

News and Trends

. . . in Curriculum Development

Margaret Gill

THROUGH the Washington office steadily come many sources of information, ranging from books, booklets, courses of study, reports, formal and informal, announcements of meetings, professional, educational and otherwise, and phone calls from people with news about curriculum development. These constitute a wealth of resources that might offer a lead in identifying some exciting innovation or study for which some ASCD members may be searching. Some of these sources selected at random, and unevaluated, we want to share with you. "Share" is a misnomer; perhaps a better word is "mention." Also, some ASCD activities now in progress will be mentioned as potential resources for members and other readers.

Early fall brought many preschool conferences. If any trend may be noted from information about and participation in these conferences, it is that an increasing number of school systems, large and small, have chosen to emphasize, through their conference theme, speakers or activities planned for elementary and secondary staff, *the teacher's role in curriculum development*. Another indication of this increasing emphasis on the teacher's role is evident in the types of pamphlets and reports which reached

the Washington office in late summer and early fall. Among these are:

"Pointers to Good Teaching" from Niles Township Community High Schools, 1963-64—compiled by Stuart A. Anderson, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. This informal mimeographed pamphlet contains illustrated advice to teachers.

Fusion Concept in Classroom Teaching, Alexander M. Gottesman, George Peabody College for Teachers 1963 (\$1), reports a study based on a type of organization used in industrial research. In the fusion concept the classroom is considered an "organization" which makes demands on pupils, as the pupil in turn makes demands on the classroom. An instrument has been developed to measure pupil preferences in the classroom situation. There are indications in the fusion concept of diagnostic properties regarding teacher functions in the classroom.

Helping Teachers Change Their Behavior (April 1963) describes an in-service training program in Michigan and Minnesota which utilized sound filmstrips, interaction analysis and self-directed experimentation. Ned A. Flinders of the University of Michigan was project director. In-service training was

THE N.E.A. PROJECT ON INSTRUCTION

SCHOOLS FOR THE SIXTIES

National Education Association.
160 pages, \$2.45 (paper), \$3.95 (cloth).

This new book presents the forward-looking views of the National Education Association in focusing attention on quality education. One of a series of four reports scheduled for publication in 1963, this report makes 33 specific recommendations in answer to twelve crucial issues facing education in the sixties. The Project on Instruction focuses on two general areas of concern—**Deciding What to Teach and Planning and Organizing for Teaching.** These two areas, along with a volume on social forces and trends entitled **Education in a Changing Society**, will be published by the National Education Association as separate reports. Specific issues analyzed include the role of research, who should make what decisions about education, priorities for the schools, team teaching, ability grouping, instructional technology, and teaching controversial issues.

Send for a copy
on-approval

McGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY
330 W. 42nd St., N.Y. 36, N.Y.

provided for junior high teachers with emphasis on making changes in behavior, that is, "acting" differently while teaching. The project explored two different conditions of training.

Creativity and College Teaching, the June 1963 Bulletin of the Bureau of School Service, College of Education, University of Kentucky, contains papers presented at a conference held in June of 1962, in which college teachers for two weeks explored creativity and conditions for its development and evaluation. Emphasis in the conference was on whether or not teaching strategy comes from the structure of a discipline or from the nature of the learner.

The Teacher and the Taught (Delta Book, 1963), edited by Ronald Gross, presents essays on "Education in Theory and Practice from Plato to James B. Conant" (\$1.95). The essays included fuse the theoretical and concrete, theory and practice, and principle and application. Each presents a distinctive view on education that is related to current educational issues.

Those who are examining theoretical bases for instruction will want to read *Theory and Research in Teaching*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1963, edited by Arno A. Bellack. This booklet is a compilation of papers from conferences sponsored in 1962 by the Department of Curriculum and Teaching of Teachers College, Columbia University. Researchers studying classroom behavior describe the conceptual framework within which their studies were conducted. Emphasis is on systematic observation of teachers' and students' activities in the classroom. An extensive bibliography is included.

The September 1963 issue of *The Journal of Teacher Education*, published by the National Commission on Teacher

Education and Professional Standards, NEA, is "A Symposium on Current Research on Classroom Behavior of Teachers and Its Implications for Teacher Education."

The first volume of four from the NEA Project on Instruction in the Public Schools is now available. *Schools for the 60's* will be valuable for all those responsible for making decisions about teaching and instruction in American schools.

These reports, booklets and journals are concerned with more than descriptions of what is considered good teaching and go beyond looking at changes in learners' behavior. There is an indication of *increasing interest in the study of instruction, research and theory*. You will recall that Jerome Bruner reminded ASCD'ers in St. Louis of the real need for a theory of instruction. Both sections of the Ninth ASCD Curriculum Research Institute plans for the 1963-64 school year will be devoted to "Theories of Instruction." Speakers at the Western Section in San Francisco, December 1-4, will discuss: "Historic Exemplars of Teaching," "A Model of Instruction Based on Information Systems Concepts," and "A Model for Transmitting Knowledge to Human Learners."

In October ASCD convened a Conference on Curriculum Content attended by the directors of the large national curriculum projects currently under way. The directors of 22 projects met in Chicago for two days to give attention to the following questions: What are the ways the projects have attempted change in the school curriculum? What are the results in the public schools of the efforts of the massive curriculum revision projects? How can curriculum people responsible for decisions in the schools and those responsible for curriculum projects work together more effectively?

A continuing trend, as evidenced by the Curriculum Content Conference, is the search for *more effective ways in which people with various kinds of responsibilities* for improving instruction can work together. In July in Brussels your Executive Secretary participated in an international conference sponsored by the UNESCO Institute for Education in Hamburg where 26 people from 24 countries spent two weeks studying ways in which the school and community can teach international understanding. Classroom teachers, ministers of education, community development leaders and association executives pooled their various cultural experiences and professional skills in searching for more effective ways in which youth of one country can acquire a realistic and true understanding of nations and cultures other than their own.

In September ASCD was represented at

An exploration of
the place, importance, and
purpose of education

PRINCIPLES OF MODERN EDUCATION

By Ralph L. Pounds and Robert L. Garretson
both of the University of Cincinnati

Recognizing that education reflects the best of our culture, the authors of this book have utilized research from the social sciences and their experiences in the classroom to discuss the principles of education in relation to contemporary American society. These principles are set forth as a guide for organizing an effective teaching-learning atmosphere in the classroom and to delineate the various other responsibilities of the teacher. Reports of actual classroom practices clarify the discussions, and illustrations, in the form of photographs and figures, make the principles more meaningful. 474 pages, \$6.50

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
60 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10011

the Second National Conference on the Arts in Education in Pittsburgh. Representatives of the various art fields convened to examine talent and the arts in the present general education curriculum.

Music in the Elementary School: Opinion and Comment (available from ASCD) was prepared in cooperation with the Music Educators National Conference. Elementary music supervisors have expressed need for this kind of cooperative statement.

The insert, "Children and Oral Language," to be found in this journal is also appearing this month in the journals of ACEI, IRA and NCTE. This joint statement represents the first phase of a cooperative examination of the oral language problem by the four associations. The next step will be a pamphlet, forthcoming, jointly prepared on the same topic. Each of the national annual conventions in 1964 will give major attention in the conference program to oral language.

ASCD is represented in the National Study of High School English Programs, a two-year comprehensive investigation of the teaching of English in secondary schools. One hundred and ten high school English programs sufficiently distinctive to deserve special scrutiny are being studied in a new and outstanding English project. James Squire, NCTE Executive Secretary, is director of the project sponsored under Project English.

The Educational Media Council, on which ASCD has membership, met in Washington in October to continue study and discussion of the new media and their uses for education.

If you need the latest compilation of programmed learning materials, you will find helpful *Programs, '63, A Guide to Programmed Instructional Materials*, a

survey and report compiled by The Center for Programed Instruction, Inc., in cooperation with the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, U. S. Office of Education. This volume, which may be ordered from the U. S. Government Printing Office for \$2.50, lists all materials available in the fall of 1963 and gives the number, variety and source of programs with no attempt to evaluate. However, this volume does carry the previously published statement of policy on criteria for selecting programed materials of the 1962 Interim Report of the Joint Committee on Programed Instruction and Teaching Machines (AERA, APA and DAVI with cooperation of the U. S. Office of Education). The Center welcomes suggestions for types of improvements that will help the educator evaluate programs. Evaluation of programs is largely subjective at the present time. Mathematics programs are still the most popular. Large gains have been made in Business Education and Modern Languages. The trend is to shorter programs.

ASCD is co-sponsoring with the Washington State Department of Education a forthcoming conference for subject field and general curriculum leaders on current curriculum developments. A model for cooperative work is to be developed from this conference for use by other state departments, content specialists and general curriculum workers.

A more visible trend among education groups seems to be *studying ways in which each group can move toward increasing professionalization*. This move grows out of attempts to define more clearly the responsibilities and roles in decision-making, and the ways whereby in-service education may help supervisors, directors of curriculum, principals and other administrators effectively to

maintain the leadership roles that are theirs. Title is not sufficient justification for real leadership. Skill, knowledge and latest information about teaching and learning must increasingly become the daily tools required of the curriculum worker. ASCD's Committee on the Professionalization of Supervisors and Curriculum Workers is continuing the important study started by the preceding Commission on the Preparation of Instructional Leaders.

Other educational groups have been for some time carrying on the same type of study of the responsibilities of their own members and the ways in which they may become increasingly skilled in their positions. The work of the joint Committee on the Professionalization of Administrators and Supervisors, made up of representatives from the college and public school levels from ASCD, AASA, DESP and NASSP, continues to give evidence of the value of shared study, shared responsibility and the strengthening of efforts toward professionalization through preservice and continuing in-service education.

Someone has said that if supervisors had spent as much time in the past year in keeping parents informed regarding instructional programs as they have in re-explaining education, both education and the status of supervisors would be greater. Hopefully, this is not typical; yet in the sharing of some ASCD activities and other curriculum information that come through your ASCD office, it occurs to me that you may find it a bit easier to keep informed about current studies in the area of your interests and responsibilities.

—MARGARET GILL, *Executive Secretary, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.*

can provide the open-ended leadership which develops and enhances the faculty group process skills and ways of working.

The creative supervisor in group process then seems to be primarily concerned about the creation of a free flowing working atmosphere. Such an atmosphere has as some of its components: (a) the group's satisfactory definition of its problems; (b) support within the group of freedom for exploration and work; (c) coordination and communication between and among members of the group; and (d) time to develop a satisfactory group relationship.

The success of group process seems to be greatly influenced by the development of a positive feeling of each individual toward the other individuals who make up the group. Thus, some characteristics included in creative supervision are: the personal development of the supervisor in his feelings of self security; his knowledge of and working ability in human relations; the understanding of the relationship between the specific area of inquiry and the teaching-learning act; the ability to develop a free-wheeling atmosphere in which problem solving becomes a personal commitment; and the knowledge and ability to use group process in an open-ended way to solve problems.

These characteristics of creative supervision are in reality interwoven and are present in different strength in each communication contact the supervisor makes with another human being. It is very doubtful whether there is a single psychology of creativeness. More likely there may be an infinite number of action possibilities which will enhance the development of creativity among teachers.

Copyright © 1963 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.