

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Correspondents: Robert L. Monks  
John S. Hand  
R. Beery

### Right Procedure, Wrong Conclusions

Dear Editor:

I have read with great interest "Teachers' Planning Models" by John A. Zahorik in the November issue.<sup>1</sup> One certainly cannot quarrel with the procedure Dr. Zahorik utilized in his research project, nor the data collected. However, one can quarrel with the conclusions based upon the analysis of data. In conclusion number one Dr. Zahorik states, "Objectives are not a particularly important planning decision in terms of quantity of use. Other decisions are made more frequently and made first more frequently than objectives. . . ." In conclusion number three, he determines that "Content is one of the most important planning decisions in terms of quantity of use. Almost three-fourths of the teachers make this decision, and it is made first more than any other decision."

If one only looks at the data collected, these conclusions are valid. However, one must look beyond the hard data. I suggest that even though most teachers listed content decisions as first decisions, these content decisions are in fact based upon objectives, goals, outcomes, or purposes. When a teacher tells students or expects them to discover the name of the principal river of Uruguay, the teacher has done so because he or she had—though perhaps not stated—the objective that students should know the name of such a river. When teachers plan activities, such as small group work, a debate, or a panel discussion, they do so with a special purpose in mind, with an objective.

It is precisely because some teachers have made content decisions or activity decisions without consciously having in mind objectives or purposes that the classroom experiences established for students are haphazard, inconsistent, or perhaps meaningless. In any case there are always objectives or goals for every activity or unit of content. Unfortunately, the objective in some cases seems to be filling time.

<sup>1</sup> John A. Zahorik. "Teachers' Planning Models." *Educational Leadership* 33 (2): 134-39; November 1975.

If one accepts that there are always stated or implied objectives, it would behoove the classroom teacher to examine those objectives in order to determine their validity, appropriateness for the age group, and then to make content and activity decisions to reach those objectives.

Further, I would like to suggest a possible explanation for the rank order of teacher responses. Practically all teachers utilize textbooks, materials, and/or curriculum guides that were written or developed by someone other than themselves. Consequently the objectives, outcomes, or purposes for a course, a lesson, or an activity were developed for the teacher. Thus, the teachers do not have to be concerned about objectives; they can immediately make content or activity decisions. This process on the part of the teachers does not mean there are no objectives, it only means they have accepted the objectives of others.

I am not necessarily supporting the position of the ends-means curriculum theorist, I am simply taking the position that nothing happens within a school by chance—or at least should not. And that for every activity on the part of the teacher or on the part of the student, some objective, outcome, or purpose explicitly or implicitly led to the decision to cover the content or conduct the activity.

ROBERT L. MONKS  
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Administration  
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### Esoteric Vistas Explored

Dear Editor:

I have spent the past half hour trying to understand the article, "Toward a Curriculum Theory," by Robert C. Morris and Russell Hamm, in the January 1976 issue.<sup>2</sup> For the

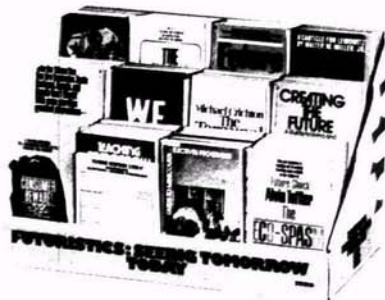
<sup>2</sup> Robert C. Morris and Russell Hamm. "Toward a Curriculum Theory." *Educational Leadership* 33 (4): 299-300; January 1976.

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sake of those of us who have not explored the esoteric vistas of "architectonics" and "zetetics," I sincerely hope that you will prevail upon Morris and Hamm to try again. I would be happy to commune with them and learn from their erudition; but, in order to do so, I need a more substantial explanation of their terminology than the definitions they give for the two terms noted.

If Julius Caesar had confined his description of Gaul to the information that "All Gaul is divided into three parts," I seriously doubt that I or any other student of second year Latin would have ever realized that Gaul had any relationship to present-day France or to the political development of Western Europe. Please help me. I would sincerely like to know what Morris and Hamm were trying to tell me.

JOHN S. HAND

Director, Indiana Facilitator Center, Logansport

## Education of Vietnamese Children

Dear Editor:

Your December 1975 issue on multicultural curriculum makes a valuable contribution to work in this area. However, I was disappointed to find no mention of the implications of a pluralist perspective for those engaged in the education of Vietnamese immigrant children.

The limited literature prepared to help teachers of these students does emphasize cultural backgrounds, but it focuses on using that information to efficiently resocialize—to facilitate their "adaptation," "adjustment," and "assimilation." This response demonstrates the strength of the historical tradition of alienating young immigrants from heritage and parents in an effort to make them "good Americans."

A more sophisticated and sensitive approach may require special perspectives and strategies that go beyond those designed for work with members of ethnic groups who have hammered out unique ethnic identities as a result of generations of neglect and oppression within American society.

I urge you to give immediate attention to the preparation of articles that deal with this matter. You have demonstrated superior leadership in the area of multicultural education. The need is evident and urgent and cannot wait on the typical time lag involved in professional publication.

R. BEERY

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