

## SELECTED FOR REVIEW

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**Instructional Supervision: A Behavior System.** Robert J. Alfonso, Gerald R. Firth, and Richard F. Neville. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1975. 371 pp.

—Reviewed by GORDON CAWELTI, Executive Director, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D.C.

Although a vast amount of research has been done in the behavioral sciences having application to supervisory behavior, less has been done which seeks to synthesize the findings or to formulate theory. This book is an exception and represents a scholarly effort in this direction.

Its analysis of research done in the areas of leadership, communication, organization, and change theory makes it an important book in itself for those seeking an understanding of these fields. (These four chapters contain over 600 citations.) However, if it proves to be sufficiently coherent to generate significant hypotheses ("if-then" propositions) for researchers, it could be a seminal work in the field of supervision.

After eliminating research findings from the group dynamics and decision theory fields, the authors selected the four areas mentioned from which they derived 106 "propositions." Presumably, these "propositions" are generalizations, principles, apparent truths, but not quite "laws" at this stage. An example in the area of leadership theory: "The probability of successful leadership will be increased if the leader maintains some degree of psychological distance from his subordinates" (p. 64). It is acknowledged that the propositions, although derived from research, need to be submitted to further study.

The 106 propositions are categorized into three interpersonal, three milieu, and five intervention components. A matrix is then developed to analyze the relationship between, for

example, the interpersonal and milieu components. It is this interrelationship between the 11 critical components of instructional supervisory behavior that the authors contend enables the outcomes of alternative supervisory styles to be predicted.

But what kind of supervisory style is implicit in this work? It is certainly less "clinical" than clinical supervision and obviously less singularly dependent on motivation-hygiene theory than Sergiovanni's human resources supervision (see: Thomas J. Sergiovanni, editor. *Professional Supervision for Professional Teachers*. Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1975. 87 pp.). Because theirs is a complex formulation, it will be helpful if the authors of *Instructional Supervision* are able to test their views of supervision in actual instructional settings or from well documented case studies of the past. It is clear that the supervisory behavior being tested must reflect as closely as possible the leadership styles and processes suggested by the 11 critical components. A weakness in the synthesis may be in neglecting the situational or life cycle theory of leadership articulated by Hersey and Blanchard. In addition, much of the literature fails to distinguish between the supervisory role of line officers (principals) and staff officers (curriculum specialists). Clear delineation of this difference needs to be made in studying the effectiveness of alternative supervisory roles.

One must also raise the question as to whether or not this approach is more useful in arriving at a deeper understanding of supervision than intensive analysis of existing instructional situations using alternative supervisory approaches as the independent variable.

In general, this is an excellent reference coming after a long evolution from the authoritarian-inspection kind of supervision, through

the scientific and democratic or human relations era, to a more modern but complex description of the intricacies of effective supervisory behavior. Whereas these earlier "schools of thought" oversimplified the process, this book affords a remarkable effort to really understand the complexities of human behavior that are under supervision.

For use in teaching supervision at the university level or for the practitioner, I would judge this work to be one of the two or three outstanding texts in the field. □

**Open Learning in Early Childhood.** *Barbara Day.* New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1975. 228 pp.

—Reviewed by **IDA SANTOS STEWART,** Chairperson, Early Childhood Program, University of Houston, Texas.

Because open education is one of the major educational innovations of this decade, many educators are asking, "What is it?" and "How do I begin?" This book is designed to answer these questions by helping early childhood personnel provide an open education learning environment for young children. It serves as an excellent introductory guide for those interested in open education.

The first chapter serves to briefly introduce the reader to the conceptual framework underlying open education. The balance of the book serves as a guide to those interested in the use of learning centers to support the growth and development of young children. The short section on the conceptualization of open education is for the reader who is new to this approach. In a few pages the author explains the observable dimensions of an open learning environment. Day focuses on a few select assumptions about children and learning, and such components as multi-age grouping, the integrated curriculum, physical organization of centers, and the use of contracts as a major strategy for individualizing instruction. However, this does result in important eclectic, theoretical roots being slighted; nowhere is the influence of Rousseau, Froebel, Dewey, Montessori, or Piaget mentioned.

The chapters on learning centers have considerable practical value as they draw from the author's personal experiences. Specific suggestions are offered in regard to what can be placed in learning centers, how these materials can be arranged, and what kinds of learning can be fostered. They include diagrams of different classroom layouts and extensively cover ten learning centers. Each learning center chapter is organized into environmental resources, commercial and teacher-made materials, learning objectives, and suggested activi-

ties. The environmental resources include suggestions for storage space, clean-up equipment, working space plus basic equipment. Each chapter has a wealth of suggestions. For example, the Language Arts chapter has 59 creative suggestions for teacher-made materials; the Sand and Water chapter has 39 suggested activities.

In an individualized program where children are working at their own pace in learning centers, one concern is effective evaluation of the children's progress. The evaluation chapter includes many practical examples of record keeping devices to facilitate evaluation accuracy. In addition, an excellent checklist for evaluating the learning environment in regard to teacher-child relationships, program, materials and equipment, physical environment, and outdoor learning environment is provided.

Unless a teacher understands why one room arrangement or learning center is superior to another in terms of open education, open education will not be understood or implemented. Centers are developed because the educational objectives of open education will be better achieved. However, because the philosophy of open education is so briefly discussed at the beginning of this book and never referred to again, there is a wide gap between theory and practice.

Here is a brief, well-written practical paperback, a fine introduction to an open education learning environment. *Open Learning in Early Childhood* is most enthusiastically recommended to all educators, but especially to teachers who are willing to try to meet the individual needs of their young children. □

**Modifying Children's Behavior: A Book of Readings.** *Alan R. Brown and Connie Avery, editors.* Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas, Publishers, 1974. 277 pp.

—Reviewed by **LA BARBARA A. GRAGG,** Education Consultant, Wayne County Intermediate School District, Detroit.

This book of readings is a treatise on various behavior modification approaches that have been used in school districts across the country. Studies included were selected to illustrate the basic principles of behavior modification. The populations of the majority of the studies consisted of students who had been identified as those with special learning needs and who were enrolled in special education classes for the mentally retarded, trainable, emotionally disturbed, and learning disabled. Also included is an extensive bibliography relating to behavior modification techniques.

This book would be of special interest to those who are working with exceptional children

and those who have a great interest in the behaviorist's theory of altering maladaptive behavior.

From reading the title, *Modifying Children's Behavior*, I expected to receive information on various techniques for altering students' behavior and their environment. The treatment in this publication, however, is basically a presentation of models which manipulate and structure the environment.

Minimal information was made available about more humanistic approaches to altering students' behavior, for example, modeling procedures, verbal reinforcement, soft and loud reprimands, and emotive imagery. One study suggested that modeling procedures could possibly represent a more effective means of establishing a new response pattern in children than those that are labeled behavior modification techniques.

Apparently the editor's intention was to compile studies that dealt with behavior modification only. This goal was accomplished and this book of readings is well done. As long as the reader understands that behavior modification techniques are the focus of all the readings in this book, there is much information that can be useful to all educators—especially those in special education. □

**The Four Faces of Teaching: The Role of the Teacher in Humanizing Education.** *Dorothy I. Seaberg.* Pacific Palisades, California: Good-year Publishing Company, Inc., 1974. 179 pp.

**Teacher/Teachim: The Toughest Game in Town.** *Joel Macht.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1975. 229 pp.

—Reviewed by ROY A. WEAVER, Assistant Professor of Education, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

Persons who read Seaberg's book probably won't read Macht's—at least not in its entirety. Although both authors agree that: (a) teachers create learning environments, (b) teachers affect the social and academic behavior of students, (c) teachers face a complex task in accomplishing (a) and (b), and (d) that (c) is significant enough to warrant the writing of a book by the respective authors, they diverge sharply in both style and content. Seaberg's effort is essentially a scholarly one, whereas Macht's work takes a more dramatic magazine-like approach. Of course, if you happen to be one of those readers who goes from "Peanuts" to Polanyi, these two just might both be your fare.

To the hard core academic, *Teacher/Teachim* is by its title as ungrammatical as *The Way Its Spozed To Be*, anemic at best with its 19 bibliographic entries, less than orderly in its conversational format, and not properly schol-

arly with its 32 "YOUDOIT's" (33 including pre- and post-completion of the exercises), two "Hogwash! s" and subtitles from "Turn On (by) the Tape Recorder" to "Wall Street Wizards." While not as "hip" or "heavy" as *The Soft Revolution*, *Teacher/Teachim* is written in a style which entices and involves the reader. Macht has interspersed the text with a series of useful exercises—YOUDOITs—which focus on in-class observations and their use in understanding and altering the learning environment, hypothetical classroom situations for reader analysis, and questions posed by the author with reference to the teaching process.

Beyond what may appear to some as "trite" headings and superficial treatment of the subject, Macht has recommended several practical suggestions for influencing student behavior. With emphasis on reinforcement, incentives, behavior cues, structured learning experiences, individualized attention, the author either by fact or by implication applies theories of psychological behaviorism to teacher methodology. By discussing teaching strategies within the context of "real" classroom situations, the author salvages what might otherwise be a too loosely knit, unreadable transcript of conversations.

To the reader who finds *Teacher/Teachim* an intriguing examination of ways for reinforcing and assuring the continuation of desired student behavior, *The Four Faces of Teaching* may appear too erudite for enjoyment. To some, Seaberg's book may seem inflexibly organized with its foreword-preface-introduction-Parts I through IV-Chapters 1-14 format, cluttered at the end of each chapter by an "Annotated Bibliography" and "Things To Do," and too heavily weighted throughout by citations of illustrative studies. However, for the most part, *The Four Faces of Teaching* will probably be more easily accepted in academia.

The title of Seaberg's book serves as the organizing theme. The four faces—(a) *relator*—creating an open or closed system in the political environment, (b) *mediator*—intervening between the child and the curriculum in developing a technology of teaching, (c) *diagnostician*—assessing potential growth and impediments to growth, (d) *choreographer*—structuring events in the "political," "technological," "phenomenological," and "aesthetic" environments of the school—identify roles that teachers must assume in establishing a profitable learning environment. Solidly based on research in Third Force psychology, the book bridges the gap between theory and practice by examining the research and by outlining practical strategies for creating a more humanistic environment for educating learners.

In sum both books are worth reading. *Teacher/Teachim* will more readily be found as

a supplementary text to education courses listed somewhere between *Neill, Neill, Orange Peel* and *What We Owe Children* in college and community bookstores, whereas *The Four Faces of Teaching* will more readily be found between *The Structure of Teaching* and *The Helping Relationship* in college bookstores listed in "bread and butter" stacks under EDUC 100-700. □

**Accountability: A State, A Process, or a Product?** *William J. Gephart, editor.* Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., 1975. 82 pp.

—Reviewed by J. JOHN HARRIS, III, Assistant Professor and Urban Curriculum Specialist, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park; and JANIS M. HAGEY, Uni-Serv Executive Director, Michigan Education Association, East Lansing.

William Gephart admits at the outset of his book that "no one, yet everyone seems to know what accountability means" (p. xi). Despite the complexities and ambiguities, accountability seems to be a coming reality. Gephart's collection of six position papers on the topic presents a variety of definitions, perceptions of, and strategies for implementing the concept of educational accountability.

Divided into six parts, Part I by John J. Loughlin, State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Indiana, juxtaposes two positions on accountability. He advocates that through proper application of measurement techniques and good business practices, education can be made totally accountable. He proposes that the state education agency assume a catalytic role in organizing an accountability plan, but emphasizes the need for local (those who are affected by the plan) interaction in the development of such a plan. In contrast, Loughlin also states that because of the enormous complexities in-

herent in educating children, including the knowledge explosion and the shifting of values, total accountability is an unrealizable goal.

In his paper, "Accountability, A New Form of Tease," James W. Becker of the National Education Association, states that "being accountable is what everyone wants everyone else to be." To work effectively, Becker emphasizes that everyone must share in accountability; it cannot be limited to teachers. Despite basic weaknesses in definition and direction, Becker advocates that "a new sense of professionalism, increased involvement, and constructive building of improved education can emerge from accountability."

Marvin Alkin and David Bushnell concern themselves with the "how to" aspect of design and implementation of accountability systems. Alkin presents procedures and techniques for achieving three types of accountability—goal accountability, program accountability, and outcome accountability. His design clarifies who is accountable to what and to whom.

Another contributor to the book, Ernest House, points to historical precedent and research evidence in ardently opposing the basic premises of accountability in education. House labels accountability plans "simplistic, unworkable, contrary to empirical findings and ultimately immoral" (p. 51).

Eight educators contributed to this book, one of the most recent treatments of accountability. Combining theory and practice, the book should be read by individuals wishing to obtain a quick overview of accountability in education. As Loughlin and Gephart conclude, too often we give answers that do not solve the problem, and we spend time and money doing most inefficiently what we should not be doing at all. Accountability is educated individuals taking leadership roles in society as well as a state of being, a process to be used, and a product. □

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