

## **SELECTED FOR REVIEW**

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A. Harry Passow  
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**Education: A Beginning.** William Van Til. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1971. 591 pp.

**Curriculum: Quest for Relevance.** William Van Til, editor. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1971. 390 pp.

—Reviewed by ROBERT B. NORDBERG, Professor and Director of Graduate Education, School of Education, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

A similar viewpoint pervades these two volumes by the Coffman Distinguished Professor in Education at Indiana State University. *Education: A Beginning* is for students intending to teach and for new teachers. It surveys teaching as a profession, dealing with a range of questions from "What's a school for, anyway?" to "What are teachers paid?" The material divides into decisions about teaching, the nature of American schools, foundations of education, and problems of the new teacher.

*Curriculum: Quest for Relevance* is designed for use in a variety of curriculum courses and is offered as different from its competition because "its contents focus on

today and tomorrow, rather than on yesterday." Some of the 42 contributors are John Holt, James Herndon, Jonathan Kozol, Theodore Brameld, and Robert J. Havighurst. "We must leave to some future anthologist the task of reporting conservative counter-criticisms of the curriculum . . .," states Van Til. Whether he must or not, he did. This anthology divides into current criticisms of the curriculum, curriculum for the 1970's, and a look at the future. Style in the collection varies with contributors. Professor Van Til's style in the text is brisk and business-like, sometimes at the price of oversimplification.

How well does each book achieve its purpose? Are the purposes worth achieving? If Van Til's text is intended to arouse interest in the teaching profession, to raise the gamut of questions its members need to pursue, and to provide a sort of handbook set of answers, it probably will succeed very well. (It is attractively gotten up with alternating black and blue type. There are so many illustrations, one begins to wonder whether any American schoolchild was excluded.) If the purpose is to make prospective teachers

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aware of their ultimate assumptions and to criticize same in the light of an adequate knowledge of a number of philosophical traditions, the text is likely to fail. For one thing, chapters 16 and 17 on these issues are shallow and label-prone, just enough to wet one's feet. For another, the only philosophical system which receives an exposition its partisans would probably accept as adequate is Instrumentalism.

The history of educational thought jumps from Aristotle to Comenius (about 2,000 years), completely ignoring the early Christian and Scholastic traditions. Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and their ilk receive due notice, but the unreserved plaudits are saved for John Dewey. He was "an extraordinary man," "a towering figure in philosophy," the one man who reconciled the emphases of lesser figures such as Kilpatrick, Counts, and Bode. In the anthology, the eulogy of Dewey is found again: "... this incredible man," etc.

The reviewer, while finding Dewey a singularly vague and pedestrian writer, one of the few men who could have produced 23,000 pages without saying anything particularly pithy, quotable, or even clear, does not deny to anyone the right to be an Instrumentalist or the right to consider Dewey a great thinker and a great writer. The point is, rather, that students lacking much philosophical background are not getting their due assistance in arriving at their own set of positions on the nature of man, the nature and grounds of knowledge, and the purposes of education, unless the material on these subjects is presented at a genuinely philosophical level and gives a full and competent statement of a variety of conflicting metaphysical and epistemological positions. In fact, they are laid open to one of the worst educational outcomes: to think they know a subject when they do not.

This is not to suggest that Professor Van Til produced a piece of propaganda. One feels that he was at pains to be fair to all viewpoints, but he did not get the job done. For example, there is a chapter on the roles of independent and parochial schools which meticulously cites the celebrated Oregon Decision of 1925 and samples from some rec-

ognized authorities on Catholic and other religious education. At the same time, one does not find the names of more traditionally oriented Catholic educational theorists such as Vincent E. Smith and Benedict M. Ashley or the statements of the Church itself such as the *Gravissimum Educationis* of Vatican II. Rather than stressing what a religiously oriented school is, the chapter talks about what it is not, from a secular viewpoint: It is not always open to all students, etc.

The selection of contributors for the anthology is open to the same criticism. The editor admits this one-sidedness, but that does not justify it. Both of these volumes, in short, are of some value, but one-sided and disinclined to come to grips with the deepest issues in education in general and curriculum in particular. If used, these volumes should be supplemented by other reading which will make students aware of other theorists and other theories. □

**Curriculum Improvement for Better Schools.** *Jack R. Frymier and Horace C. Hawn.* Worthington, Ohio: Charles A. Jones Publishing Company, 1970. 270 pp.

—Reviewed by A. HARRY PASSOW, Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City.

Frymier and Hawn argue that curriculum workers at the local district level have simply been responding to external forces and events and must now "assume primary responsibility for beginning and continuing curriculum development efforts" (p. 2). What is more, they maintain, such efforts "can only be effective if they are predicated upon information generated from careful evaluations of curriculum changes undertaken by the district" (p. 2). The external sources—university-based, government-backed, and foundation-supported—have led curriculum workers to interpret their role as one of considering and adapting programs developed elsewhere rather than perceiving that local districts "can and should serve as the driving force and organizing center for curriculum ventures of all kinds" (p. 3).

This book, as Frymier and Hawn state at the beginning of their final chapter, provides details about one approach to curriculum improvement, an approach that emphasizes evaluation and research as an alternative to passive adaptation of curriculum produced elsewhere. The book is addressed to all curriculum workers, but especially to the supervisor.

The instructional leader's role is one of changing curriculum "so that more and more children will have ever increasing opportunities to experience and benefit from rejuvenated and revised educational programs" (p. 20). If such changes are to occur, Frymier and Hawn suggest, the *effectiveness* question involving evaluation and corrective feedback must replace the *frequency* and *efficiency* questions that are more usually asked about programs, materials, and strategies.

Fourteen "principles"—five philosophical, four psychological, and five operational—are expounded as the context for suggestions about how to start, how to organize for change, how to study the curriculum in action, how to communicate, and how to influence others about curriculum matters.

Five chapters are devoted to illustrative curriculum improvement efforts, each containing one or more examples, "quasi case study in form." These studies are drawn from the authors' experience in a medium-sized district they call "Riverside." These curriculum studies involve the community, students, organizational factors, content, and teachers. For example, two illustrations are provided of studies of community-related problems—one of vocational opportunities and another of the number and characteristics of children in the district who are educationally deprived.

Four case studies deal with the relationship of readiness scores to academic achievement, the grading and marking practices, academic failure, and student motivation to achieve. Class size, departmentalization in an elementary school, and transition between school levels provide the foci for studies of organization. The MSG mathematics program is compared with traditional math in a case study involving content. Finally,

there is an example of an in-service program designed to help teachers work with inner city children.

The curriculum studies generally follow the form of statement of the problem, the procedures used, the results, and recommendations for action. The final chapter discusses general principles of curriculum improvement—such efforts must be comprehensive, systematic, and democratic, and must possess integrity, validity, and reality.

Frymier and Hawn are committed to the basic proposition that "improving program through curriculum evaluation and curriculum research is an effective approach" (p. 237). There are other dimensions of curriculum design, pedagogy, and instruction with which the authors do not deal adequately. While making a clear and cogent case for curriculum evaluation as a basis for change, and while distinguishing between curriculum improvement and maintenance tasks, they tend to slight analysis of the design and development of new content, materials, strategies, and relationships. In urging an approach involving evaluation and research "as a vehicle for deliberate, thoughtful curriculum change," they provide the reader with specific, tested techniques with which to assess educational needs and determine effectiveness of innovations. □

**Curriculum Guidelines in an Era of Change.** *Vernon E. Anderson.* New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1969. 114 pp. Available from Student Supply Store, University of Maryland, College Park.

—Reviewed by JOSEPH W. CRENSHAW, Chief, Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction, Florida State Department of Education, Tallahassee.

*Curriculum Guidelines in an Era of Change* is a book somewhat larger in scope than its small size (114 pp.) and its title might imply. Certainly the topics covered do include the demands for change and the increasing tempo of curriculum innovations. But, as well, the work includes a rather thorough analysis of the power forces at work,

a competent overview of the change process and the adoption of new ideas, and, in what may very well be regarded as a key section of the book, a brief but fruitful discussion of what could be considered under the heading, "The Future of Supervision."

The "era of change," then, of which Dr. Anderson speaks is much broader than the turbulent era of the late 1960's and our present early 1970's. The author makes this point:

When my little grandchildren speak of "yesterday," they mean any day in the past which they can remember. Their "tomorrows" take in anytime in the foreseeable future. I sometimes wonder if their concept of "tomorrow" isn't more realistic than mine (p. 52).

Continuing the *motif* of the future, the author points up probably as well as it has ever been done how difficult it is to change, but how we *must* change. Given this assumption, one follows the author's logical thought toward and through the knotty problems of the rapidity of change and the difficulty of adapting to it. As a case in point, the author states:

Today's accelerated pace of change has made local curriculum programs which focus on revising courses of study as outmoded as the steam engine . . . (p. 24).

Yet there is still more than enough work for supervisors and curriculum developers, for:

. . . the new forces in curriculum-making and the many new devices and programs appearing on the market make a continuing study of curriculum necessary (p. 24).

Anderson goes on to lay out the parameters of the problems we shall face; some possible spheres of leadership direction; and finally, in two appendices, a set of criteria for selecting innovations, and a concise outline for working with groups and individual teachers to improve instruction.

In all, *Curriculum Guidelines in an Era of Change* is a valuable book. It is concise and readable, it contains a cogent overview of our present age of stormy growth, and it points the way to the light at the end of the

tunnel. In addition, it is a helpful book, one that firing-line supervisors and curriculum directors will use at work.

The "era of change" which Anderson envisions goes on well into the future. It is good to know that journey is not totally unknown. Though no one can fully know the future, it is well that men like Anderson have begun to chart the way. □

**Linguistics, Phonics, and the Teaching of Reading.** *Emerald Dechant.* Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 1969. 184 pp.

**Reading Improvement in the Elementary School.** *Donald C. Cushenbery.* West Nyack, New York: Parker Publishing Company, Inc., 1969. 199 pp.

—Reviewed by MARYANNE HALL, Associate Professor of Education, University of Maryland, College Park.

In effecting improvement in reading programs, Cushenbery seeks to reach the in-service teacher, and his material stresses basics—not the novel or the innovative. His book is less voluminous than most methods textbooks typically aimed at the undergraduate and, thus, is not as comprehensive. However, the purpose, which may be considered both a strength and a weakness of the publication, is to provide a general overview instead of thorough theoretical discussions. Cushenbery states his purpose is "to present useful suggestions for the classroom teacher; to include straightforward, pointed discussions which would lend insights into various reading concepts; and to provide the reader with data concerning available books, materials, and other aids." The major strength of the book is related to the third goal since the extensive appendices covering book clubs, periodicals for children, an annotated professional text list for teachers, a professional journal list, and instructional materials do indeed answer many teachers' questions about resources.

The background material seems to have a basal reader orientation and to include aspects of what is frequently termed the

"conventional wisdom" which is open to question currently. For example, many readers will question statements such as, "Any child whose reading instructional level is below that of his grade can properly be classified as a retarded reader," or "The most vital and significant aspect of learning to read is the recognition of words." However, the author does have a strong chapter on comprehension and does emphasize the importance of meaningful reading.

The concept of attaining a mental age of six and a half before formal reading instruction is begun is outdated, as is stress on developing a sight vocabulary of 50-100 words before word attack skills are introduced. The latter idea is out of order with the stress on visual and auditory discrimination in prereading programs and with the earlier introduction of letter-sound relationships in recent basal series.

The book is logically organized with chapters on the reading process, reading readiness, primary reading, intermediate grades, word attack skills, comprehension, content area reading, current approaches, evaluation, and federally funded programs. Suggestions for teaching are included in connection with each major instructional concern. Sound principles of effective instruction based on individualization and grouping, diagnostic teaching, and using a variety of approaches and materials are the foundation for Cushenbery's philosophy for achieving improvement in reading.

A reading program must provide a child with a "coding system" which enables him to attack new words with ease and accuracy. Dechant designates his system as "linguistic phonics," which he defines as the study of the structure of language through the study of symbol-sound relationships in whole words. His book is designed to equip teachers with the knowledge both of content and of techniques to help children develop their personalized coding systems. Dechant maintains that this additional book on phonics is needed because the significant advances in linguistic knowledge have not been used in the teaching of phonics. His point that linguistic and phonics knowledge needs to be

interrelated by the teacher of reading in determining word attack instruction is certainly justified.

Linguistic bases for reading need to be offered by linguists to educators, and linguistic knowledge can lead to improvement in reading programs. The danger is that linguistics may be equated with teaching the phoneme-grapheme relationships of the language with neglect of the meaning-bearing patterns of language structure which operate in both the spoken and written codes of the language. While Dechant's book refers primarily to the sound-symbol aspects of linguistic study, the author does provide in his first chapter a perspective on both phonics and linguistics which should not be overlooked. In fact, the introductory chapter is a strong one which clearly puts phonics in perspective with relation to the total reading program. It is refreshing to read that phonics is no longer a real issue in reading but instead an acknowledged part—but only a part—of a well-balanced reading program and only a part of the skills needed for independent word attack. The basic principles of teaching phonics skills are well formulated and in line with the author's previous books, *Improving the Teaching of Reading* and *Psychology in the Teaching of Reading*.

An analytical whole word approach study of phonetic patterns is advocated, with the recommended sequence progressing from auditory and visual discrimination through beginning consonant sounds, short vowels, ending consonants, consonant blends and speech consonants (digraphs), and long vowels. Each of these categories is treated in a chapter giving background and suggested procedures. A section on structural analysis is included, as is a listing of instructional materials. An important principle of linguistic phonics is that control is recommended in the rate of introduction of specific teaching of the phoneme-phonogram pattern relationships instead of strict control of a basic vocabulary illustrating the patterns to be taught.

Dechant concludes with principles of learning and teaching which teachers would do well to review and to remember in teach-

ing in curriculum areas in addition to phonics. The closing perspective on learning adds to the soundness of the philosophy and fits well with the introductory comments of the first chapter.

In summary, these books are designed for a teacher audience, although the Dechant one could fit logically in either a preservice or an in-service class. One offers a specific perspective on one part of reading, while the other looks at a total program in a general way. If much of the basics of both were in practice in more classrooms, the reading improvement of Cushenbery's title would be more of a reality. □

**Man, Education, and Manpower.** *Grant Venn.* Washington, D.C.: American Association of School Administrators, 1970. 281 pp.

**Vocational Education and Guidance: A System for the Seventies.** *James A. Rhodes.* Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1970. 163 pp.

—Reviewed by ALBERT J. PAUTLER, Associate Professor, Faculty of Educational Studies, State University of New York at Buffalo.

Two recently published volumes focusing on the problems, processes, and techniques of providing a high quality of vocational education should be of concern to all educators. One volume (Rhodes) concentrates on describing how Ohio is proceeding to integrate vocational guidance and education within the present system. The other volume was written to delineate the role of education in the development of manpower needs in a highly technological society.

*Man, Education, and Manpower* follows by some six years Venn's *Man, Education, and Work* (1964), which was and still is a most often quoted source in the field of vocational education. It seems to this reviewer that the newer volume will have the same effect. The philosophy of *Man, Education, and Manpower* was developed on a few premises based on the experiences of the

sixties. One premise was, "any program to educate or train people outside or apart from the mainstream where the majority are educated will be seen as second-class by those enrolled, by those who employ the trainees, and by those who must pay the bill, the taxpayers."

Venn calls specific attention to the role of the school in helping assist in the manpower development effort. He brings home to the reader the fact that occupational orientation and guidance programs must be operational in our school systems, beginning at the elementary or junior high school levels. At the secondary level, work experience programs should be expanded and made available to all students and should not be restricted to a limited number of vocational fields or to needy students. He states, "co-operative school-work programs are a real asset to the youngster seeking entry into the job force." Such work programs should be of value to any school, no matter what size, in providing some actual, paid, on-the-job experience.

He makes a strong plea to those involved in high schools to develop job placement bureaus in the schools. Guidance workers, administrators, and teachers should be just as much concerned with job placement as they are with placement in colleges and universities. According to Venn, "schools should be responsible for the transition of all non-college bound students from school to work." His thinking is well developed and should be of serious concern to those responsible for the high school program.

James A. Rhodes, Governor of the State of Ohio from 1963 to 1970, is the author of *Vocational Education and Guidance: A System for the Seventies*. He maintains that "public education does not have the right to throw its rejects into the ranks of the unemployed in our community."

Rhodes proposes that a system of vocational guidance and vocational education be established as the core of the curriculum, starting with the kindergarten. He maintains that much needs to be done to change the attitudes of parents. In regard to parents he states, "they want to compete again through

their own young people, and make the mistake of thinking that the educational curriculum of thirty or forty years ago is an adequate curriculum for today." Parental attitudes in regard to occupational education and higher education, no doubt, are very important considerations at the present time. However, it still remains difficult for someone with one or more degrees and a nice job to tell a student that an associate degree or higher is really not essential at this time.

Just as Venn built a strong case for cooperative school-work experiences, so does Rhodes. He suggests that a work-centered curriculum be an integral part of the total educational system. The curriculum should be based on the life experiences of the students. A very real life experience will be employment, so why not attempt to develop an awareness and proper attitude toward work starting in kindergarten and continuing on through the secondary level?

Both books should be of value to school board members and officials, but also of special interest to principals and curriculum workers at all levels. Both deserve careful analysis and study at the local level before curriculum changes occur. □

**Every Kid a Winner: Accountability in Education.** *Leon M. Lessinger.* New York: Simon and Schuster, Publishers, 1970. 239 pp.

—Reviewed by NORMAN J. BAUER, Professor and Chairman, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, State University College of Arts and Science, Geneseo, New York.

Schools must guarantee the acquisition of necessary skills by all their students, regardless of the interests, motivation, cultural background, home life, and ability, as measured by culture-bound tests, which their students may possess. Schools must be held rigorously accountable for the results of the actions which they take to meet the specifications of their guarantee. This is the essence of the message transmitted by Lessinger in the volume, *Every Kid a Winner: Accountability in Education.*

The author develops an entirely new nomenclature for describing the means which education should consider adopting to guarantee the acquisition of basic skills by their students. Among the terms which constitute this nomenclature are: management support group (MSG), local educational agency (LEA), turnkey, educational engineering, society of educational engineers, "venture" capital, developmental capital, incentive pay and incentive capital, outside instructional services, new educational alliances, requests for proposal (RFP), independent educational accomplishment auditor (IEAA), certified educational auditor, performance contracting, vouchers, accountability for results, and systems analysis. In many respects, these terms remind one of the early years of this century, as described by Callahan in his book, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency*. During this early period a strong effort was made to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of schools by systematically organizing and evaluating them in accordance with the concepts of industrial design.

Of considerable concern to the reviewer is the lack of discrimination with which public schools in general are treated in terms of the results they achieve. Much of the book emphasizes the need to develop more effective teaching strategies for children with cultural deficits who are attending schools largely in urban areas. The book, however, tends to reflect rather badly on educational efforts everywhere, regardless of the quality of and support for the school programs. It is true that the author does point out that schools which enjoy a high level of support and morale seem to be more effective. Yet, on the whole, the book offers up a blanket indictment of educational efforts everywhere, an indictment which the reviewer firmly believes is unwarranted.

The emphasis which the book places on skill acquisition is also quite disturbing. First, there appears to be a highly oversimplified notion of just what constitutes a skill in learning. Skills, it appears, are only those kinds of abilities which can be revealed on specified tests. At only one point is a passing

reference made to the fact that many of the larger goals of, for example, the social studies, or any of the recently developed process-oriented curricula, are virtually impossible to measure on any tests now available. Furthermore, there is no recognition given to the hierarchy of skills associated with the various taxonomies of educational objectives which have begun to direct the efforts of competent instructors.

Second, emphasis is placed upon the acquisition of skills only in reading and mathematics. Third, stress is placed on the frequent use of standardized achievement instruments to determine whether minimum competencies in skills are being achieved. Fourth, no mention whatever is made of the need to guide the development of the evaluative capacity of each learner so that the judgments he makes when he employs his skills will serve to actualize his potentialities and those of our society.

A final, disturbing notion is the emphasis which the author places on the need to think of education as an adaptable kind of business.

In one sense, the author compares education to investment banking, in which the banker must decide which of several firms offers the best prospects for the investment of his capital. In a second sense he sees the possibility of large corporations establishing learning centers across the country. In still another way, he sees the need for education to recognize the importance of forming new alliances, especially with big business, in order to cope with the problems of education. Indeed, in some respects the book is primarily a subtle apology for the involvement of business and industry (e.g., Behavioral Research Laboratories, Westinghouse Learning Corporation, Dorsett, etc.), rather than a systematic examination of the means for improving public education.

This is an explosive book, one which is packed with ideas which could affect the funding, organization, and management of education for years to come. And, while there is much in the work with which the reviewer has concern, he cannot overemphasize the need for all teachers and adminis-

trators to study its contents with systematic care. □

**The Management of Education: A Systematic Design for Educational Revolution.** Shelley Umans. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1970. 226 pp.

—Reviewed by NORMAN J. BAUER.

This volume argues that, in many respects, traditional educational programs and systems, wherever they are located, are failing to accomplish their purposes. Educators appear to be unwilling or unable to cope with their problems. As a result, instead of revising their thinking and developing fresh approaches, they are employing expedience to solve their instructional and organizational problems as they arise. Umans believes this has brought about the demise of public education.

What would the author recommend to bring about the emergence of a more viable future for public education? He would have us recognize the immense potential of much of the electronic media which industry has developed during the past eight years. He would also have us become more cognizant of the educational programs which have been developed by industry and by government. Indeed, he would have us involve large industry in a much more systematic way in the implementation of public education. In this way Mr. Umans believes it would be possible to create more relevant systems of education.

The final chapter of the book reminds one somewhat of George Leonard's *Education and Ecstasy*. It is particularly rich with new concepts, for example, education conceived as an ecosystem, educational environment centers which function 24 hours a day, seven days a week, satellite development centers, skills centers, "no school" schools, and the impact of recent developments in enzyme-assisted instruction.

The book is clearly and concisely written, and is of value to all those concerned with enhancing the quality of the instructional climate traditionally found in our schools. □

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