

SELECTED FOR REVIEW

Reviewers: Milton Gold
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The Changing Secondary Curriculum: Readings. William M. Alexander. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969. 479 pp.

—Reviewed by MILTON GOLD, Dean of Programs in Education, Hunter College of the City University of New York, New York.

In these strange times I find it necessary to submit a dual review of the Alexander volume of readings on the secondary school curriculum. One of these reviews is for myself as a professor in the educational establishment approximately in Alexander's generation; while the second is a putative review for my youngest daughter who is a high school senior. I hope that readers of this review will scan both sections.

I

As a member of the establishment I read the book with appreciation of the numerous selections chosen with exquisite taste. They give in capsule form a good picture of the bases of the secondary curriculum, of the curriculum as it is, of the curriculum as reformers would like it to be, and an idea of the considerations that are essential if change is to take place.

While books of readings often leave much to be desired because they do not seem to hang together properly, this volume does extremely well: with its juxtaposition of articles that present different points of view,

it yet maintains a flow of thought that would do credit to a volume written by a single person. The reader is exposed to some of the most thoughtful people writing in the field, and I would hope that the instructors in courses in which the book is being used would stimulate subsequent reading of entire volumes by the same writers.

Alexander has chosen articles describing present status in each subject field so well that they do a better job than is encountered in most texts on secondary curriculum. He has wisely let the professional association in each field speak for itself.

The one question that is not raised is the following: If the aims and the organization of each field are as good as their proponents claim them to be, why is it that the typical graduate of American high schools achieves so poorly in written and spoken communication, in exercise of citizenship, in appreciation of the arts, and why does he fail to demand more substantial output from the mass media? A similar question can be addressed in fields of vocational preparation, sciences, and the cultural heritage.

I must admit, therefore, that I am disappointed in the shortage of really original ideas with respect to fundamental curricular changes. The statement by Reid and Shaw comes closer to kicking over the traces than do the others. Perhaps this is true because the architectural orientation of the authors is free of the preconceptions of persons who

are prisoners of their own experience as professional educators.

It may be time for us to question the whole organization of secondary education. Have we expected too much of the high school as a day school when we contrast it with the possibilities of a year-round living experience which is found both in practice in the kibbutzim in Israel and in theory in Skinner's *Walden Two*? The traditional concept of keeping young people off the labor market in full-time schools may have to be contrasted with a system of schooling, from age 14 on, coexisting with part-time paid work experience.

Dealing with all 12- to 18-year-olds in substantially the same way (full-time formal education for all) denies the doctrine of individual differences and obviously works poorly for many young people. It is possible that we have gone as far as we can in tinkering with the present high school curriculum. We may find it necessary to try some fundamental and different approaches if we are to come up with a superior product.

2

I am not making any guess as to how representative of high school seniors my daughter Janice may be. She will take umbrage, however, at this volume's complete disregard of the student as a participant in establishing the aims, selecting content, and determining procedures. As one reads the book, it is quite obvious that education is something which is designed for and thrust upon high school students because the establishment in its wisdom has all the answers and possibly has very little respect for young people growing up inside a system that purports to be democratic.

Times have moved so rapidly since 1967, when the book was published, and 1965, which tends to be the latest date of publication of articles inside the book, that the issue of "relevance" is completely overlooked. Student unrest and dissatisfaction with the status quo were scarcely visible just a few years ago and now are possibly the most important concern to which we can address ourselves. There is accordingly no

attention to issues of civil rights, "student power," the effects of an unpopular war, threats of atomic world suicide, preoccupation with life for the sake of mere living as exhibited in the manner of the mammoth "rock" festivals, and the search for "free" experience via drugs and hallucinogens.

In general, school curricula have been predicated upon *a priori* assumptions external to the individual concerning needs for education in an adult world. They have not been updated to look existentially at the personal needs of the student himself for expression and for living for its own sake.

As a result, the many fine statements in this volume can well be regarded by the high school generation as the imposition *ex cathedra* of adult values and concerns rather than the development from within of the individual's needs, interests, concerns, and feelings. Is it possible that the schools in this way share with other institutions in our society a failure to develop a sense of participation and responsibility on the part of young people because imposition, rather than participation, is offered?

I suspect that practically all texts currently available for graduate and undergraduate programs of teacher education share this failure to recognize what is valid in present student unrest. As new texts are written, they will not be "relevant" if they do not prepare teacher candidates to understand a radically transformed attitude on the part of their future students, particularly in high schools and colleges. □

Supervision: A Synthesis of Thought and Action. *William H. Lucio and John D. McNeil.* Second Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1962, 1969. 329 pp.

—Reviewed by CLAUDIA PITTS, *Elementary Supervisor, Arlington County Public Schools, Arlington, Virginia.*

Supervisors who are seeking a definition of roles will find many ideas in this treatment of supervision. This second edition reiterates the theme advanced in the first edition that supervision is a process that re-

quires "super-vision acquired through special preparation and insight."

The distinction is made between the supervisor who performs certain tasks and the supervisor who is a "statesman" who "makes decisions for achieving the purposes of the school using the method of reason and practical intelligence." The authors proceed to detail this method in the book.

The history of supervision has been brought up-to-date with emphasis on its changing roles and the addition of the many different titles of persons performing supervisory activities. A significant section of part one discusses role theory and role expectations.

Throughout the book, theories are enunciated which permit supervisors to chart a course of action if they can accept the philosophy of these authors: "The philosophy of advocating instructional improvement through supervision by objectives which consists of a continuous process of examining and modifying (a) objectives, (b) methods for achieving them, and (c) indicators of attainment and their consequences."

There is a wealth of research cited to support the theories advanced. The authors also have included many excerpts of speeches by persons who have made thoughtful study of the important aspects of supervision.

Prospective supervisors, who use this book as a text, will find the discussions of "How Supervisors and Teachers Perceive Each Other," in Chapter 7, and "Factors in Learning and Supervisory Behavior," in Chapter 9, of particular interest and helpful as a resource.

The human and technical skills which are needed in the performance of successful supervision have received adequate treatment. This reviewer found Chapter 12, "A Rationale for Development of Curriculum," to be especially noteworthy as a statement seeking to clarify the recent controversy on stating objectives and on evaluation of teacher performance.

Since the authors state that they have not attempted to present a prescriptive program but have requested readers to question and to adapt, this book should be "must"

reading for discussion and study by supervisory staffs as well as by prospective supervisors. □

Planning for Effective Utilization of Technology in Education. *Edgar L. Morphet and David L. Jesser, editors. Designing Education for the Future, No. 6. New York: Citation Press, 1969. 372 pp.*

Teaching Children About Technology. *Mary-Margaret Scobey. Bloomington, Illinois: McKnight & McKnight Publishing Company, 1968. 414 pp.*

—Reviewed by PAUL W. F. WITT, Professor of Education, Michigan State University, East Lansing.

The history of the advent and rise of technology in American education during the present century is the story of most innovative developments in the institutions of man. Always there has been the little band of believers who had the vision of what technology has to offer for the improvement of teaching and learning. The dominant role in curriculum development, however, has been in the hands of professional educators (the establishment) who took little or no note of the emerging technology or who believed that its potential for teaching and learning was of limited or insignificant consequence. As a result, schools and colleges have been slow to adopt the materials and methods of technology; and past predictions, such as those made at the close of World War II that audio-visual instruction would become commonplace in schools and colleges, have, in the main, failed to materialize. (In industrial and military training the picture is much brighter, since the growth of instructional technology there has been much more rapid and productive.)

The zealotry of the early advocates of technology in education and their sometime lack of complete understanding of the educative process (a lack they shared with many other educators) undoubtedly gave some credence to the epithet, "gadgeteer," with which they were frequently labeled. Nevertheless, a retrospective appraisal of the

experiences teachers and learners have had with graphic and pictorial images, recorded audio and visual stimuli, broadcast sights and sounds, and pedagogical procedures such as programmed instruction and computer-assisted instruction, gives strong support to the early claims of pioneers in this field. These claims have held that technology can make highly important contributions to the general education of children, youth, and adults as well as to their specialized preparation and training in professional and vocational fields.

Increasingly, curriculum planners and educational innovators are recognizing these facts. Educators today are faced with the twin explosions in population and in knowledge and with the ever-increasing demands of a highly interdependent world society as well as the tragic and foreboding facts that traditional educational programs and practices are no longer appropriate or sufficient for modern man. Educational planners and innovators, therefore, are giving serious consideration to instructional technology and are trying to utilize its resources and techniques to create functional curricula for today's learners that will enable them to learn effectively, efficiently, and with satisfaction and pleasure.

An example of the current interest of both laymen and professionals in the use of technology in education is to be found in *Planning for Effective Utilization of Technology in Education*. This book, the sixth in a series produced by an Eight-State Project entitled, "Designing Education for the Future," is composed of the 34 papers that were prepared by 39 "authorities" from industry and education for a conference which was held in Denver in May 1968. (The first two publications in the series were reviewed by William Van Til in the February 1969 issue of *Educational Leadership*.)

It is obvious, in the views of the authors of these papers, that we live in a rapidly changing, increasingly technological society; that society is making greater and greater demands on schools and colleges; that society's future depends in large measure on the effectiveness and speed with which edu-

cation responds to and satisfies these demands; and that education must employ technology appropriately and effectively in order to meet the demands being made of it.

This book offers no specific blueprint for utilizing technology in education, but it does contain a wealth of ideas, suggestions, and recommendations which educational planners, at local and state as well as at higher levels, will find worthwhile. True, many of the ideas and suggestions are not new. Some differences in opinion are evident. Nonetheless, an idea such as that advanced in the opening chapter, that modern man "can select and can achieve his own future," deserves serious and careful consideration. Indeed, it is both sobering and exciting to be faced with the challenge that modern man need only "write his own scenario of the future as he himself dreams it and then to live his own drama."

Meriting equally serious thought and attention is the realistic appraisal of the social and economic factors that facilitate and/or inhibit the introduction and advancement of technology in education which is presented in the final two chapters. In the 13 chapters between, the reader is reminded of the nature of society and what it needs from education; the pitfalls as well as the advantages of technology; the nature and importance of planning; state and local responsibilities for planning; the importance of the systems approach in planning; the changing roles of educators in the use of technology; and the need for changes in the professional preparation of teachers and other educators.

While the word technology in the titles of the two books being reviewed here suggests that they deal with the same subject, they are actually distinctly different in purpose and content. In *Teaching Children About Technology*, Dr. Scobey refers primarily to industry when she uses the term technology. She writes that her book is an attempt "to develop insights and present methodological suggestions that will help children understand industry and live intelligently in a world of technology." It is her intention "to provide useful information about industry

as an aid to teachers in planning curricular experiences for children."

The book is in three parts. Part I "provides a theoretical and pedagogical basis for the study of technology in the elementary school." Industrial processes and trends are described encyclopedically in Part II. Part III contains suggestions for classroom activities intended to help children understand better the world of technology.

This is a methods book for preservice and in-service teachers, especially those who work in self-contained elementary school classrooms and who attempt to teach children to use hand tools and then to use those tools to make articles which will enable them to know and understand better various cultures and ethnic groups of the past and present. □

Crisis in Television: A Study of the Private Judgment and the Public Interest. Solomon S. Simonson. New York: Living Books, Inc., 1966. 229 pp.

TV as Art: Some Essays in Criticism. Patrick D. Hazard, editor. Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1966. 221 pp.

Literature and Technology—The Alien Vision. Wylie Sypher. New York: Random House, 1968. 257 pp.

—Reviewed by KITTI CULVER, Consultant, Educational Media Utilization, Dade County Public Schools, Miami, Florida.

The first two books reviewed here are concerned with television. The third deals with the relationship between literature, technology, and the arts.

Crisis in TV is well organized, is written clearly, and deserves to be read. Dr. Simonson pleads his case well in his brief introduction to the book. He feels that "television is a precious pearl in that it can attract and communicate instantaneously to both eyes and ears of masses." He challenges the reader to choose wisely from the "pearls both precious and paste." The stated aims of the book: to assist us in differentiating between the precious and the paste, to permit us to

choose from the vast library of television programs, to give us criteria for judgment and appreciation that will help us to improve the weak and to approve the strong, are accomplished admirably.

The book is divided into three parts: "Behind the Electronic Curtain," "In Your Private Judgment," and "In the Public Interest." In the 14 chapters which make up these three parts, Dr. Simonson covers in depth the three major functions of communication as related to television: entertainment, education, and propaganda. "No Accounting for Tastes," the chapter on entertainment, is very thoroughly written, and television's relationship to three of the six stages of human response is nicely developed.

Features of this book that are worthy of attention are the footnotes and the appendixes. The author's delightful coining of words and his interpretations of both entertaining and educational television programs would be enjoyable reading for the educator, parent, or student.

In Chapter 11 on "How To Watch Television," the author gives six ways of watching television and perceives "creative participation" as the ultimate mode of watching.

Dr. Simonson has added a "Note to Educators" which cross-references the chapters within the book with the seven disciplines: English, Psychology, Education, Sociology, Speech, Political Science, and Journalism.

TV as Art, containing a series of essays in criticism of significant TV programs, is very comprehensive in scope. In reflecting on the purpose of the essays, the editor states that the TV critic's task is to make the viewers as aware as possible of what a TV program is. Certainly, the nine essays which follow this brief introduction, "Some Reflections," do just that.

The essay on politics and mass communication presents a critical analysis of the volume, *Making of the President, 1960*. The author challenges the broadcasters to editorialize more. In discussing the program, "Meet the Press," the author contends that television has performed a public service in airing controversy.

One essay explores in depth popular cul-

ture, while another, "Ethos by Esso," critiques "In What America." More than one essay emphasizes the theory that we can learn as much from bad as from good (television). The essay, "Shakespeare on the Screen," discreetly places the bard's works high on the list for possibilities via television, citing the flexibility of place, the mobility of viewpoint, the variation of imagery, which television makes possible, as a means of giving understanding to Shakespeare that has not been possible in theaters of a past generation.

The essay on "Television and the Culture of a Child" is a critic's delight. Here is an excellent explanation of how television stimulates the child and of the child's response to television. The next two essays on "Children's TV" are more technical in detail. The last and ninth essay deals with the "Story of a Newspaper Man." This is a film and the author relates his use of the film in his English classes.

In general, the essays are well written and, without exception, fit the purpose of the collection: explication of significant TV programs. The essayists are outstanding educators and two of the consultant readers of the manuscript are John M. Culkin, S.J., Fordham University, and Edward Stanley, formerly with the National Broadcasting Company. Not only should teachers of English enjoy this volume, but educators involved in television programming and production will find it most enlightening.

The third book, *Literature and Technology—The Alien Vision*, very thoroughly explores the unacknowledged or understressed relations between technology and the arts. The author states very aptly his criticism of Marshall McLuhan's theories of the visual and the position of Freud in his double interpretation of art. He weaves throughout the six areas of the book the definition of the poet as related to the romantics, the aesthetics, and the impressionists, and relates the influence of technology on each group.

This is a rather comprehensive book and might well be read thoughtfully by all who have an interest in literature and art. □

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