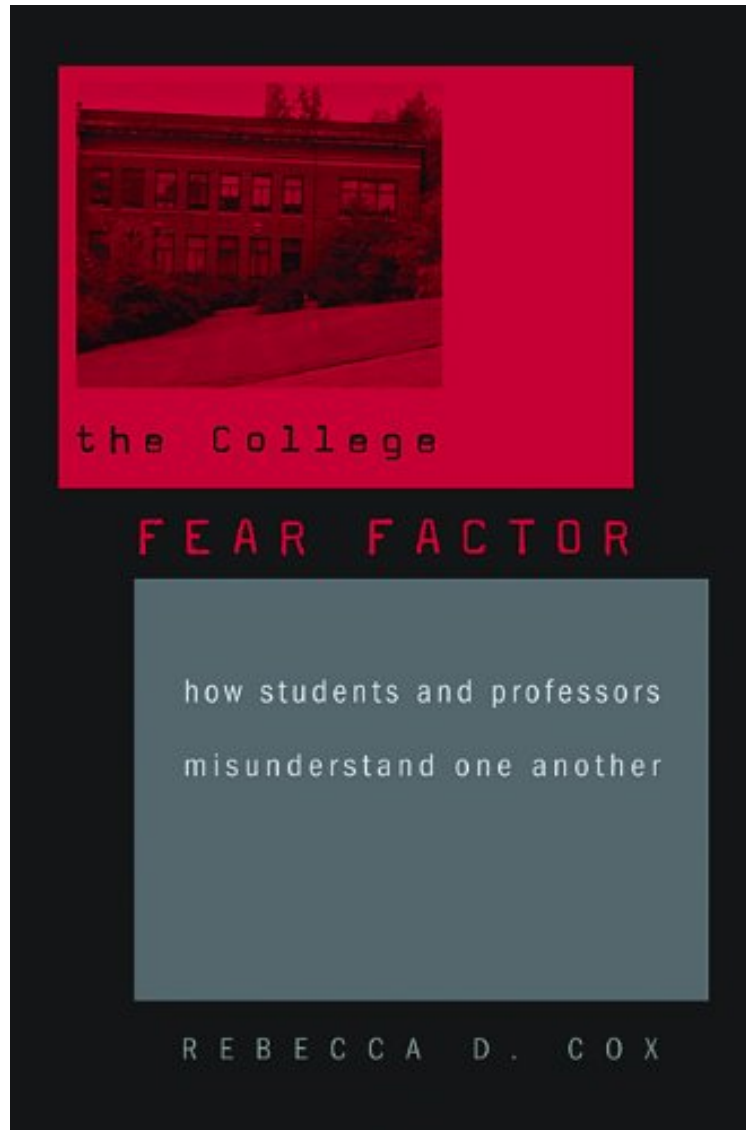


(Download) The College Fear Factor: How Students and Professors Misunderstand One Another

The College Fear Factor: How Students and Professors Misunderstand One Another

Rebecca D. Cox

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Rebecca D. Cox : The College Fear Factor: How Students and Professors Misunderstand One Another before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The College Fear Factor: How Students and Professors Misunderstand One Another:

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Important ContributionBy SLCThis book addresses a big gap in our understanding of effective college teaching by examining how students approach teaching. Using qualitative data

from four studies, Cox shows how students' expectations, their fears, the way they interpret instruction, their external commitments and their learning strategies all play a major role in the success of teaching. We teachers focus so much on pedagogical approaches, but the way the students interpret and respond to the pedagogy can undermine any pedagogical approach. The result can be disappointment for both teachers and students. The teacher then blames the pedagogy, the students, or high schools for not preparing students adequately. The student blames the teacher or the subject. In the book, Cox describes a case that I found particularly instructive where both teacher and student were well intentioned and trying hard, but due to how the students misconstrued the teacher's pedagogy, the class failed. Cox's emphasis is on community college students, but there is plenty that applies to all college teaching. The book reminded me of Bain's "What the College Teachers Do" because clearly an effective teacher must know how to communicate the goals of a class and correct student misconceptions about both the content and the pedagogy. It also reminded me of Light's "Making the Most of College: Students Speak their Minds" because it examines the student perspective, but this goes much more into depth about teaching. Although the book examines the student perspective on teaching, it really isn't a book for college students to read who want to overcome their fears and anxieties. There are better books for that. The book doesn't offer easy answers, but it does raise many important questions relevant to teaching. I recommend this book to teachers and administrators who care about effective teaching and student retention.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. excellent, particularly for community college teachers

By mom of 2
amazing book! I watched Rebecca Cox at a conference and thought her ideas were critical for college teachers. Reading the book reaffirmed my initial impressions. It has changed the way I talk to my students (community college), and the way I approach problems in the classroom. Almost without fail, when I mention students feeling like they don't belong in college, a few heads will gently nod - they hear someone speaking what they feel. We've also used it at our college as part of our Growth Mindset (Dweck) programs because it helps teachers address student fear of risk.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. ... community college and state college there really weren't any great revelations. I teach at a community college and ...

By Aerospace Engineer
Since I came up through the public school system and graduated from both a community college and state college there really weren't any great revelations. I teach at a community college and the book was more of a confirmation of the challenges students attending a community college from Income, personal issues with family or friends, or trying to make ends meet. This would be more appropriate for the stoic college instructor / professor.

They're not the students strolling across the bucolic liberal arts campuses where their grandfathers played football. They are first-generation college students, children of immigrants and blue-collar workers who know that their hopes for success hinge on a degree. But college is expensive, unfamiliar, and intimidating. Inexperienced students expect tough classes and demanding, remote faculty. They may not know what an assignment means, what a score indicates, or that a single grade is not a definitive measure of ability. And they certainly don't feel entitled to be there. They do not presume success, and if they have a problem, they don't expect to receive help or even a second chance. Rebecca D. Cox draws on five years of interviews and observations at community colleges. She shows how students and their instructors misunderstand and ultimately fail one another, despite good intentions. Most memorably, she describes how easily students can feel defeated by their real-world responsibilities and by the demands of college and come to conclude that they just don't belong there after all. Eye-opening even for experienced faculty and administrators, *The College Fear Factor* reveals how the traditional college culture can actually pose obstacles to students' success, and suggests strategies for effectively explaining academic expectations.

We have had blue ribbon commissions, congressional committees, corporate roundtables, university consortiums and dozens of non-profit organizations struggle with the central question of American education: How do we prepare students for success in college? The written output of these groups numbers tens of thousands of pages, at least. And yet I just got more useful information from a 198-page book written by an unknown assistant professor of education at Seton Hall University than I ever learned from those stacks of well-intentioned reports. The author's name is Rebecca D. Cox. The title of her book is *The College Fear Factor: How Students and Professors Misunderstand One Another*. She did something none of those glossy, brightly-illustrated demands for reform ever did, as far as I can recall. She spent five years talking to, and watching, community college students. She noted carefully the many ways they failed their classes. She listened closely to their reasons why... There are some very wealthy and concerned people funding a wide assortment of commissions and cooperatives that address the college readiness issue... Putting the book in the hands of educators and policy makers at all levels would cost relatively little for the reality it would bring to our so far clumsy attempts to get this right. (Jay Mathews Washington Post blog 2009-11-06) It provides many valuable ideas and lessons... This is a worthwhile read that enables the reader to reflect on what and who exactly higher education is for, and also about how best to achieve this for those who choose to take this path. (Andreas Hess Times Higher Education 2009-12-17) Cox reminds readers that, while student preparedness (or lack thereof) is important, more attention needs to be directed toward what is valued in the realms of college teaching and college learning if true progress is to be made in student academic achievement... *The College Fear Factor* will be of particular interest to

community college practitioners and researchers. (Elizabeth M. Cox of Higher Education 2010-09-01)Rebecca Cox's argument is both simple and compelling. She reminds us that students often enter classrooms feeling academically inadequate, with very limited definitions of 'real' instruction or 'useful' knowledge. Combine that with teachers' definitions of learning, and of what's important to know, and the result can be mutual frustration, with each side blaming the other. We have learned a great deal in the last twenty years about what goes on in classrooms. But no one before Cox has shown so clearly what teacher-student interactions about learning and teaching are like, how these are interpreted, or misinterpreted, and with what consequences. The implications go far beyond community colleges. This is a book that should be read by every teacher at every level. (Marvin Lazerson, University of Pennsylvania)About the AuthorRebecca D. Cox is Assistant Professor of Education at Simon Fraser University.