

Textbooks

Textbook Experts and Consultants

My previous column described the essential training that textbook selectors should have. The following is a list of the experts who provided that information along with a brief description of their special interest in the area. Although most could assist in any subject area, I've asked each to identify one area in which he or she has the most experience.

Armbruster, Bonnie. Assistant professor, University of Illinois, Department of Educational Psychology and the Center for the Study of Reading, 51 Gerty Dr., Room 174, Champaign, IL 61820, (217) 333-2552. *Specialty:* content textbooks.

Bonnie has done research to determine what makes content subject textbooks easy to comprehend and remember. She calls effective textbooks "considerate texts" and has published several articles on how to determine whether or not textbooks are considerate.

Dole, Jan. Assistant professor, Michigan State University, College of Education, Erickson Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824. *Specialty:* reading.

Jan is coordinating a project to develop a guide for selecting basal reading programs, to be published by the Center for the Study of Reading (also see Jean Osborn). She has worked with many adoption committees, teaching them how to evaluate the instructional content of basal readers. Her area of research is how teachers use textbooks for instruction.

Elliott, David, and Kathleen Carter Nagel. Codirectors, Educational Materials Association, P.O. Box 7599, Berkeley, CA 94707, (415) 525-1451. *Specialty:* K-12 science.

David and Kathleen conduct research, write articles, and run work-

shops on textbooks and textbook selection. They recently worked with the California adoption of science textbooks. Having written the textbook, *Profiles*, for Educational Products Information Exchange, they are familiar with textbook evaluation in all subject areas.

Farr, Roger. Associate dean for research and development and professor of education, University of Indiana, Bloomington, IN 47401, (812) 335-1236. *Specialty:* basal reading adoptions at both state and local levels.

Roger has helped author two basal reading textbooks, has written several standardized tests, and does extensive research on textbook adoption. He is especially interested in having selection committees "operationally define" what they most want their new textbook programs to accomplish. He has many strategies for teaching selection committees to stay on task and for having committee members research separate tasks and report their findings to the rest of the committee.

Muther, Connie. Director, Textbook Adoption Advisory Services, 25 B Esquire Dr., Manchester, CT 06040, (203) 649-9517. *Specialty:* K-8 adoptions.

Having worked for several publishers, I now teach how to run district textbook adoptions based on a how-to-do-it manual, which includes articles I have written for *Educational Leadership*. My workshops stress how to evaluate programs to match a specific district need and how to successfully implement newly purchased programs.

Osborn, Jean. Associate director, Center for the Study of Reading, 51 Gerty Dr., Room 174, Champaign, IL 61820, (217) 333-2552. *Specialties:* reading textbooks for slow learners and evaluating reading worksheets.

Jean, who has worked on the development of a basal reading series, is now coordinating a project to produce training booklets on how to evaluate basal reading programs. Having field-tested three of her booklets, I strongly recommend them.

Tyson-Bernstein, Harriet. Consultant, The Rand Corporation, 2100 M St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037, (202) 296-5000. *Specialty:* The adoption process and high school textbooks, especially U.S. history.

Harriet directed a project on textbooks that is trying to make people aware of research and issues and to mobilize them to collective action. She recently completed a review of the research on textbooks, which was summarized in *A Study Guide for Issues in Textbook Quality*, distributed to participants at a summer conference on textbook reform. Harriet works primarily with state adoptions and has a historical understanding of the state textbook adoption process.

Woodward, Arthur. Codirector, Educational Materials Associates, P.O. Box 27685, River Station, Rochester, NY 14527-7685, (716) 385-8953. *Specialty:* evaluation of publishers' learner verification and revision statements.

Formerly an associate director of Educational Products Information Exchange, Arthur now works with David Elliott and Kathleen Carter Nagel (see above). His expertise is in history, and he recently completed an analysis of ten K-8 social studies textbook programs. □

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Please send questions, ideas, responses, or suggestions for this column to **Connie Muther**, director, Textbook Adoption Advisory Services, 25 B Esquire Dr., Manchester, CT 06040, or call (203) 649-9517.

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