in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

His pioneering research into the causes of dyslexia and learning disabilities has given hope to millions of parents that their wrongly diagnosed children can be helped and even cured.

His books, *How to Tutor* and *Alpha-Phonics*, were written to provide parents with effective tools which they could use to prevent learning problems and cure those caused by faulty teaching methods.

In an appendix to this new book, the author will provide a complete and effective reading program that any parent can use to teach their child to read in the proper manner.

KIPP's Progress

*The exciting story of how two young teachers
started an education reform movement
that may finally turn around
American public education.*

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KIPP:

Knowledge Is Power Program

It is the most serious and significant attempt to reform American public education since the 1983 *Nation at Risk Report* of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, which warned:

“The educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and as a people”

Believe it or not, the movement for education reform did not rise out of the leadership of the education establishment, but from idealistic university students who wanted to do something about the inequities in American education.

**Two of those idealists were Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin,
who joined the Teach for America program
in order to become better teachers.**

Frustrated by their experiences in the public schools, they put their heads together and conceived the KIPP idea as a means of rescuing low-income, mostly African American and Latino kids from inevitable failure in the public schools.

The first KIPP schools opened in Houston and New York in 1995.

In 2001, three additional schools were opened.

In 2002, eight KIPP schools were started.

In 2003, seventeen new KIPP schools opened their doors.

In 2004, seven more were added, and several more in 2005.

Today, a total of 45 KIPP schools with 400 teachers are serving over 9,000 students in 15 states and D.C.

The KIPP idea is based on The Five Pillars:

High Expectations in Academic Achievement.

Choice and Commitment on the part of parents and students.

More Time: an extended school day.

Power to Lead: Giving Principals the power over budget and personnel.

Focus on Results: No shortcuts. No excuses.

The results so far have been exceptional.

Test Scores are Up.

The students are thriving.

The earliest graduates are already in colleges and universities, including: Dartmouth, Brown, Georgetown, Cornell, Stanford, NYU, Tufts, Tulane, & others.

A Ten Year Assessment

**The purpose of this book is to see whether or not the KIPP idea
can become the basis for an overall reform of
American public education.**

Who's for it, and who's against it.

**The creation of the KIPP Foundation with the financial help of the former CEO of
the Gap clothing chain permitted rapid expansion.**

**The book will include visits to schools and in-depth interviews with principals,
teachers, students, and parents.**

We will look into:

Classroom practices.

How discipline is maintained.

The rewards system.

Why KIPP academies start with the 5th Grade.

How reading is taught.

How science and math are taught.

Extracurricular activity.

Trips as rewards for work well done.

Homework.

The extended school day: 7am to 5pm.

Saturday attendance.

KIPP schools are Charter schools, and therefore part of the public system.

How KIPP has overcome local objections to a Charter school.

Does a KIPP education cost more than a regular public education?

KIPP students are financed at the same rate as the public school student.

KIPP teachers are paid at the same rate as the local public schools.

A Team Effort:

**Everyone—parents, students, faculty—must make and uphold a commitment to the
school and to each other to put in the time and effort required to achieve success.**

How KIPP changes lives!

How KIPP has made the teaching experience fulfilling and rewarding.

This is the story of people struggling to achieve the American dream.

Every parent with school-age children will want to read this book.

It may save their children from academic failure.

It may save their lives!

About the Author

Samuel L. Blumenfeld was born and educated in New York City where he attended Stuyvesant High School and graduated from The City College of New York.

After studying for two years at the Sorbonne in Paris, he returned to New York where he worked as an editor in the book publishing industry with Rinehart & Company, The Viking Press, The World Publishing Company, and Grosset & Dunlap.

Mr. Blumenfeld is the author of ten published books, including:

How to Start Your Own Private School

The New Illiterates

How to Tutor

Alpha-Phonics: A Primer for Beginning Readers

In writing *The New Illiterates*, Blumenfeld discovered the origin of the whole-word method of teaching reading. It was invented in the 1830s by the Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet, the teacher of the deaf and dumb at his school in Hartford, Connecticut.

Since the deaf could not learn to read by a phonetic system, he used a whole-word methodology, which produced a modicum of success among the deaf.

The method was then tried on normal children in the primary schools of Boston, but proved a disaster.

Because the public schools were producing so many functional illiterates, Blumenfeld decided that there was a need for an easy-to-teach primer so that parents could do the teaching of reading at home. The result was

How to Tutor and *Alpha-Phonics*.

Both books have been used by thousands of parents to teach their children the basic academic skills needed for school success.

Mr. Blumenfeld has lectured in all 50 states as well as in Australia, New Zealand, and Canada on the subjects of reading instruction and literacy.

His articles on education have appeared in *Reason*, *Boston Magazine*, *American Legion Magazine*, *Practical Homeschooling*, and other publications.

Living Long and Loving It!

The Glories* [and Occasional Hazards] *of Longevity

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Why This Book

As more and more baby boomers reach the age of sixty and over they have a right to know that senior citizenship and “old age” may be the best time of their lives.

Think of it. By the time you reach 60, you’ve accumulated wisdom, skills, and appreciations that you never had when you were young and wet behind the ears.

And if you have been financially wise, you probably have the resources to enjoy the many possibilities in the years to come.

What are the keys to making these years the best of your life?

Stay active.

Keep your mind at work.

Be creative.

Watch your health.

Have a good love relationship.

Help others.

And most of all: appreciate life!

While social commentators warn us that retiring boomers will become a terrible financial burden on younger workers, they ignore the fact that boomers have acquired an incredible store of knowledge, know-how, experience, and skills that can be made available to the nation.

**In other words, boomers represent an enormously valuable economic and cultural asset to the nation,
*not a burden.***

Boomers have also accumulated a tremendous amount of wealth that can be invested in the future of our country.

They own homes, real estate, stocks, bonds, and other assets.

They are eager to help the future generation learn from their experiences, good and bad.

Chapters

Old Age: A Time for Optimism

One of the best-kept secrets about seniors is their optimism.
There are many reasons for this optimism, which seem to defy logic.

What the Young Can Learn from the Old

The young need all of the knowledge they can get from those who have gone before them and done all the things that helped and harmed them.

Knowledge based on experience is priceless.

Watching Your Health

It goes without saying that the older you get the more likely you will come down with any number of health problems. The trick is to know in advance what may come, how to prevent it, and how to cure it when it comes.

Getting Rid of Bad Habits

Drinking in excess, smoking, eating bad foods can cause health problems and shorten your life.

Choose to live and get rid of these bad habits.

How to Use Your Mind and Keep Learning

This more than anything else is the key to creative longevity.
Decide on an activity that will occupy your mind in the years ahead:

Read all of Shakespeare's 36 plays.

Study philosophy. My sister is doing this at age 82!

Study religion, the good food of mind and soul.

Music, Art and Good Books

Read all the good books you never read when you were busy earning a living.

Start drawing or painting, it's relaxing and focuses the mind.

Listen to the great music of the ages.

Long-range Planning

Plan to live to 100 and assume you're going to make it.

Start a project that you know will take years to complete.

This will keep you happy, purposeful, and healthy.

Making the Most of Your Resources

If you handled your finances wisely you are probably sitting on considerable earned wealth. There are many great cultural, social, and political organizations that would welcome your support.

Back a worthy candidate who represents your values and worldview.

The Pleasures of Travel

Everyone knows how exhilarating travel can be, whether by car, mobile home, air, cruise ship, railroad train, river boat, etc.

Now that you no longer have a 9 to 5 job, use your new-gained freedom to see the world.

Becoming a Joy to Your Kids and Grandkids

One of the chief pleasures of the senior years is the ability to provide one's children and their children with gifts, financial assistance, and attention.

Baby sitting is an old traditional use of grandparents.

Grandparents can also homeschool their grandkids.

Knowing Your Limits

It's wise to recognize that an old body can't do some of the things that young bodies can do. That's why taking vitamins is a must.

But an old body can probably do more than we think.

That's why it's good to exercise and keep one's muscles limber.

Swimming, dancing, walking, hiking, skiing, moderate weightlifting, etc. are ways to keep the body fit. Just know your limits.

Great Hobbies for the Older Years

Now that you have the time there are any number of hobbies to enjoy:

Bird watching: this great hobby will take you to the far ends of the earth.

Photography: learn how to take great pictures of people, flowers, animals, architecture, or whatever else you love or is of interest.

Making movies and videos: the latest technology enables rank amateurs to test their creative skills in this new exciting activity.

Retirement? Whoever Heard of Such Nonsense

Some senior citizens can never really retire because they need to continue to earn an income. Thus you see them working behind the counters in department stores, or as cashiers in supermarkets. Other seniors continue to work at their professions and businesses until they can no longer do so.

For them, there is no such thing as retirement.

Secession!

A dramatic chronicle of the conflicts that led to the Secession of the South and the devastating Civil War that destroyed the Confederacy.

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Why This Book?

Secession! covers an area of American history that has been largely overlooked by most historians who deal with the Civil War.

The war itself and the towering figure of Abraham Lincoln have become the main historical foci of interest.

Some modern revisionists have blamed Lincoln for the Civil War rather than the South's Secession, which they consider to have been legitimate.

This book attempts to correct that view by analyzing why the South preferred to perpetuate the institution of slavery rather than preserve the Union.

The Secessionist Movement, which led to the war, is a most fascinating political phenomenon not only in American history, but in the history of nation states.

Until 1861, political compromise had prevented Secession from taking place.

The passions and economic interests involved explain much about human nature.

We shall concentrate on those who spurred the Southern Secessionist Movement, knowing full well that it would lead to a bloody contest of wills between two political entities.

Outline

The Constitutional Compromise

From the very beginning of the Republic, the implicit right to secede threatened the very efforts of the Founding Fathers to create a Union of Sovereign States.

Thus, on framing a new Constitution for the United States, they deferred action on the slavery issue because it was too divisive to deal with at the time.

There were slaves not only in the South but among the Northern states as well.

Many of the Southern delegates were indeed slave owners, including Washington. Jefferson had been able to get the Virginia Legislature in 1787 to prevent slavery being introduced in its north-western territory.

He and others believed that the slave system was intrinsically evil and that it had been imposed on the colonies by the British.

Thus, they hoped and expected that slavery would decline and die out on its own. However, in order to induce the Southern states to join the Union the northerners were willing to make compromises that accommodated slavery.

When it came to the taking of the Census in order to determine the number of Representatives from each state, slaves were to be counted as three-fifths of a person.

The Constitution also called for the ending of the Slave Trade in twenty years.

The Southern Plantation System

But the idea that slavery would somehow die out, did not materialize. Instead, the system grew and became an important part of the southern agrarian economy where the production of cotton required intensive field labor.

Thus, slaves became valuable economic assets.

New Englanders Launch the First Secessionist Movement

With the election of Jefferson as President in 1800, New England Federalists were convinced that the federal government had fallen into the hands “of infidel, anti-commercial, anti-New England Southerners,” and agitation began for Secession. Patriotic loyalty to a grand national entity called the United States of America had not yet developed. Their loyalty was to their region.

They opposed Jefferson’s Louisiana Purchase as unconstitutional. But it was the War of 1812, which brought New England to the brink of Secession. However, when the war ended the call for Secession also ended.

The Great Missouri Compromise

The issue of slavery versus freedom became most significant bone of contention between the North and the South.

As new states entered the Union, the question was: would they be slave or free states? Again, the threat of Secession and the breakup of the Union hung over the Republic like a sword of Damocles.

However, Secession was avoided with the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which admitted Missouri into the Union as a slave state and Maine as a free state. It also provided that in territory north of 36 degrees and 30 minutes north latitude, slavery should never be permitted.

Henry Clay and Daniel Webster were the architects of the compromise, and young politician Abraham Lincoln became a life-long admirer of Clay.

Andrew Jackson Opposed Secession

It was Andrew Jackson, a Southerner, who spoke unequivocally of an American nation based on American principles of freedom.

Elected President in 1829, Jackson summed up the philosophy of his political party, the Democrats, as, “The Constitution and the Laws as supreme, and the Union indissoluble.

Secession and the War with Mexico

New England’s opposition to the war against Mexico (1846-48), caused by the annexation of Texas, again raised the spectre of Secession.

Texas had come into the Union as a Slave state, and the South wanted California to become a Slave state. But the Californians voted against it, and when they petitioned Congress for statehood, the clause prohibiting slavery angered Southern members who threatened Secession if this clause were accepted.

Clay and Webster Denounce Secession

But, in January 1850, in order to placate the South, the Missouri Compromise, which limited the expansion of slavery above 36 degrees, was repealed. Again, this

compromise was made to avoid Secession. This forced Henry Clay to speak out against Secession in as strong a voice as possible. In his view, no state had the right to secede. He dwelt on the ruin which would spring from the dissolution of the Union. War would be inevitable; and such a war—"so furious, so bloody, so implacable, so exterminating"—would be like none other in history.

Although this great Kentucky Senator died in 1852, he could foresee what the actual Civil War would be like.

Daniel Webster was as strong and eloquent as Clay in his denunciation of Secession. He said: "Mr. President, I hear with pain, and anguish, and distress the word secession falling from the lips of the eminent and patriotic. Secession! Peaceable secession! The dismemberment of this vast country without convulsion! The breaking up of the fountains of the great deep, without ruffling the surface! Peaceable secession! What would be the result? What would become of the army, the navy, and the public lands? Where is the line to be drawn? What states are to be associated? What is to remain American? Where am I to be? Where is the flag to remain? Is the eagle still to tower? Or is he to cower, to shrink, and fall to the ground?"

The Abolition Movement in the North

One of the great thorns in the side of Southern slave owners was the Abolition Movement in the North, a religious, moral, and political movement, which called for the immediate freeing of the slaves. It led to a Southern reaction and the conviction that Secession was the only way out for the South. The Slave Oligarchy had become rich and powerful with its use of slave labor, and there was even talk of reviving the African Slave trade.

The Southern Oligarchy had become addicted to slavery.

It provided for a comfortable way of life in which docile Negroes constantly fed their masters' egos with an exaggerated sense of power.

And their masters' wealth and domestic splendor added to their sense of power.

Slavery and Southern Prosperity: Statistics Tell the Story

In 1790 there were 697,897 slaves in the United States.

In 1850, there were 3,198,324 slaves, virtually all of them in the Southern slave states.

In 1847-48, the South produced 2,347,634 bales of cotton.

Only eleven years later, in 1859-60, the South produced 4,669,770 bales, a record.

It was obvious that the slave economy had become quite lucrative, and that it provided no incentives for the South to dismantle it.

Southern Attempts to Spread Slavery in the New Territories

Because of their great prosperity, the Slave Oligarchy was bent on expanding the system in the new states.

But restrictions and opposition by the North thwarted Southern ambitions.

Southerners decided that Secession would give them the freedom to expand their system in the new territories and also to revive the Slave Trade.

The Democrats had argued that each new state should be free to decide whether it wanted to be a slave state or a free state.

Lincoln contended that this would expand slavery and discourage white settlement in the new states.

How the Secessionist Movement Grew

By the 1850s, Southern politicians and slave owners began thinking in earnest of setting up their own sovereign country with a new constitution tailored to their needs. Secession would free them from the harassment of Northern abolitionists. The new sovereign country would protect the property rights of slave owners. It would free them from Northern tariffs. They believed they had the right to secede from the Union and create the Confederate States of America.

The notion that each state was politically sovereign and could withdraw from the Union at will was argued among Southerners as the legal basis for Secession.

Many Northerners agreed with them and were willing to accept a peaceful Secession.

The Dred Scott Decision

Another great encouragement to the slave owners was the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the famous Dred Scott case in 1857, which held that slavery was constitutional and that slaves were property. This meant that slave owners could take their property anywhere in the Union without fear of losing their "property" in a free state.

This was seen by Lincoln and his fellow Republicans as an inevitable expansion of slavery throughout the United States. Rather than slavery being restricted to the slave states, it could now spread legally throughout the Union.

It was this aggressive expansion of slavery into the North and in the new states that challenged abolitionists and anti-slavery politicians.

The Fugitive Slave Law

The federal act of 1793 provided for the return of runaway slaves to their owners. The law was circumvented by the creation of the Underground Railway.

However, the Compromise of 1850 strengthened the law.

The refusal of Northerners to obey the law strengthened the Southern Secessionists

The Nebraska-Kansas Conflict

Since each new state was free to decide whether or not it wanted to be a slave state or free state, the Slave Oligarchy encouraged Southerners to settle in those states and vote in favor of slavery. It was in these territories that open warfare broke out between pro-slavers and abolitionists.

It left no doubt that Southern ambition bristled at being hemmed in only to the slave states. Their aim was to legitimize slavery throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Lincoln was opposed to the spread of slavery into Kansas and Nebraska. It would set a precedent and allow the spread of slavery everywhere else.

The Lincoln-Douglas Debates

It was in this set of debates during the Senatorial campaign of 1858 that Lincoln became the champion of the anti-slavery movement. He said: "A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free.... It will become all one thing, or all the other." Douglas upheld the legal right of the Southern states to have slavery, and upheld the right of any territory to choose to be a slave state if its inhabitants voted for it. He also defended the Dred Scott decision.

Lincoln argued that if the South were permitted to expand slavery beyond the Southern states, it would destroy the nation.

"This slavery question," Lincoln said, "has been the only one that has ever endangered our Republican institutions—the only one that has ever threatened or menaced a dissolution of the Union."

He was determined to never let that happen.

Lincoln Is Elected President

The Election of Abraham Lincoln as President was the signal the Secessionists needed to finally secede. They created the Confederate States of America. The Lincoln-Douglas debates made it clear what the two sides stood for, and the Dred Scott decision made it obvious that a showdown was inevitable.

The Constitutional Question

Did the Southern States have the right to secede? That is a question that is still debated today.

But it was the South's bombardment of Fort Sumter that started the war. And while Lincoln characterized this Southern action as a Rebellion, it was in truth a war between two sovereign political entities. But there was no way that Lincoln would legitimize the breakup of the Union by opting for a peace treaty between these two entities. To Lincoln it was a Rebellion that had to be crushed, and the only acceptable end of the war was unconditional surrender.

The Government of the Confederacy

The Constitution of the Confederate States of America included a provision holding that human beings, as slaves, were to be considered property.

It reflected the Dred Scott decision of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Otherwise, the governance of the Confederacy was not very different from its northern counterpart in its organization of government.

Thus secession was mainly about maintaining the institution of slavery and permitting it to expand.

In other words, the South valued the institution of slavery more than it valued the Union created by the Founding Fathers.

It was a moral terrible choice that led to the deaths of over a half-million soldiers on both sides.

Lincoln and the Secession

Lincoln considered himself chosen by destiny to defend the Union from dissolution. He considered the Union to be the sacred creation of the Founding Fathers and was determined to maintain its continuance.

And he was smart enough to know that the Confederacy had to fire the first shot in order to galvanize Northern public opinion in favor of armed retaliation. The Confederacy obliged by firing on Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor, thus igniting the armed conflict.

No one believed that the war would last more than a few weeks, but it was Lincoln's determination to bring the South to its knees that turned it into the bloodiest conflict in American history.

The Civil War and the End of Secession

The victory of the Union in the Civil War put an end forever to all attempts of Secession by any state.

Yet, the idea of Secession is by no means dead among political libertarians.

It took a half-century for the South to recover from the devastation of the war.

Today, the Southern states are some of the most dynamic and productive regions of the Union. They are also among the most patriotic states in the country.

While the Confederacy is still celebrated in poetry and legend, the South has become the most stalwart defender of the American Union.

About the Author

Samuel L. Blumenfeld has written ten published books, several on the history of education in America. He has also written hundreds of articles on a variety of subjects, many on historical events.

He is an avid collector of old periodicals and journals that tell history as it is happening.

The idea for this book was suggested by articles he read in old Harper's magazines in which the Secessionist Movement was discussed.

SAMUEL L. BLUMENFELD

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August 20, 2006

Reynolds Smith
Executive Editor
Duke University Press
905 West Main Street, Suite 18B
Durham, NC 27701

Dear Mr. Smith:

Enclosed please find a proposal for a book, *Secession!* A dramatic chronicle of the moral, political, and economic conflicts that led to the Secession of the South and the devastating Civil War that destroyed the Confederacy.

Even though we all know the ending of the story, I intend to write a book that will have as much suspense and drama as if one didn't know how it would end. And even though there were Northerners willing to let the slave-holding States go their own way, Lincoln would not permit the South to destroy the Union.

The book will be a fast-moving study of political, moral, and social conflicts that tore America apart, with a special focus on the personalities who willingly led the nation to its most severe crisis. The South gambled on their expectation that the North would not fight a war to preserve the Union, and so they fired the first shot, believing that the North would sue for peace with the Confederacy. But, as we know, they seriously miscalculated the determination of Lincoln to crush the secession.

I have had the opportunity to read many old newspapers published before the war, and the book will quote from original sources in the archives that have been long forgotten.

Hoping that this proposal interests you, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

SAMUEL L. BLUMENFELD

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August 20, 2006

Joyce Harrison
Editor-in-Chief
The University Press of Kentucky
663 South Limestone Street
Lexington, KY 40508-4008

Dear Ms. Harrison:

Enclosed please find a proposal for a book, *Secession!* A dramatic chronicle of the moral, political, and economic conflicts that led to the Secession of the South and the devastating Civil War that destroyed the Confederacy.

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August 20, 2006

Lawrence J. Malley
Director and Editor
The University of Arkansas Press
McIlroy House
201 Ozark Avenue
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701

Dear Mr. Malley:

Enclosed please find a proposal for a book, *Secession!* A dramatic chronicle of the moral, political, and economic conflicts that led to the Secession of the South and the devastating Civil War that destroyed the Confederacy.

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August 20, 2006

Candace Taylor
Basic Books Editorial
The Perseus Books Group
387 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016-8810

Dear Ms. Taylor:

Enclosed please find a proposal for a book, *Secession!* A dramatic chronicle of the moral, political, and economic conflicts that led to the Secession of the South and the devastating Civil War that destroyed the Confederacy.

Even though we all know the ending of the story, I intend to write a book that will have as much suspense and drama as if one didn't know how it would end. And even though there were Northerners willing to let the slave-holding States go their own way, Lincoln would not permit the South to destroy the Union.

The book will be a fast-moving study of political, moral, and social conflicts that tore America apart, with a special focus on the personalities who willingly led the nation to its most severe crisis. The South gambled on their expectation that the North would not fight a war to preserve the Union, and so they fired the first shot, believing that the North would sue for peace with the Confederacy. But, as we know, they seriously miscalculated the determination of Lincoln to crush the secession.

I have had the opportunity to read many old newspapers published before the war, and the book will quote from original sources in the archives that have been long forgotten.

Hoping that this proposal interests you, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

Secession Submissions

Loomis - Random House - Rejected

Ivan R. Dee Ivan R. Dee, Publisher
1332 North Halsted St. Chicago, IL 60622

Reynolds Smith Executive Editor
Duke Univ. Press Box 90660 Durham, NC 27708-0660
905 W. Main St. Suite 18B Durham 27701

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663 South Limestone St. Lexington, KY 40508-4008
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The Miller Test

**A revolutionary new way to detect
school-induced dyslexia.**

**An educational breakthrough that can change the way
reading is taught in American schools.**

The “Why Johnny Can’t Read” of 2006.

A Book Proposal

by

Samuel L. Blumenfeld

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Who Is Edward Miller?

Edward Miller is a former public school administrator, now living in North Carolina, who became curious about the causes of dyslexia.

He considered himself dyslexic, handicapped in his ability to read.

Yet he managed to pursue a successful career as a school administrator. However, since he was quite intelligent and a whiz at mathematics, he was at a loss to understand why he was dyslexic.

It was his reading of Samuel Blumenfeld's book, *The New Illiterates*, published in 1973, that Miller learned that dyslexia could be caused by a faulty teaching method. Blumenfeld claimed that reading disability or dyslexia could be caused by the way schools were teaching children to read:

by the Look-Say or Whole-Word method, a non-phonetic means of instruction.

Miller had read *The New Illiterates* slowly and carefully and came to the conclusion that his own dyslexia had been caused by the way he had been taught to read in primary school by a young teacher.

He had been taught to read by memorizing words in their whole configurations, like Chinese characters.

Today, that form of teaching is known as the Whole Language approach.

Miller contacted Blumenfeld and they discussed how a non-phonetic teaching method could cause dyslexia.

But then Blumenfeld revealed a problem he was faced with.

Parents had come to him with stories that their children were dyslexic before they ever got to school. How could this be? Were they born dyslexic?

But, believe it or not, Miller was able to solve the problem.

His own perfectly normal grandson, Kyle, was considered dyslexic.

Miller investigated the situation and found that Kyle, as a preschooler, had been reading the Dr. Seuss books and memorizing the words as whole configurations!

It was a revolutionary discovery!

Preschoolers could become dyslexic by memorizing words in preschool books and acquiring the habit of looking at all words as whole configurations.

In other words, if they had not been taught alphabetic phonics—the letters and letter sounds—before “reading” and memorizing their children’s books, they could become dyslexic.

What Is Dyslexia?

Webster's New World Dictionary defines dyslexia as “impairment of the ability to read, often as the result of genetic defect or brain injury.”

Children born with serious retardation will exhibit the symptoms of dyslexia. But the whole-word method of teaching can actually injure the normal brain of a normal child, thereby causing dyslexia.

Children who are taught to read with intensive, systematic phonics cannot become dyslexic because they automatically see the phonetic structure of our alphabetic words and therefore can easily sound them out.

Two Types of Readers

Geraldine Rodgers, in her exhaustive history of reading instruction, has identified two types of readers: subjective and objective.

The subjective reader has been taught to read with a non-phonetic method and thereby relies mainly on context clues, configuration clues, and guessing to make sense of text. That reader has acquired a “holistic reflex.”

Thus, they become inaccurate, subjective readers. They put in words that are not in the text, they leave out words, they truncate words, and simply misread words.

The objective reader has been taught to read by intensive phonics and thus is an accurate, fluent reader. That reader has acquired a “phonetic reflex.”

In other words, the two different teaching methods produce two very different kinds of readers with two different reflexes.

The Miller Test

To prove that there is such a condition as “school-induced dyslexia,” or “whole-word dyslexia,” Miller devised an ingenious but simple test that not only proves that a non-phonetic teaching method can cause dyslexia but that dyslexia can occur in varying degrees of strength.

The test is composed of two parts:

The first part is composed of only sight words from Dr. Seuss’s two most popular books, *The Cat in the Hat* and *Green Eggs and Ham*.

The second part is composed of phonetically regular words taken from Dr. Rudolf Flesch’s famous book *Why Johnny Can’t Read*.

The student is asked to read the sight-word list first and then the phonetically regular words.

The student is timed on reading both lists and the errors are noted.

The dyslexic student will be able to read the sight words with few or almost no errors, but will slow down considerably and make many more errors reading the simple phonetically regular words.

This is the first time in educational history that such a test has been devised to provide that kind of startling information!

By now, hundreds of students have been given The Miller Test, and the results prove conclusively that the teaching method determines whether a student will become reading disabled and dyslexic or a good, fluent, and accurate reader.

Dr. Seuss and the Sight Vocabulary

The fact that Dr. Seuss used a sight vocabulary in *The Cat in the Hat* and *Green Eggs and Ham* was confirmed by the good doctor himself when he told *Arizona Magazine* in June 1981:

They think I did it in twenty minutes. That damned *Cat in the Hat* took nine months until I was satisfied. I did it for a textbook house and they sent me a word list. That was due to the Dewey revolt in the Twenties, in which they threw out phonic reading and went to word recognition, as if you're reading a Chinese pictograph instead of blending sounds of different letters. I think killing phonics was one of the greatest causes of illiteracy in the country. Anyway, they had it all worked out that a healthy child at the age of four can learn so many words in a week and that's all. So there were two hundred and twenty-three words to use in this book. I read the list three times and I almost went out of my head. I said, I'll read it once more and if I can find two words that rhyme that'll be the title of my book. (That's genius at work.) I found "cat" and "hat" and I said, "The title will be *The Cat in the Hat*."

The Market for *The Miller Test*

This book can easily become the "Why Johnny Can't Read" of 2006!

Like Rudolf Flesch's bestseller of 1955, this book is for anyone and everyone interested in the literacy of this society and how children are taught to read. That includes educators, tutors, parents, politicians, librarians, editors, writers, newspaper owners, journalists, book publishers, employers, hi-tech CEOs, and philanthropists like Bill Gates willing to spend billions reforming education.

The concern over the recent drop in SAT verbal scores has sent educators scampering for explanations of why American students continue to decline in academic skills. This book provides the answer, clearly and unequivocally.

Properly promoted, this book can have a very strong impact on how children are taught in American schools, saving millions of children from reading failure, and saving taxpayers millions of dollars in remedial costs.

According to *The New York Times* of 9/02/06:

"Though higher education is now a near-universal aspiration, researchers suggest that close to half the students who enter college need remedial courses. ... In reading