

Significant Books in Review

Column Editor: Howard B. Leavitt

Contributors: Ralph Garry,
Gene Phillips, Calvin W. Deam

What Education Has to Learn from Psychology. By Percival M. Symonds. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1959. 74 p.

The monograph contains six articles originally appearing separately in issues of the *Teachers College Record* between 1955 and 1958. Choosing the topics of motivation, reward, punishment, learning is reacting, whole versus part learning, emotion and learning, Symonds briefly reviews some of the basic research on each topic, identifies the generalizations that can be made, and discusses their implications for education. His purpose arises from his conviction that unless teachers understand some of the principles of psychology having educational application they are unlikely to be more than tinkerers or mechanics operating by rule of thumb methods in the classroom.

At the risk of doing an injustice to the entire monograph the implications cited are in the main for education rather than for educational practice. Hence the practitioner may be disappointed as the reviewer was when he arrives at the end of each article looking expectantly for the more specific application. But if one is willing to pause, speculate upon one's practices, evaluate possible relationships between Symonds' conclusions and educational practice, the monograph will prove rewarding. Even the specialist in

educational psychology, though he will read more quickly and selectively because of familiarity with much of the research, will find himself reminded of considerations that have been forgotten or overlooked, and speculating on various questions that are raised.

—Reviewed by RALPH GARRY, associate professor of education, Boston University, Massachusetts.

The Secondary School Curriculum, The Year Book of Education, 1958. Edited by George Z. F. Bereday and Joseph A. Lauwerys. Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y.: World Book Company. 554 p.

The two recent pronouncements on the nature of the secondary school curriculum by Conant and Rickover might well be appraised in relation to statements made by professional educators from all parts of the world. The 1958 *Year Book of Education* provides us this needed perspective. It even discusses many of the positive forces operating for education's advance in the United States, forces not often recognized by those outside professional education.

Important and expanded views of the workings of secondary education in this country constitute a sizable portion of the book, along with accounts from England, Holland, Ghana, Ceylon, Philippines, Italy, Russia, New China, Israel, Germany, Canada, France, Yugoslavia, Ethiopia, Brazil, South Africa, and Ja-

pan. Such a listing indicates the cosmopolitan context of the discussion of various secondary school curricula about the world. The richness of the material can be shown by the kinds of questions the *Year Book* raises and, in some cases, attempts to answer.

What is an appropriate content for secondary education? What are the foundations of curriculum development in the U. S. and elsewhere? Why is there such worship for the education of the past? How can schools effect higher moral training? What is the importance of mental and physical health in curriculum development? Who decides the content of the curriculum in the U. S. A.? Problems of nationalism, social change and the curriculum, teacher education, nationalism *versus* internationalism, impacts of new media in education, military education, technological education, social and cultural determinants in curriculum construction, influence of social and psychological research and theories upon curriculum development, and experimentation in schools in attempting to create a better design for education receive careful attention. In sum, the questions and problems center on tradition and the curriculum, stated aims and objectives, the curriculum in the educational pattern, the influence of social circumstances, and theories of education and curriculum reform.

In providing for such inclusiveness, there could be a possibility of inconsistent effort and quality among its many authors; however, this particular edition enjoys a qualitatively high standard of excellence throughout; style, clarity, consistency of purpose and well-above-average theme continuity.

The points of view extending the ideas of progressivist philosophy were to a large degree absent. The newer ideas of

culture-oriented curricula could well have been included, and the proposals for change or new directions in the secondary school curriculum were modest. Since the treatise devoted itself to the implementation of the aims set forth in the *1957 Year Book, Education and Philosophy*, this volume might well have taken into account recent thinking on the dynamics of change as a process and a theory.

An improved understanding of the aims, nature and content of the secondary school about the world will surely be advanced as a result of this cooperative effort.

—Reviewed by GENE PHILLIPS, associate professor of education, Boston University, Massachusetts.

Building Better Programs in Citizenship: A Guide for Teachers, Administrators, and College Instructors. By William S. Vincent and others. *Citizenship Education Project.* New York: the Project, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1958. 309 p.

Laboratory Practices in Citizenship: Learning Experiences in the Community. *Citizenship Education Project.* New York: the Project, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1958. 312 p.

During the contemporary debate over educational policy, proponents of "intellectualism" and "discipline" have captured the headlines. Too frequently form rather than substance has been emphasized, and over-simple solutions have been advanced for complex problems. Two volumes summarizing the work of the Citizenship Education Project, Teachers College, should serve as a counter-vailing force to the ideas that have been so readily accepted by a segment of the general public. Also, needed reassur-

Announcing—

Fourth ASCD Curriculum Research Institute,
Western Section,
in cooperation with
The National Institute of Mental Health

Theme—

**Underdeveloped Capacity to Learn:
An Area in Need of Study and Research**

May 2-6, 1959 Los Angeles, California

For information write to:

ASCD, NEA, 1201 16th St., N.W.
Washington 6, D. C.

ance will be given to those who desire to improve the program of general education for youth enrolled in the American secondary school.

In a world in which conflicting ideologies are competing for the minds of men, it is imperative that citizens of a democratic society fully and completely understand the premises upon which their way of life is founded. Unfortunately, the concepts of human freedom and liberty are considered to be abstractions, soothing to the ears, but somewhat impractical and devoid of meaning in daily affairs by far too many citizens. *Building Better Programs in Citizenship* develops a plan whereby youth can discern the relationship between democratic principles and human action and, at the same time, learn and practice the skills of civic action in the numerous communities in which they live, international as well as local.

The means by which youth can develop the necessary insight into the relationships among knowledge, premises or values, and civic behavior is the laboratory practice. It affords youth the oppor-

tunity to learn by doing—by applying generalized knowledge to problem situations in the community. Therefore, if a class were examining the topic of conservation, it would be expected to relate knowledge acquired in the classroom to specific, local problems involving conservation and subsequently to take action regarding them. Involved in the process are research, knowledge, premises, skills and participation in civic affairs. The laboratory practice becomes an instrument for vitalizing and giving meaning to many of the abstract concepts contained in textual materials.

Laboratory Practices in Citizenship is a revision of the former Brown Box containing practices tried out by 10,000 teachers throughout the nation. It serves as a valuable reservoir of ideas for classroom teachers, although some are open to question. Suggestions are made for the implementation of each practice and specific instructions are spelled out. Unfortunately, the relationships among participatory activities, premises, and collateral reading are not made nearly as explicit as they were in the earlier edition. This lack of integration diminishes the effectiveness of the practices given.

Educators who are interested in emphasizing the citizenship function of general education will find much of value in the volumes. American youth must develop an understanding of and a commitment to the premises of American liberty and must be willing to govern their civic behavior accordingly. Perhaps the most serious defect of the project is its failure to treat adequately the nature and the psychological dynamics of the learner himself.

—Reviewed by CALVIN W. DEAM, assistant professor of education, Boston University, Massachusetts.

Copyright © 1959 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.