

## SELECTED FOR REVIEW

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**The World as Teacher.** Harold Taylor. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1969. 322 pp.

—Reviewed by LOUISE M. BERMAN, Professor of Education, University of Maryland, College Park, and Chairman, ASCD Commission on International Cooperation in Education.

In a challenging statement addressed to all persons in any way responsible for the education of children and youth, Harold Taylor, renowned educational philosopher, critic, and administrator, presents a sharply delineated case for the United States' assuming vigorous leadership in preparing its young to become citizens of the world. *The World as Teacher*, an outgrowth of a study conducted by the author through the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, essentially treats man's sojourn in space and his need to relate to his neighbors in other lands as well as those next door. The book is extremely contemporary and is packed with a wealth of illustrations and figures. Unlike many educational writers, however, Taylor has the facility to subordinate apt examples derived from his own experience and his AACTE study to the vital concerns to which he gives predominance.

The book is divided into five chapters and has a full appendix which describes, among other topics, aspects of the study not included in the central portion of the book. In Chapter I, Taylor describes "The Dimen-

sion of the Problem." He defines education as "the way in which each person becomes aware of himself and his place in the world at large, and learns best how to conduct himself in it and contribute to it" (p. 7). From this definition Taylor develops several themes which are treated in detail throughout the book. Other chapters deal with institutions which prepare teachers—particularly the failure of such institutions to incorporate an international dimension in the total of the teacher education program; "international experiences abroad and at home"—with special emphasis upon the Peace Corps; questions of certification; and "the cultural element in foreign policy."

A number of themes occur throughout the book, often expressed in poetic and stirring terms. One such theme is the problem of developing worthwhile commitments in our children and teachers. One of the ills from which the United States suffers today lies in the small vision which teachers, and in turn their students, create for themselves. Lack of commitment is perpetuated by inattention to demanding social and economic issues.

The attention of the educators has been turned inward and directed to a set of questions which in the long run are technical and organizational, assuming that the student is a standard human entity, with individual differences measurable by educational devices, and that teaching is a standard process in which the teacher is defined by the functions he fulfills and not by

the person he is. The *being* of the student and the teacher is therefore not a matter for educational concern. The main concern is in assuming the adequacy of the professional skills which student and teacher can acquire (p. 45).

In order to develop the commitments and responsibilities which should characterize the American life style, Taylor advocates much greater involvement of teachers and students in the community, "community" meaning the world. He points out that there is a difference "between possessing knowledge and using it" (p. 37). The task of the school is to establish settings where persons can apply the knowledge derived from the various disciplines to the solution of problems facing mankind everywhere. He points out that the United States might be used as a laboratory where persons from all parts of the world can gather to explore problems which all peoples share.

Another welcome theme is the attention to the potential impact of good teaching. The present system of teacher education is indicted for its failure "to touch the life of its students" (p. 89). "In the case of the teacher, the ultimate expression is found in what he leaves in the lives of others" (p. 91). Throughout the work the author makes reference to the potentiality for human good found in the art of teaching.

Central to Taylor's concerns is the necessity of a total revamping of curriculum so as to accommodate to themes common to all cultures. He suggests that the curriculum should contain far more of substance from Western cultures, should treat such concepts as how persons come to terms with their lives or how persons adapt responsibility to their conditions. What Taylor is suggesting does not involve a tinkering with existing courses or the addition of courses for the committed few. Rather, the curriculum needs a total overhaul and rethinking if America is to assume any leadership in a rapidly shrinking world.

Published on the brink of International Education Year and just prior to the ASCD World Conference on Education, *The World as Teacher* provides the stimulus and some guidance to those concerned that teachers

and students learn world citizenship. His ideas merit serious consideration and action. □

**Essays on World Education: The Crisis of Supply and Demand.** *George Z. F. Bereday, editor.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1969. 359 pp.

—Reviewed by NORMAN V. OVERLY, *Associate Secretary, ASCD.*

This book is a companion piece to Philip H. Coombs' *The World Educational Crisis: A Systems Analysis*, reviewed in this journal in the May 1969 issue. The essays form a part of the record of the International Conference on Education convened in 1967 at Williamsburg, Virginia.

While each chapter will have varying appeal to different individuals, several themes are stressed in many of the articles. The repetition of major points in the articles by international educators serves to underwrite the seriousness of the present crisis in education.

The first section of the book will have the widest appeal because each article focuses on a different educational concern. Yet readers should be encouraged to consider the second section, which includes brief appraisals of education by geographical areas. Even though such a presentation is likely to be superficial, each writer has selected wisely and well the aspects he highlights. Especially noteworthy is the chapter by Carlos P. Romulo with notes by P. N. Kirpal and Uday Shankar. In an age of flourishing nationalisms and rising aspirations, Romulo has sensitively pictured the involvement, willed or not, of the educator in a nation's development.

Two major themes, politics and economics, are found throughout the book as might be anticipated from the subtitle, "Supply and Demand." For educators as a whole, increased political involvement in education coincides with increasing professional competence. Just as educators are feeling better equipped to speak with authority, new forces are challenging that authority and making

conflicting demands. Not the least of these demands arises from the relationship of the world of work to education. Every nation is facing challenges to long-established attitudes toward education as individual and national goals are reevaluated. As Edding points out, an effective marriage of political and economic forces is dependent upon a will to achieve, modernize, and act rationally. The common crisis may ultimately turn out to be a crisis of will.

The essays focus on basic problems all educators need to contemplate. Too frequently American students of education take a very activist, parochial view of education. If American education is not to become a profession of technicians, its practitioners must give wider consideration to varying educational philosophies, goals, and organization. One of the more challenging ideas presented is Bereday's call for an "un-system" of education which would permit the deliberate fostering of educational chaos within which flexibility would be maximized. Torsten Husén's chapter will be of particular interest to those concerned about suggestions that U.S. education should be more elitist.

The chapter on "Formal and Informal Education," primarily based on Schwartz's French experience, is basic to understanding adult educational requirements in the present and future.

It is not possible to summarize each chapter here. Even though each can stand on its own, the total content presents an even more powerful statement. For those who cannot or will not read the whole book, special attention should be given to the chapters by King, Bowles, Butts, Porter, and Kerr, besides those previously mentioned. □

**Developing Nongraded Schools.** *Sidney P. Rollins.* Itasca, Illinois: F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 1968. 275 pp.

—Reviewed by EDWARD G. HUNT, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Warwick, Rhode Island.

In his latest book Dr. Rollins writes knowledgeably about nongraded schools, a

topic to which he brings considerable expertise. Having served as a consultant in the planning of Middletown High School, a pioneer effort in Rhode Island, and as a consultant to the nongraded Nova Schools in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Dr. Rollins is able to combine the insights gained from firsthand experience to the promising ideas he puts forward as a curriculum specialist. He knows what schools are like now and what they can become if the nongraded concept is fully realized. His book offers concrete and helpful suggestions to all who would assist in the process.

The rationale behind the concept is certainly a valid one. Educators have talked for many years about the need to gear instruction to the individual needs and differences of their pupils, but the traditional graded structure of our schools effectively prevents this. The practice of dividing a child's academic career into 12 or 13 "grades" of equal length is based upon the false premise that all children develop at the same pace in all academic areas at all stages of their development.

Teachers' striving frantically to "cover" all of the material listed for a particular year in a textbook or curriculum guide is a common problem. The annual trauma of promotion or nonpromotion and the ego-shattering experience of "repeating" a grade (which research has repeatedly shown to be an unproductive procedure) are also related. Schools remain group-oriented rather than sensitive to the needs of the individual learner.

The author makes it clear that shifting from graded to nongraded schools is not merely an organizational change but one that involves philosophical considerations, a different role for the teacher, a new approach to curriculum sequencing, and predictable problems in school administration. While he does not minimize the difficulties of making the transition, he does give considerable attention to these aspects of the problem and in many cases is able to suggest innovative solutions.

The role of the teacher is, according to the author, sharply different in a nongraded school. For one thing, the teacher must talk much less and become much more of a

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group leader. De-emphasis upon the traditional lecture method demands greater proficiency in multimedia techniques. A broader view of curricular programs is needed and an ability to participate in working instructional groups that may include "floating" teachers and paraprofessionals. Fluidity in student grouping is also a must for the teacher in a nongraded school.

Individualized progress in many subject fields will greatly increase the teacher's burden of pupil record-keeping, and the constant regrouping of children will pose a unique scheduling problem. Reporting pupil progress to parents is also complicated by the new approach. Dr. Rollins hopes that electronic data processing and teacher aides will be utilized more effectively in solving such problems.

Dr. Rollins summarizes: "If we really accept the notion that pupils deserve the chance to progress as rapidly as they are able, or as slowly as they must, and if we accept the notion that children differ in their abilities to learn and in the ways they learn, then we need to give careful consideration to developing nongraded schools." □

**A Public School for Tomorrow.** *Marion Nesbitt.* Paperback Edition. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1967. 168 pp.

—Reviewed by SARAH H. LEEPER, Professor of Education, University of Maryland, College Park.

In *A Public School for Tomorrow*, Marion Nesbitt actually describes the public school so desperately needed *today*. Such an elementary school is characterized as:

A good place for children to live and learn and grow, a place that is warm and accepting of human hopes and frailties, a place where learning is stimulating and challenging, recognizing that facts are for the illumination of ideas, a place where there are values and ideals toward which one strives, a place where one always holds out hope, knowing that to despair of a child is to make him desperate (p. 150).

Many who accept these ideals for a school believe them to be practical only in select situations. In the heart of Richmond,

Virginia, however, is Maury School, in which these ideals have been and are being translated into practice and have been found to be successful. The building is not new. It was built in 1888. In the words of the author, "the school neighborhood reflects the increased mobility of our society. There are more broken homes, more mothers who work, more moving from school to school, from community to community, from city to city" (pp. xv-xvi). Some of the children come from prominent families in the city while others are from families supported by the city. The academic abilities represented here vary widely. Surely if the philosophy is applicable in such a situation it can, with wise leadership, be applied anywhere.

A description of the school, the children, the parents, and the community provides a setting for the curriculum which has been developed. Here, says the author, "There is a common bond by which all in this school are held together. It is in the acceptance of each individual, in a feeling for people, a love for humanity, that all are bound together" (pp. 3-4). Since the quality of the school life is dependent upon cooperative planning for the solution of problems, the types of planning and the activities for which plans are made are discussed.

The school philosophy holds that children are learning with their entire selves. So playing, eating, and resting are considered an integral part of the curriculum. Activities in the arts permeate the total life of the school. In one chapter, "We Listen, We Talk, We Read, We Write," the language arts activities are described. In other chapters the opportunities for experiences in mathematics and science are presented. Opportunities for

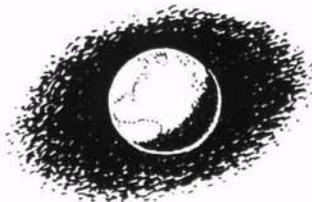
seeking to live well with others as well as for being at "One with Our Community" are described in a very beautiful and sensitive manner.

The book does not deal in generalities. Some of the processes, the human relationships, and the materials which seem necessary to produce the kind of environment where such living and learning can take place are described in detail. The examples of children's activities, speech, and writing are described with rare skill and insight.

For teachers, principals, superintendents, supervisors, students, and laymen this book offers support, encouragement, and practical help. Here one finds a school which provides for the individual as well as the group; encourages the push and drive which come from the internal involvement of the learner; works closely with parents as partners; and exemplifies the humanistic approach to education. Persons involved in teacher education can find direction for their work with the prospective teacher.

In the words of the author, "The curriculum at Maury is constantly being refined in the light of present-day practices and trends. But the direction is not changed, for the direction lies in the democratic processes of life (p. xvii). . . . the basis for action still lies in humanism, for the curriculum is now as always centered in human values and human interests" (p. xvi).

This new edition, now available in paperback, contains the foreword to the original edition by William H. Kilpatrick as well as a foreword to the new edition by Rodney Tillman. Marion Nesbitt, the author, has written a new introductory statement for this edition. □



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