

Significant Books in Review

Column Editor: George W. Denemark
Contributors: Richard M. Brandt
Walter B. Waetjen

The Self: Explorations in Personal Growth. By Clark E. Moustakas (Editor). New York: Harper Brothers, 1956.

The educator who wishes to explore a new focus in psychology should find *The Self: Explorations in Personal Growth* a valuable resource. Through the first half of the twentieth century education was forced by the absence of more adequate theory elsewhere to embrace oversimplified psychologies. First, stimulus-response and conditioning theory led educators to overemphasize teaching methodology and the proverbial "bag of tricks," which, incidentally, often failed to work. Under this psychology the learner himself was neglected almost entirely. Later, "adjustment psychology" placed importance on the learner, but primarily in terms of those needs and concerns which kept him from achieving school tasks. This psychology originated in the clinic with the study of disturbed people, hence its concern with forces that retard rather than foster self-development. Only recently has there been any serious attempt to define the nature of healthy personality, except perhaps as the absence of maladjustment; and to recognize the inner force within the learner that, when it is released, drives him to seek, to know, and to fulfill his potentialities. Education can now turn from a psychology of maladjustment to one of mental health.

The Self: Explorations in Personal Growth is a book of readings representative of this new focus. Clark Moustakas has performed the useful function of assembling and editing articles about the nature of self from such diverse disciplines as existential philosophy, clinical psychiatry, psychoanalysis, psychology, education, anthropology, and Indian metaphysics. The papers are well selected for both readability and enlightenment.

Several of them state a core of current thinking in their respective fields. Papers by Maslow, Rogers, Allport, and Goldstein bring out basic differences in motivational dynamics between the healthy and the maladjusted personality. Critics of modern education's emphasis on adjustment as leading toward mediocre accomplishment will find an answer in the new source of motivation which springs into action once a person lives comfortably with himself and others. The motivation of well adjusted individuals, according to these authors, is primarily growth-oriented and goal-seeking. The personal nature of experience is another major concept discussed, especially by Moustakas and Smillie. Maslow and Mooney stress creativity as an attribute of the self-accepting person. Creativity is meant to be more than productivity. Another emphasis, expressed especially by Lecky, Rasey, and Lee, is on the internal consistency of a healthy personality. Life is not seen or experienced in

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fragments and segmented behavior, but in unity of action and fullness of response. The concepts of growth-oriented motivation, personalized experience, and internal consistency of personality furnish a nucleus with which educational psychology can focus attention on positive self-development rather than lack of negative development.

If educational and psychological research support the theories of this new psychology (at this time little research has been attempted), a revolution would seem forthcoming in adult-child relationships, including the teaching process. Teaching would have to be viewed, as some educators are already stating, as the process of providing children with a rich, supportive environment but allowing them much more opportunity than generally prevails in choosing from this environment that which they wish to learn.

Although this viewpoint would seem

to suggest a return to the strawman which we know as "progressive education," there would be some basic differences. One would be the support of both psychological theory and research, if the latter materializes. Another would be the role of the teacher who, while allowing children considerable freedom and emotional support, would still set limits and play an essential and active part in the learning situation.

From the standpoint of education the main limitation of this book is the lack of clearcut description of school processes which foster healthy self-development. Although Rasey and Horney provide some leads for educational implications, nowhere is education dealt with as such. Moustakas' other recent book, *The Teacher and the Child*, shows more concretely how awareness of self-processes in children leads directly into classroom program. Nevertheless, the book under

review is perhaps the most comprehensive statement so far of the new emphasis in psychology. Thinking readers who understand the nature of self as put forth in this book cannot help but begin questioning many current educational practices which were inherited from an earlier psychology.

—Reviewed by RICHARD M. BRANDT, assistant professor, Institute for Child Study, College of Education, University of Maryland, College Park.

Education and Human Motivation. By **H. Harry Giles.** New York: Philosophical Library, 1957.

Occasionally a book is written about human behavior that is unlike others of its kind in that it is not limited to treatment of aspects of behavior as discrete entities. Dr. Giles' volume is one of these. The author wrote the book as an inquiry into the nature of man and society.

"It is the author's conviction that research, professional education, and social action in any field may gain force and meaning from an integrative theory of behavior and may be so designed as to test and improve that theory." In keeping with the foregoing statement the author has, in actuality, set forth his conception of how human behavior may be explained and understood. Yet, the description is not confined to discussions of various traits or abilities; rather, it approaches the problem of human understanding through synthesis, through seeing the interrelationships between traits and characteristics. The intent of the book is evident in the chapters on the following topics: An Integrative Theory and Its Uses; Growth—An Examination of Concepts from the Biological and Social Sciences; The Individual—Limitations and Potentialities for Growth; Growth and Human Society; Growth, Democracy



A nine-year-old Hindu boy, writing on his favorite animal, the cat:
"The cat has four legs, one in each corner. He also has nine lives, which he does not use in Europe because of Christianity." *The World Within*—Gina Cerminara

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and Education; Growth, Belonging, and the Task of Human Relations Studies for the Professional Student of Human Relations.

One of the refreshing qualities of the book is that it has an entirely positive orientation about the worth, dignity and capacity of human beings. The repeated use of the word "growth" in the chapter headings is an indication of this. Further indication of the orientation in the book is the author's belief that ". . . the constant struggle of man in all climes and times has been to achieve freedom to grow, to develop all abilities, to contribute to his society." Indeed, the theme of the book is that the central motive of people is the desire to grow, to elaborate one's behavior. The author points out that psychologists, anthropologists and physiologists agree that only a minute part of the potential of organisms and societies has ever been developed. The democratic way of life is conceived of as the social context in which the growth motive comes to full flower with benefit to the individual and his society.

Like other literary endeavors *Education and Human Motivation* has certain limitations. The growth motive is stated as having its basis in the postulate that organisms go toward some things and

away from others—adience and abience. Since this postulate undergirds much of the book's content it is well for the reader to be sensitive to the major role it plays in the discussion of other concepts. Another limitation of the volume is in terms of the recency of the reference material. Most of the references cited were published prior to 1950, which is somewhat unfortunate since many valuable contributions to the understanding of human behavior have appeared during the past six years.

The reader of Dr. Giles' volume will find not a "do-it-yourself" approach to curriculum development and instructional improvement, for it was not the intention of the author to produce such a work. The reader is left to make his own translation into action of the ideas presented in the book. A glance through the volume indicates that it is intended for the more mature readers who bring to the content of the book some sophistication in the understanding of peoples' behavior. Curriculum workers should find the book especially helpful when they are formulating a rationale for understanding and working with people.

—Reviewed by WALTER B. WAETJEN,
associate professor, Institute for Child
Study, Univ. of Maryland, College Park.

Beckon of Spring

"Come to me,"
The spring calls.
"Come!
I'll wrap you in my sunny shawls."

—CLARENCE PARMENTER—Grade 8A,
South Pasadena, California, Junior High
School.

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