

# A teacher's call to educational arms

## Teachers of the World, Unite!

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Author: Sebastian de Assis

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book

By SARAH LINN

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"Teachers of the World, Unite!," by OSU instructor Sebastian de Assis, is a call to arms in the manner of Karl Marx's "The Communist Manifesto" or Martin Luther's "95 Theses."

Tackling the problems that plague modern education from a teacher's perspective, de Assis argues that students today need to be treated as humans, not economic units.

He goes on to discuss the roles spirituality and technology play in education (among other subjects), calling on sources as diverse as the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1959), Brazilian educator Paulo Freire and French philosopher Rousseau.

Another section questions the connection between the war on drugs and educational reform.

"Teachers of the World, Unite!" proposes establishing a new educational system based on what de Assis calls the "trinity of knowledge": the development of Mind (intellect), Heart (emotions) and Spirit (the evolving human as a species). This, de Assis writes, will promote self-knowledge, social knowledge and wisdom.

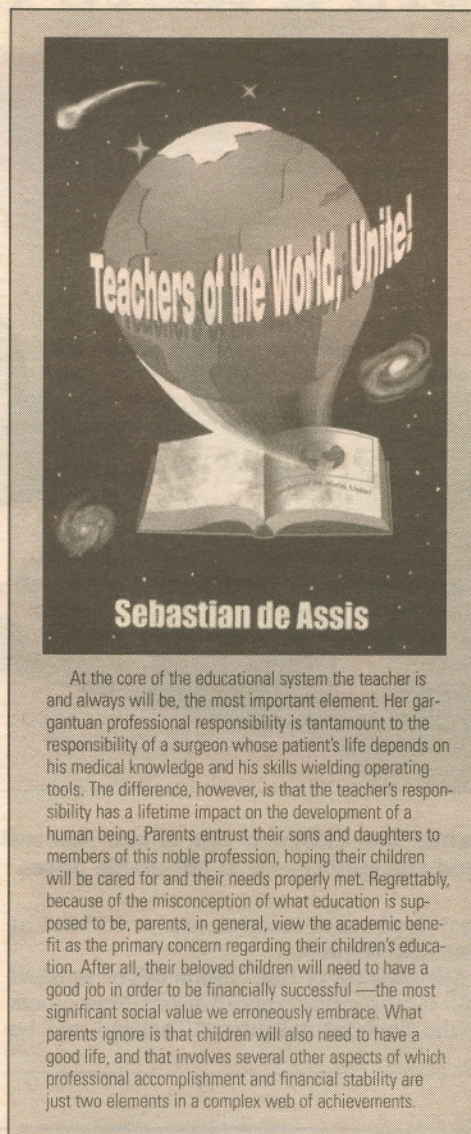
Formatted like a Socratic dialogue, the book first offers questions (example: who and where are the reactionary forces against the reform of education), then detailed answers.

Weighing in at a slim 83 pages (not counting the 14-item resources section), "Teachers of the World, Unite!" is a quick, pleasant and informative read.

Partially due to its length, the book fails to address the real-world applications of its suggestions in great detail. However, the ideas and theories offered are basically sound.

The issues discussed in "Teachers of the World, Unite!" are especially pertinent now, as the November election approaches. Ballot Measure 95, for instance, denotes that student learning and qualifications — not seniority — determines teacher pay and retention.

With measures such as these on the ballot, the educational system will soon be under even



At the core of the educational system the teacher is and always will be, the most important element. Her gargantuan professional responsibility is tantamount to the responsibility of a surgeon whose patient's life depends on his medical knowledge and his skills wielding operating tools. The difference, however, is that the teacher's responsibility has a lifetime impact on the development of a human being. Parents entrust their sons and daughters to members of this noble profession, hoping their children will be cared for and their needs properly met. Regrettably, because of the misconception of what education is supposed to be, parents, in general, view the academic benefit as the primary concern regarding their children's education. After all, their beloved children will need to have a good job in order to be financially successful — the most significant social value we erroneously embrace. What parents ignore is that children will also need to have a good life, and that involves several other aspects of which professional accomplishment and financial stability are just two elements in a complex web of achievements.

sharper public scrutiny.

"Teachers of the World, Unite!" is recommended reading for both aspiring and established teachers. While offering more ideas than factual solutions, the book capably inspires and instructs.

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