

● Selected for Review

Reviewer: Carolyn E. Bowen

Children Under Pressure. Ronald C. Doll and Robert S. Fleming, editors. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1966. \$1.95.

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The main concern of Messrs. Doll and Fleming is centered on the scholastic pressures on today's children: where these pressures come from, what the social forces are that bring such pressures about, how the children and their parents react to them, what educators say about them, and finally, what action can be taken to relieve or reduce these pressures. Educators and parents share fairly equal billing as the sources of these pressures, with parents nosing ahead in some aspects. Those of us who claim both titles might well take time out to read *Children Under Pressure*.

Generally, 1957 is marked as the end of the B. P. era (before pressure). Not coincidentally it marked the beginning of the Sputnik era, and the "Junior Academic Rat Race" was on.

Our hopes for the future focused on our children. We concluded that the schools of the '50s were not preparing our children to keep abreast of the new scientific age; the schools of the future must. Just *how* to upgrade the schools was the problem. In too many instances the able students were given more work

to do, not necessarily better, just more. Even elementary children came home daily to face hours of homework. Material was being presented at an increasingly early age. Elementary teachers were pressured by the high school teachers, who in turn were pressured from the college level and they from parents and the national philosophy to turn out a superior finished human product.

So the child of today faces pressures from homework and the race for college, from too much competition, from parents—to excel not only academically but also in sports and socially, from overcrowded lives, from the conflicting values all too prevalent in today's society, from grouping and other school practices.

This then is the challenge to parents and teachers: to help the child adjust to these pressures, to help him operate at his optimum efficiency, to recognize the creative child, to revise our yard stick to measure potentially successful college students and adults, to help him develop greater appreciation of self, and, for the teacher, good, creative teaching, on as individual a basis as possible. A tall order? Yes, but one that must be met.

While I would prefer that the book give some concrete answers, it does offer much food for thought. ☞

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