

## **SELECTED FOR REVIEW**

*Reviewers:* Robert R. Leeper  
Bruce Howell  
Alice Miel  
Evelyn Gay  
Donald M. Matheson

**Trousered Apes: A Study of the Influence of Literature on Contemporary Society.** *Duncan Williams.* New York: Delta, 1973. 169 pp.

—Reviewed by ROBERT R. LEEPER,  
Editor, Educational Leadership.

This small volume, since its appearance in 1971, has attracted attention all out of proportion to its size. Penetrating and eloquent analyses have been made of its text and of the manner in which its major premises are presented and supported. This is well, for the message in this work is, without question, sincerely given and is one that should be accepted as both important and urgent.

Should literature, music, and the arts reflect only the finest, most idealistic visions of the world and of man's destiny? What actual influence do such arts have upon man's shaping of his own future? Is there some alchemy by which the ideals and aspirations

expressed in the arts and through the mass media influence especially the young people of the world and thus help them build a future which might not have been as hopeful or constructive if these influences had not been felt?

The role of literature and the arts, as seen by Professor Williams, is not merely that of a mirror passively reflecting whatever passes for contemporary social and cultural values. Rather their role is depicted as a powerful force which helps ultimately to shape the way people seek to live and behave.

The author makes a well-documented case for the idea that much of the rootlessness, violence, and callousness of the present world may have grown out of the shoddiness and deliberate sensationalism of the cultural "arts" of our time. Indeed, the author holds that discernible trends toward this present situation are traceable to the general decline in literary and cultural standards over several generations.

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In eight chapters, the author presents his case for the direct relationship between the aspirations and ethical dimensions of the expressive and aesthetic arts and those of the culture at large. For example, the popularity of the "anti-hero" in literature, on stage, and screen may actually have helped shape the rootless and introverted trends visible in the social scene of our time.

The message of the book is not, in spite of the careful and extensive documentation, an overwhelmingly negative one. The final chapter, "To Be or Not To Be," indicates that man's lot need not be hopeless. The author holds that "Man will prevail (to use Faulkner's words) only if he confronts such problems resolutely and honestly" (p. 149).

Williams continues, "To deny such an ideal, to emphasize man's primitivism, to ignite his baser passions, to question his capacity for sympathy and empathy, in short, to depict him as merely a trousered ape, is not only a form of literary, aesthetic, and philosophic dishonesty. It is a sin against life itself, a crime against humanity" (p. 149).

This reviewer highly recommends this book to the attention of all who are concerned about the moral dimensions of education, the possible alternative futures which man may be able to create, and the quality of life which may yet be available to humankind if, indeed, the hope expressed by Duncan Williams is realized. □

**Public Schools of Choice. Mario Fantini.**  
*New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1973.*

—Reviewed by BRUCE HOWELL, *Superintendent of Schools, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Public Schools.*

"We already have a voucher system. It is called public education. What we do *not* have are alternatives and choice." So states Mario Fantini in *Public Schools of Choice*, a new book supporting the concept of alternatives in education. Attempting to combine the "is" with the "ought to be" the author builds his case for peaceful coexistence among proponents of various programs on the thesis

that schools of choice should encompass the conventional and the contemporary. The conventional process constitutes one road to a common set of objectives but alternative routes should be available to those who need them. The problem lies in creating effective alternatives.

The concept of choice that is presented neither discards existing learning models nor supports specific replacements. As a matter of fact, Fantini notes "in a system of choice if 10% of the parents wanted to explore an alternative they would have the right. At present either the 90% overrules the 10% or the 10% tries to impose its rules on the 90%. It's all or nothing on both sides."

Although magnanimously accepting alternatives for any child's learning style, Fantini does establish some do's and don'ts for inclusion in this happy marriage. One, *do* adhere to educational objectives. Two, *do* maintain similar expenditures. Three, *don't* advocate exclusivity. Four, *don't* superimpose over other programs. Five, *do* advertise the program as "another way." Six, *do* evaluate the alternative.

In addition to reviewing procedures for implementing programs of choice, the author also suggests that appropriate placement should be implemented for teachers. Noting that typically "once teachers are certified they are perceived as being the same," the author suggests that teaching personalities and styles should be matched to the alternative program. The credibility of the text is enhanced by a number of case studies of alternative programs in existence in schools across the nation. Factors involving the strengths and weaknesses of the choices are reviewed and the reader becomes aware of the variety of substantive choices that are emerging in the nation's schools.

*Public Schools of Choice* is a book in step with the times. It communicates. It provides practical suggestions for implementing varied learning strategies in a positive manner. It is a must for the libraries of practitioners who are attempting to provide alternatives in the school programs. □

**Planning Curriculum for Schools. J. Galen Saylor and William M. Alexander.** New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1974. 404 pp.

—Reviewed by ALICE MIEL, Professor Emeritus of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York.

While the flyleaf indicates that parts of this book have already been published under similar titles in 1954 and 1966, this volume from the respected pair of curriculum authors, Saylor and Alexander, contains so much new material and is organized so very differently from its predecessors that it is difficult to find traces of the old.

The most striking difference between the present edition and the one appearing eight years ago may be seen in the shift from a chapter title in 1966, "The Theory and Process of Curriculum Development," to a 1974 subtitle, "Theories of Curriculum Planning," and a chapter title, "Processes and Roles in Curriculum Planning." This change signals a commendable feature of the new book, namely a fairly even-handed treatment of differing points of view and proposals. After assessing the strengths and weaknesses of various positions regarding curricular matters, the authors state their own position, which usually includes what they consider to be the best features of different proposals.

A good example is their statement first of the case for "explicit behavioral objectives," then for "broader, nonexplicit goals," before proposing their own program for defining goals. Other examples of the *including* stance of the book are:

- Roles for pupils and community participants in curriculum planning as well as for teachers as individuals and as members of teams, committees, and councils
- Use of such externally developed curriculum plans and systems as textbooks, proposals from national curriculum projects, and instructional packages and systems
- Curriculum models from other groups —performance contracts, alternative schools, networks, and leagues of schools

● Use in curriculum planning of such data sources as data about students, social and cultural factors, data about society, the learning process, and availability and organization of knowledge as well as such significant factors as legal structures, political control of the schools, resources and facilities, and research reports and professional advice

● Different foci of curriculum designs—specific competencies, disciplines/subjects, social activities and problems, process skills, and individual needs and interests.

In the last instance, the material is organized in an especially useful way. After an account of the historical development of one focus, the characteristic features of the focus are presented, followed by “the case for” the focus, and finally applications and limitations. Illustrative of the spirit of the book is the statement on p. 241: “No one curriculum design can be adequate for the total curriculum plan of a school serving the varied population and the multiple goals our schools generally serve. Instead, we see the curriculum planners as properly selecting, even developing, appropriate designs for particular curriculum goals, domains, and learning opportunities.”

In a chapter on “Planning Curriculum Implementation: Instruction,” a helpful “catalog of instructional modes” is presented economically. Modes possible in structured class situations are presented first: lecture and verbal presentation modes; discussion-questioning modes; practice and drill modes; viewing, listening, answering modes; problem-solving, heuristic and discovery modes; laboratory and inquiry modes; modes to develop creativeness; and role-playing, simulation, and games. Modes possible in freeform and nonclass situations are: play, handling, manipulating, acting; telling; school-activities program; independent learning and self-instructional modes; and community activities.

For each instructional mode are given major characteristics, groupings, student activity, teacher activity, teaching resources, uses and values (including new applications

suggested by the authors), and drawbacks and defects. The chapter also includes a discussion of the hidden or unstudied “curriculum” and of the pros and cons of accountability.

A praiseworthy addition to the 1974 volume is a strong chapter on evaluating curriculum plans and instruction. Recent developments in evaluation and several evaluation models are presented.

Throughout the book pointed suggestions are made for planning goals, curriculum designs, instruction, and evaluation. In particular, the final chapter is devoted to “Planning Schools for the Decades Ahead.” The careful attention to curriculum events, conflicting views espoused, and varied proposals made from the birth of the curriculum movement before 1920 to the present, amplified by well-chosen quotations, makes this work a valuable resource for the person wishing to gain perspective on the field as well as for the one charged with making the hard decisions on the scene of action.

If any fault is to be found with *Planning Curriculum for Schools*, it is the loose use of the word *theory* in the first chapter, which otherwise is valuable as a thorough and concise preview of the book. Often it might have been better to substitute the word *proposal* or to qualify theory with the adjective *prescriptive*. One looking for enlightenment on descriptive curriculum theory will not be completely satisfied with this work. □

**The First Review of Special Education.**  
**Lester Mann and David A. Sabatino, editors.**  
*Two volumes. Philadelphia: JSE Press, 1973.*  
292 pp.; 313 pp.

—Reviewed by EVELYN GAY, Associate Planner, Mental Health Planning Council of Milwaukee County, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

In his introduction to the two volumes which constitute this *First Review of Special Education*, Mann sums up the tenor of the conclusions of the majority of authors represented in a single word “sobering.” This is particularly appropriate to the first volume which is primarily devoted to an extensive

review of the research literature on evaluation instruments such as the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistics, the Frostig Test of Visual Perception, and others. The real need of the special educator to link diagnostic instruments to educational practice, gave rise in the early 60's to the development of these tools.

Teachers and evaluators alike grasped avidly at the promise of identification of specific behavioral strengths and weaknesses and their relationship to classroom strategies. Performance on these instruments has been fed into the process of diagnostic categorization. The closer look at subsequent research, uneven and fragmented as it may be, now calls into doubt their reliability, and gives scant support to their validity. Training programs which evolved, based on strengths and weakness evidenced in sub-test performance, have proved disappointing in their effectiveness.

The authors pull together studies published in the professional journals, papers, and unpublished dissertations. This bringing together of the data should be required reading for both administrators and educators to at least arouse a healthy skepticism in those responsible for the education of developmentally handicapped children, and to restrain the unwarranted enthusiasm which has been based more on wishful thinking than solid analysis.

The second volume covers a potpourri of topical subject matter, and is less cohesive than the first. New dimensions of exceptional education, the challenge of mandatory education for all children, the effect and usefulness of labeling, the impact of litigation, the rapidly expanding use of behavior modification in the classroom, new demands on Administration of Special Education among others are given thoughtful presentations.

The contributors as a whole, individual variation considered, bring to each subject matter as current an overview and consolidation of information as publishing lag can allow. There is sometimes an internal contradiction in the primary definition of subject area and level of sophistication in subsequent treatment, but this is only mildly disconcert-

ing. The bibliographies that accompany each article are generally extensive and contemporary.

These volumes in summary can be substantially useful for reference in graduate studies and particularly by their summary structure in helping the harried practitioner to remain current which, in this era of burgeoning publications, is no small contribution. □

**Exceptional Children in the Schools: Special Education in Transition.** Lloyd M. Dunn, editor. Second edition. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1973. 610 pp.

—Reviewed by EVELYN GAY.

This book presents an extensive overview of the past, present, and future issues facing the educators of children who present exceptional educational needs. The presentation by Dunn and the other contributors makes a well-organized, comprehensive text. Each chapter is preceded by a topical outline, interspersed with case vignettes which bring life to the academic material and followed by a useful listing of not only references, but also information resources. The presentation of each of the learning disabilities develops from historical review to traditional practices and approaches and concludes with emerging directions, trends, and goals. Issues surrounding definition classification and prevalence are stated.

Although pertinent research studies are widely utilized, there is a minimum of statistical presentation which frequently confounds the classroom-oriented student.

The prevailing thrust of the several presentations is to reject the clinical or medical model of categorization, and to present the learning needs of children in more educationally pertinent terms. The implications of the growing social and legal pressure for greater accountability and a more humanistic, normalizing approach to the child who requires accommodation of pedagogic techniques are developed consistently throughout.



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It is not possible in so comprehensive a treatment to cover each topic in equal or sufficient depth. The compression of any text of this nature must almost automatically result in some distortion, oversimplification, or overgeneralization. The authors did not always heed the very traps they specifically warned against.

Overall this is a veritable encyclopedia, rich in information, provocative in its postulates, and suggestive of where indeed this transitional period has the potential for leading the field of Exceptional Education. □

**Curriculum Handbook for School Executives.** *William J. Ellena, editor.* Arlington, Virginia: American Association of School Administrators, 1973. 379 pp.

—Reviewed by DONALD M. MATHESON, Administrative Assistant, Muskego-Norway Schools, Muskego, Wisconsin.

This book, as a collection of expanded articles on 16 major curricular areas, should serve as a valuable reference for practicing administrators and curriculum workers.

Each chapter presents an authoritative review of emerging concepts, organizational structure, and methods of instruction as such relate to a particular area of curriculum. The chapters are conveniently arranged in alphabetical order. Approximately 20 pages are devoted to each subject. A final chapter is devoted to a brief review of forces involved in curriculum decision making.

For a book intended to serve as a readable and current up-date on relevant curriculum trends, the total composite is right on target. Authorities in each field have demonstrated notable restraint in avoiding extended philosophical defenses of their special interests and have devoted space to succinct, helpful information. Each chapter ends with a bibliography for those who might wish to pursue any one topic further. □

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