

● Selected for Review

Religion and the Schools. *Paul Blanshard.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1963. 265 p.

Federal Aid and Catholic Schools. *Daniel Callahan.* Baltimore: Helicon Press, Inc., 1964. 160 p.

Reviewed by JOSEPH LEESE, Professor of Education, State University of New York at Albany.

The storm which greeted the Regents Prayer Decision has abated, and calmer voices have replaced those that thundered so loudly but a short time ago. However, it is all too clear that the major problem involved has not yet been effectively approached. Discussion of the peripheral issues still continues, while little is done with finding out how to provide balanced, systematic and satisfying religious instruction for those who attend public schools.

The recent publication by the AASA Commission on Religion in the Public School offers suggestions for several practical steps to alleviate difficulties with some common practices. There remains, however, a long way to go before there is effective instruction in the school, the home or the church. Surely if there were adequate instruction, particularly in the latter two institutions, there would be much less of the great controversy than there now is. There will need to be much more imaginative proposals for action before the way out of the briar patch is surely determined, despite some very good work done by groups such as those in Kentucky.

Unfortunately neither Paul Blanshard nor Daniel Callahan and his co-authors suggest much in the way of manageable curricular adaptation to that end. Several chapters in Callahan's book do propose broader arrangements, such as shared time or released time, but none gets very thoroughly at the essential elements of moral and spiritual literacy.

Of course this is not the purpose of either of the books, much as one would like it to be in the light of the pronounced gap. Rather the purpose in both books is to state again the facts and the arguments about religion in the public schools and about the support of church sponsored schools by public funds. Blanshard reviews his well-known apprehensions while he traces in very readable reportorial style the history of the church school problem from Jefferson to Kennedy. His summary of events, decisions and after-effects seems to attain an unemotional objectivity.

Although one who does not know Blanshard's deep convictions can easily be well aware of the posture from which he writes, the account provides a good assessment of where we are now and why. The decisions handed down by the Court are included verbatim in the appendix, the comments of responsible individuals and groups are quoted, and a fair examination of the major common-sense arguments about the Prayer is presented. In Chapter 5 a careful review of the several cases on Bible reading and the Lord's Prayer is included

to support the contention that anyone familiar (and the chapter seeks to assure familiarity) with the prior Court decisions would have predicted the Prayer decision.

The second half of *Religion and the Schools* focuses on the perennial headache of financial support of church schools. The uncertainty and disagreement in Catholic circles (Kennedy, Spellman, the Jesuit literature) are examined. Eight reasons held to be advanced by Catholics for support of transportation, books, teachers, and various other provisions are systematically rebutted. Quite expectedly Blanshard's conclusion is that continued and extended public aid will increase religious narrow-mindedness and make the public schools all but ineffectual. His opinions are of course widely supported among public school administrators and others for whom there really exists very little research support.

Interestingly, with respect to prejudice, Monsignor D'Amour, Associate Secretary of the Department of School Superintendents, National Catholic Educational Association, argues that historically the non-public supported schools have been chiefly responsible for the desirable and healthy pluralism presently characteristic of America. The four appendix chapters in Callahan's book which describe programs and success of dual school systems elsewhere, too, gives the reader a chance to make a choice about arriving at the same point Blanshard does.

The concluding chapter in Blanshard's book faces up to the reality that there is no quick and very likely no continuing resolution of "the great controversy," as he calls it. Doubtless he

predicts correctly. Court reexamination of some matters heretofore "laid to rest" and his speculation that the burgeoning Catholic population may take its case through the constitutional amendment route seem well founded, as he looks upon the consequences fearfully.

Either as a better route or as a set of stop gap measures, four well known "middle ways" are offered. None of these is seen as sufficient to satisfy the vast range of proponents and opponents of more religion in the schools. Neither will complete separation. Yet Blanshard advocates this anyway.

The Callahan volume is much more acknowledgedly cogitative and soul searching. One might expect from so many authors with such diverse backgrounds, e.g., free lance writer, public college president, foundation secretary, Jewish magazine editor, Catholic school superintendent, Protestant council director, that one would find himself utterly confused at the end. Happily the editor and his contributors establish from logic or heart a fairly consistent and strong position while they provide the reader an opportunity to attain greater awareness of issues and problems that are broader and more complicated than the single one of constitutionality. Their sentiments do range from discomfiture with the need for aid to self-criticism for now less adequate than possible programs.

Neil McCluskey, associate editor of *America*, protests (a) clerical domination of the schools, (b) excessive commitment to elementary schools, (c) confusion of school mandate and the pastoral charge, and (d) unhealthy substitution of school for both family

and church. Monsignor O'Neil wonders "really" about the parochial school financial crisis. Robert Francoeur of Fordham complains that the Catholic church has been submerged by the Catholic school where there are lopsided parishes and school centered priests and where a church is merely a supporting device for a school. Such forthright self-criticism gives one the feeling that many avenues to improvement are under consideration. The consensus, however, is that one reasonable rationale or another can and should be worked out to provide the financial base and insurance to guarantee in schools more attention to and effect upon moral and spiritual values than is now the case.

Both these books are persuasively written and they leave one with the

feeling that the authors are men whose long and sober thought has brought them logically to nearly unassailable positions. If one is inclined to resist substantial public financial aid to parochial schools, Blanshard will certainly strengthen his inclination while, I suspect, Callahan, for all the merit of the book, will not much reorient it. Conversely, I doubt if Blanshard, less aggressive as he has become here, will much sway those who join in support of the view that churches need more sustenance than they already enjoy from the state to do well that over which they claim province and admit they do so poorly.

That we in America need a new vigor to explore our values more thoroughly and a deeper conviction to apply them more helpfully and usefully to our

More and More
School Districts
Are Adopting
this Proven
Phonics Program
Supplementing
the Early
Development of
Communicative
Skills:

LISTENING

READING

WRITING

SPELLING

SPEAKING

**THE PHONOVISUAL
METHOD can be
used with any
series of readers.**

*Teach Phonics
Easily, Quickly by*

**THE
PhonoVisual
METHOD**®



The electric success of the Phonovisual Method is based upon the use of two scientifically planned pictorial charts . . . consonant and vowel . . . game-like procedures and additional supporting aids. It strengthens a child's ability to attack independently the phonetic words that comprise nearly 80% of the English language.

Inquiries Invited. Ask about "Phonovisual in Action"
(16mm demonstration film with sound track). Write to:

PHONOVISUAL PRODUCTS, INC. Dept. EL-5
4708 Wisconsin Ave., Washington, D. C. 20016

In Canada: Educator Supplies, Ltd.
105 Falcon Street, London, Ontario

emerging problems is a conviction which, I believe, would enjoy very general support. In our time, at least to many of us, our institutions seem most ineffectual in the face of factors such as urbanization, rapid communication and transportation, wealth, increased leisure, safety in health and the like, all of which may bring new ideas, new modes of thought and action, and new values. A massive dose of tax money may somehow help parents to provide the instruction and supervision they now blissfully ignore and hopefully delegate. Such support might in part infuse new life into church education which now is known to be quite unsatisfactory. It may add something to a public school curriculum which is now already chock full of the teaching and preaching of morals.

Stability and Change in Human Characteristics. *Benjamin S. Bloom.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1964. 223 p.

Reviewed by ARLENE PAYNE, *The University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City, Kansas.*

The study reported in this book was an attempt to accomplish two major tasks: the proposal of hypothetical curves for the normal development of certain human characteristics, and the determination of the potential effect of environment in causing deviations from the normal pattern.

In conducting the study this author utilized the results of a large number of longitudinal studies reported by various investigators over the past several decades. He suggests that the similarity in results among these studies is indicative of a "lawfulness" that can

be a means for making educational research a more exact science. The curves of development are proposed as standards for comparison which can be used in studying the effects of environment on growth and which can serve as a basis for the interpretation of cross-sectional data.

The types of characteristics selected for investigation were those identified as "stable." These are described as characteristics having high correlations from one point of time to another, with individuals tending to retain their relative standings. The characteristics discussed in greatest detail are height, intelligence, general academic achievement, and certain personality traits.

The hypothesized curve of development for each characteristic gives the percent of the mature level that is typically attained at earlier ages. The curve for height of males (using age 18 as the mature level) indicates that, on the average, the individual will attain 30% of his mature height by birth, 54% by age 3, and 86% by age 12. Stated another way, 54% of mature height is gained between conception and age 3, and only 14% is gained between ages 12 and 18.

The hypothetical curve of development for intelligence shows a similar pattern. Using age 17 as the mature level, 50% of mature intelligence is developed by age 4, 30% is developed from ages 4 to 8, and 20% from ages 8 to 17. It is this picture of rapid early growth, with a diminishing growth rate as the individual approaches maturity, that the author proposes is typical of the stable characteristics with which he is concerned.

In deriving a curve for the develop-

ment of academic achievement, the type of measure selected as the best estimate was that of vocabulary development. From analyses of vocabulary data and comparisons with other achievement measures, the author concludes that the development of the "general learning pattern" also shows rapid early growth with a diminishing growth rate. Using age 18 (grade 12) as the criterion, he proposes that the child has attained about one-sixth of his general learning pattern by age 4, and about one-third by age 6. The half-development age is nine years (grade 3) and at least 75% of the pattern has developed by age 13 (grade 7).

No comparable developmental curve is given for personality traits but the author expresses the opinion that many of these traits follow the same general pattern as those described here.

Much of this book is devoted to the effects of environment on the development of the various characteristics. The effects of extreme environmental conditions (deprived or abundant) are discussed in terms of deviations from the curves of normal development. Hypothetical limits of these effects for different age periods are proposed for certain characteristics. For example, a child in a deprived environment from conception to age 3 may have a loss of as much as 2.7% in potential mature height. A similar environment from ages 3 to 12 could result in a loss of 1.6%, and from ages 12 to 18, 0.7%. The total effect of a deprived environment for the entire period could be a loss of 5% in mature height. The proposed effects of the abundant environment are of the same magnitude but on the positive side of the normal curve of development.

In regard to the development of intelligence, the effects of extreme environments are proposed in terms of gains or losses in I.Q. units. The extreme environment from birth to age 4 may cause a deviation of five I.Q. units in the mature level. The continuation of the same environment through age 17 may result in a total deviation from the normal of ten I.Q. units.

In reporting the analyses on which the proposed values are based, the author includes the results of his analyses of the relationships (or lack of) between gain scores and initial or final measures of the different characteristics. School personnel should benefit from his comments on this subject, particularly those in the section on academic achievement. He proposes that children affected by the same "powerful environment" (i.e., the combined home-school environment) will show the same amount of gain over any given period, regardless of relative initial standings. A major hypothesis is that the amount of gain is highly related to environment but is unrelated to initial measures.

The theme of this book can perhaps best be summarized in Dr. Bloom's own words: "The effect of deprivation or abundance is assumed to be greatest during the period of most rapid growth and least during the period of least rapid growth." He stresses the need for extensive research on the home and school environments and the effects of these environments on development during the preschool and early school years. We do not know whether losses suffered at one age in a deprived environment can be made up at a later age, even with the most desirable learning conditions.

Copyright © 1965 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.