

● Selected for Review

Reviewers: Franklin Parker
Edna Mitchell
Dwight W. Allen
Dorothy Kavanagh

The School and State in the USSR. *Herbert C. Rudman.* New York: Macmillan Co., 1967. 268 pp.

British Secondary Education. *Richard E. Gross, editor.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1965. 589 pp.

Scottish and English Schools: A Comparative Survey of the Past Fifty Years. *G. S. Osborne.* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1967. 351 pp.

Introduction to Education: A Comparative Analysis. *Donald K. Adams, editor.* Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1966. 392 pp.

—Reviewed by FRANKLIN PARKER, Professor of Education, University of Oklahoma, Norman.

Of this quartet of comparative education books, *British Secondary Education* is one of two anthologies. Editor Richard E. Gross of Stanford University, who visited British schools while serving as a Fulbright Professor at the University College of Swansea, has included descriptions of the full range of English secondary schools. The 24 contributors are headmasters or staff members of the variety of schools described.

The coverage is informative but understandably uneven.

Used in conjunction with a standard textbook on British education, this collection can give special understanding of the critical secondary school level where the greatest changes in British education are occurring. There are 21 useful illustrations and a good index.

The second anthology, *Introduction to Education: A Comparative Analysis*, has perhaps too wide a range of selections. These 56 readings are reasonably well grouped and some, like Harold Benjamin's "Saber-Tooth Curriculum" are old favorites. Yet the book does require a good bit of explanation and integration by the teacher if it is to provide the undergraduate student with the comparative analysis intended by the editor. The collection ends abruptly and the book lacks an index.

Scottish and English Schools is the most scholarly of the 4 books and is a fairly current analysis suitable for advanced graduate students. The author knows both school systems, having been Vice Principal of Aberdeen College of Education and former Assistant Director of Education in Derbyshire. He

deals at length with the subtle differences between the two closely related school systems. The book has a good historical section, is footnoted, and has an extensive bibliography, a glossary, 65 tables, and an index.

Although Soviet education has been extensively studied and much written about in recent years, few books have focused on the process of decision making and implementation from the top to the bottom of the Soviet hierarchy. *The School and State in the USSR* admirably fills this need. It is a major work which examines the complex interrelationship between the Communist Party, the State, and Soviet schools. It does this in an organized and understandable manner, making effective use of 16 tables and 30 figures. There are several appendixes and an index. The author visited the Soviet Union three times and headed a U.S. research team studying Soviet educational administration. 45

Supervision for Better Schools. 3rd Edition. **Kimball Wiles.** Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967.

—Reviewed by EDNA MITCHELL, Associate Professor of Education, William Jewell College; Research Associate, University of Missouri at Kansas City.

The current status of supervisors in today's schools, as reflected in the literature, is one of complexity if not sheer confusion. Recent developments in education have caused the author of *Supervision for Better Schools* to make a third revision of his book in an attempt to give a sound theoretical base to the supervision process.

The new edition retains much of the material of the previous work but includes important new features. There is an obvious effort to incorporate recent trends in supervision using these as a basis for interpreting future directions for change.

The attempt to spell out a formal theory of supervision illustrates the difficulty of defining a fluid condition. The assumptions upon which the theory is based are necessarily academic. The relevant concepts drawn from behavioral sciences reiterate the old, but still vital, ideas about learning through interaction and involvement, principles of group dynamics, the nature of leadership, and other rather obvious statements about communications and human relations.

Giving more substance to these skeletal statements is a reference key which indicates supporting research or opinion of recognized authorities. The reader is challenged to use this theoretical framework as a ground against which to test the remainder of the book or the reader's own philosophy and experience.

The book seems particularly strong in its presentation of supervision as a way of releasing human potential. The sections on the elements of supervision are excellent reading for developing insight about the dynamics of human relations, the uses of authority, the varieties of reactions to change, and the application of the counseling process in supervision.

Typical efforts of communication between supervisory personnel and teaching staff are analyzed and condemned as examples of failures in communication. While these channels are realistically criticized, no better suggestions

are seriously forthcoming. The workshop is a favored idea but is not very clearly developed.

A major part of the book is devoted to examining the role of the principal as a supervisor. Perhaps herein lies the most valuable application of the book as an introduction to the general field of supervision, particularly the preparation of the school principal.

The author recognizes the changing shape of supervision but the reader is forced to express disappointment over what appears to be a side-stepping of some of the most serious conflicts and dramatic changes in school supervision. One who believes strongly in a philosophy of staff development through principles which show respect for teachers as partners capable of sharing leadership, will still find it difficult to avoid reacting negatively to statements which have the ring of clichés and platitudes.

The real issue becomes one of a difference of emphasis on supervising functions. For example, in the first set of assumptions, the statement is made that "the difference between supervisor and teacher is more one of function than education and experience." This statement seems inadequate, with supervision emerging as a specialized professional area requiring specific skills in group process, research design and evaluation, and other ability and knowledge which equip the supervisor as a special agent for change.

Some of the specialized tools and techniques now offering such promise for the improvement of teaching and supervision were not mentioned. The varied uses of classroom interaction

analysis, the use of instant replay video, of closed circuit t.v., and other newly developing channels for staff improvement through supervisory leadership were omitted as fields for investigation.

The discussion of the dispersion of sources of pressure for innovation pointed up the fact that the supervisor is no longer the major initiator of change. The author may have been overly optimistic in his forecasts of great educational partnerships stimulating change progress through the applications of federal funds and more particularly through the influence of the Regional Educational Laboratories. More emphasis could have been placed on the healthy trend toward specific funds for local research as a basic part of each school system budget, although the suggestion for demonstration schools in each system touched upon this issue of systematic research and evaluation.

A major point of philosophical disagreement which seems to be emerging, hinges on the concept of supervision as a service role. The discussion of the future of supervision and the multiple sources of supervision does not analyze, in the vigorous fashion one would expect, the many specialized roles found in a modern supervisory team. Dr. Wiles treats the recent history of supervision in a clear and sympathetic manner.

The book, which might otherwise fill a critical need and which provides much insight regarding strategies of leadership, has two major weaknesses: (a) The author does not deal specifically with explanations of the changing struc-

tures and complex specialization of supervision utilized in schools of urban America. The picture of supervision is one of an amorphous vague position still viewed largely in the singular. (b) Trends in curriculum change and instructional improvement such as delegating supervision responsibilities for innovations coming from many directions, utilization of new techniques and media were not reviewed in the depth which their possible future relevance would indicate. ¶

The Comprehensive High School.
James B. Conant. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967. 95 pp.

Secondary School Teaching Methods. **Leonard H. Clark and Irving S. Starr.** New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967. 501 pp.

—Reviewed by DWIGHT W. ALLEN,
Dean, School of Education, University
of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Conant's *The Comprehensive High School* and Clark and Starr's *Secondary School Teaching Methods* speak to different populations about different concerns in secondary education. Conant would influence policy; Clark and Starr seek to mold prospective teacher behavior.

Conant's book, of special interest to all who read his "First Report," is a contribution to the profession. Comparing the status quo today with that of a decade ago regarding such questions as the adequacy of financing, staffing, course offerings, and counseling, the current report gives mild cause for optimism: "Courses in English composition are far better staffed than was the case ten years ago." "Considerable

progress has been made in the teaching of mathematics, science, and foreign languages." †

More powerful, however, is Conant's well-documented challenge to the reader: "The fact remains that well over 1,000 schools in the nation are not as well staffed as three quarters of the same type schools in a few states. Where is the doctrine of equality of opportunity?" The recurrent theme, in answer to this challenge, contends that the state and federal government must play a far greater role in financing public education.

In a book 100 pages long from title through appendix, Conant can deal only briefly with a vast topic, and with a discussion based largely on responses to questionnaires, he can scarcely make qualitative assessments of the nation's schools. In spite of these not inconsiderable limitations, the book is important for all, both in and outside the teaching profession, who care to have information for shaping and evaluating future educational policy. It is of special value to those who find themselves in the dilemma of wanting to support good schools while maintaining a local property tax level of tolerable proportions.

In fact, even the 14 pages of appendices, which present state-by-state comparisons on various criteria, may be sufficient justification for purchasing the book.

The "methods" book by Clark and Starr talks to teachers and aims at a qualitative dimension outside the scope of the Conant report. The book recognizes the current status and organization of the schools, and it attempts "to describe methods suitable for use in the

type of school in which the student is likely to teach when he goes to his first position."

While the authors designed the book primarily as a college text for a one-semester general methods course and secondarily as a reference work for student and in-service teachers, this reviewer would reverse the emphasis. The greatest strength of this compendium-like, 500-page document is to be found, not in its statements of theory, but in its wealth of specific examples which give meaning and a direction for action to the teacher confronted with any of a host of classroom problems involving questions of strategy. Perhaps it is just the reviewer's bias that such guides to action assume relevance and meaning primarily when the reader is in the classroom context where specific problems confront him and where the need for solutions or alternate strategies is pressing.

The following are examples of tactics or methods which Clark and Starr illustrate in considerable detail: using a behavior log; constructing sociograms; making diagnostic tests and performing an item analysis; having a repertoire of discipline techniques; developing lesson and unit plans; planning individualized procedures; using special strategies for remedial students; providing for various classroom activities; using free and inexpensive materials; developing a variety of evaluative procedures; and taking steps toward increased professionalism.

In a book of this sort there is always the danger of including many "should do's" without sufficient "how to's" to bridge the theory-practice gap. While

this book attempts, and in part succeeds in bridging this gap, the chasm still exists. For example, in the perennial problem area of discipline, one wonders how the teacher translates into action such idealistic advice as "a teacher needs a sense of humor and a sense of proportion," or "the teacher should also try to make the classroom a friendly place."

Clark and Starr write as editors rather than innovators, as proponents of a variety of schools of thought rather than just one, as disciples of both traditional and innovative practice. For example, they challenge the teacher both to make the cafeteria "a valuable educational experience" and to avoid wasting their time with tasks "which might better be turned over to machines" (or lunchroom supervisors?).

With one foot planted firmly in a traditional era and the other moving toward tomorrow, the book attempts to be all things to all people. In so doing, it lacks a conceptual and philosophic base of commitment which might allow it to be exciting and inspiring.

The Conant and Clark-Starr volumes accentuate a perplexing set of dilemmas. How do we build bridges between the policy-makers and the practitioners? Where do we start in the process of organizational and methodological change for schools? And what, specifically, is the education that we want? Education needs a pied piper—and Conant may claim to be one; the pied piper needs a tune—Clark and Starr would do well to select one; but just piping a tune of change is not enough. We still must find the right road and actually reach our destination.

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The Teaching of Reading in Our Schools. Ruth Reeves. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966. 120 pp.

Testing in Our Schools. Louis J. Karmel. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966. 112 pp.

The Teaching of Writing in Our Schools. Richard Corbin. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966. 118 pp.

The New Mathematics in Our Schools. Donovan A. Johnson and Robert Rahtz. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966. 192 pp.

The Teaching of Language in Our Schools. Miriam B. Goldstein. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966. 192 pp.

Preparing for College. Bette J. Soldwedel. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966. 117 pp.

—Reviewed by DOROTHY KAVANAGH, Director of Elementary Instruction and Curriculum, Public Schools, Dayton, Ohio.

Written as guidebooks for parents, these books vary in style and format with each of their respective authors. Suggestions for parents may appear at the end of each chapter, at the end of the last chapter, or interspersed throughout the book. Most readable in terms of vocabulary and style are *Testing in Our Schools* and *Preparing for College*.

The Teaching of Writing in Our Schools deals with the many aspects of writing—from the mechanics of handwriting to the composition of the college student. In addition, the author discusses motivation, grouping, quality of teaching, teachers' workloads, and grading. Mr. Corbin frequently wanders from his stated purpose to criticize

the work of the schools. For example, "At times, indeed, the school curiously resembles an army in its ability to mis-gauge and misdirect the human potential" (p. 13).

The Teaching of Language in Our Schools is a scholarly and sometimes technical description of explorations in the teaching of the English language. The author is all-inclusive, but draws few conclusions. For the uninitiated, frequent trips to the glossary will be necessary. The discussion of dictionaries should be helpful, especially to parents faced with the responsibility of having to choose one. Chapter 7 ("Is Literacy Enough?") deals with "humanistic education for the general student" and probably does the best job of explaining the overall concerns of the schools.

The Teaching of Reading in Our Schools is a very detailed account of every phase of the teaching of reading, with samples of materials from workbooks and tests. In fact, one wonders if all the detailed samples are necessary. Little emphasis is placed on listening, oral language, experience background, or individualized reading. The USOE reports are not discussed. Though the material is easily understood, detailed, and basically accurate, it seems to be a compilation of the author's reading and research and does little to involve the reader.

The New Mathematics in Our Schools explores the content of the first eight grades. The authors are generous with illustrations and provide practice exercises for readers at the end of each chapter (answers in the back of book). There seems to be a genuine effort on the part of the authors to build a good

background for parents to understand the mathematics content. A highly motivated reader could pursue the book alone. It has merit as a handbook for those who are providing courses for parents in elementary mathematics.

Testing in Our Schools provides easily understood and reassuring reading for parents. The "mystery" of tests is removed as Karmel clearly and carefully describes how tests can be useful in guiding a student's progress. He discusses group and individual intelligence tests, and points to their values when used along with other evidence. Aptitude and achievement tests, interest and personality inventories are described in detail, using "practice tests" for illustrations. One chapter deals solely with College Entrance Examinations. Stress is placed on the importance of these tests in helping the student

choose a college as well as for helping colleges in choosing among students.

Preparing for College begins with very frank questioning of the parents' and students' motivation for a college education. The rest of the book is a mini-guidance course for parents which discusses possibilities, raises questions, and suggests topics for child and parent to discuss. Each chapter suggests further reading. The parent without a college background should feel more comfortable after reading this book as every aspect of college selection is described. Deciding whether or not college is advisable, how to choose a college, what to do about rejections, finance, living away from home, and adjustments to college, are discussed in detail. Probably most important is the emphasis placed on the student's motivation and his choice of college. ☛

GUIDELINES for Elementary Social Studies

John Jarolimek

"In this fine booklet John Jarolimek first presents the current status and rationale for the social studies program in the elementary school. Then, recognizing that curriculum workers must choose among literally dozens of competing programs, he offers twelve guidelines as a basis for assessing the worth of an elementary social studies program."—J. HARLAN SHORES, President, ASCD

Pages: 40

Price: \$1:50

(Orders for \$2 or less must be accompanied by remittance.)

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