

# Significant Books in Review

Column Editor: Howard B. Leavitt  
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**America's Children.** By **Eleanor H. Bernert.** New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1958. 185 p.

Those who have had occasion to turn to the U.S. Census reports are well aware that they contain a staggering amount of material. *America's Children*, a volume in the census monograph series, is an attempt to isolate from the census reports important data relating to the status of children and education in America. By conducting various analyses of economic and social factors relating to these data the author makes it possible to obtain a clearer picture of American children. The book is replete with figures and graphs either borrowed from census reports and other sources or produced by the author to show relationships among census data. For example, on page 30 the author reports on correlations between certain social and economic statistics uncovered by the Census Bureau:

There appears to be a significant negative correlation (-.75) between current school expenditures per pupil and percent of selective service registrants who failed the Armed Forces Qualification Test, July 1950-June 1951.

There appears to be a significant negative correlation (-.84) between median family income and percent of enrolled males 14-17 years old retarded more than one grade.

There seems to be no significant relationship (-.28) between percent of dwelling units with television and percent of enrolled males 14-17 years old retarded more than one grade.

However the book contains more than figures and graphs. In nine chapters covering such topics as: living and family arrangements, school enrollment and educational attainment, variations in school progress, and youth in the labor force, the author analyzes the data and helps the reader find meaningful relationships. What the author stops short of doing, however, is suggesting implications for education, social service or welfare agencies in general. Having called the reader's attention to critical census data and having uncovered intriguing relationships among related factors, the rest is left up to him.

There seems to be a tendency among teachers to project onto other states or regions of the nation the characteristics of children and schools in their own locality. Although the U.S. and its schools appear to be surprisingly homogeneous, especially to visitors from other lands, there are of course striking dissimilarities. Through the use of statistics, these differences, sometimes overlooked or smoothed over, stand out clearly. The differences related to the states' ability to pay for education and the differences in retardation of students are among the most revealing. To this reviewer the most interesting chapter concerned this latter point—variations in the progress of students in school. From relating drop-out rates to such variables as sex, region, urban-rural residence, color, etc., new dimensions of the school's holding power could be seen.

## READINGS IN EDUCATION

by

Hugh B. Wood

*Professor of Education  
University of Oregon*

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The data, presented so clearly by the author, invite interpretation. It would seem that too seldom do educators get the chance to mull over statistics or to draw implications from important facts. More likely, the generalizations are already drawn, in texts, speeches, or in conversation. Greater attention to basic data especially in schools of education, might result in a more acute perception of American education.

This book will provide important facts for educators, youth workers and sociologists in general. Two other purposes are suggested, both relating to college teaching. This book could be used as a reference in courses in American Public Education, in which, under the guidance of an instructor, students could be helped to analyze data and arrive at considered generalizations about U.S. education. This book might also be used as a reference in a statistics course. Because such courses are frequently taught without

relation to live statistical data of importance, students could use the book to analyze the types of statistical treatment and then could be helped to make statistical inferences and valid interpretations of facts concerning American education.

—Reviewed by HOWARD B. LEAVITT,  
associate professor, School of Educa-  
tion, Boston University, Massachusetts.

**Education in Nepal: A Report of the National Educational Planning Commission. By Rudra Raj Pandey, Kaiser Bahadur, Hugh B. Wood.** Eugene, Oregon: American Nepal Education Foundation, 1958. 352 p. (\$6.00)

This report is a landmark in educational history, especially for the little Himalayan country of Nepal, which lies as a 500-mile buffer state between India and Tibet. From 1846 until 1951 this country was ruled by the Rana family and was completely closed to the Western world. To maintain this tight control, the people were kept in ignorance, and as late as 1952, 98 percent of the people were still believed to be illiterate and there were only six high schools in the entire country of nine million people.

In 1951 the King led a revolution, overthrew the Ranacracy, and established a benevolent monarchy with the promise of democracy for the people as soon as they were ready. To achieve this democracy the King in 1952 solicited the aid of the United States Government in developing agriculture, health, village improvement, and education. In 1953, the King's Government appointed a 46-man planning commission which studied the educational needs of the country. *Education in Nepal* is a report of this committee's activities, but it is much more than a formal recitation of statistics.

The Report first of all provides a brief historical and cultural background for the reader. Next, there is a summary of

educational conditions in Nepal as they existed in 1954. The major part of the book, however, is devoted to a master plan for education in Nepal from the primary school level through the university level, including adult education. This section provides a thrilling example of educational planning on a large scale where there were few traditions and precedents to hamper the thinking of the group. The Commission set as its major goals: universal primary education in 25 years; adult education for all who desire it in 15 years; a national University in 10 years; improvement and expansion of secondary education; and teacher

training programs necessary to attain these goals. The final chapter is a review of the activities of the University of Oregon Contract Team which, working under the United States Operations Mission in Nepal, has been responsible for the development of the educational program thus far.

This book will be of particular interest to those concerned with teacher education, or comparative education, or those who are interested in a challenging story of our foreign aid program at work.

—Reviewed by CHARLES D. BYRNE, chancellor emeritus, Oregon State System of Higher Education, Eugene.

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organism, and the possibility that learning—both of subject and method—can occur at its best, as a means to continuing development.

The outcomes of social relations education will be infinitely varied, but the direction will be toward that freeing of the person from the narrow view and experience which may bring countless new ideas and techniques to the constructive resolution of the social conflicts of our time.

#### Suggested Readings

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