

Book Reviews

Memorandum: On Renewing Schooling and Education.

Paul F. Brandwein.

New York:

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers,
1981.

—Reviewed by M. Frances Klein, University
of California, Los Angeles.

As the United States moves into a techno-electronic stage, we need an educational system that serves society's new needs. In his book, Brandwein envisions a necessary renewal of schools and construction of a comprehensive integrated educational system for the future. In his view, schools plan and instruct learning, the essence of which is a nonrandom, planned experience. Education, however, is a broader life-long process and is community-based. Education includes schooling as well as self-activated learning, and both schooling and the educational system must exist within an ecology of achievement if they are to be successful. Although his concept is not fully developed, Brandwein defines the boundaries of an ecology of achievement as three essentials of an educational system: equality of educational opportunities; essentiality of certain knowledge, attitudes, and skills suited to a growing society; and excellence of performance.

Balance within and across areas is the central theme of the chapters on curriculum, instruction, and evaluation. Any change in one area requires a compatible change in the other two with the emphasis on students and their needs. Needs of the linear-sequential and the holistic modes of the mind must also balance. Curriculum must provide for equal opportunity for achievement, not for equal achievement. Brandwein emphasizes that there is nothing so unequal as the equal treatment of unequal students.

Instruction requires a balance between the didactic and the heuristic—one where the teacher is the central figure and one where the pupil is the central figure—and between instructional efforts in the cognitive and affective domains. Schools must nurture students who are competent and

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compassionate. The student must be an essential participant in instruction since learning requires an active or overt response. Thus, instruction is much more than teacher lectures. Through instruction teachers must help students become independent learners. In this developmental process, the teacher becomes less a guardian of archives and more a guide to inquiry.

Instructional reform is more resistant to change than curriculum reform because instruction involves a teacher's skills and habits. Innovations in curriculum and instruction may be introduced at the same time, but their implementation will proceed on different schedules. Past efforts at reform have failed, in part, because this difference was not recognized.

For evaluation, Brandwein emphasizes that tests are usable tools and that educators must search for fair ones. In judging capabilities, consider the non-measurable capabilities along with the measurable. Evaluation must be continuous with students progressing based on accomplished work, not on attendance. With this type of evaluation, there are no "failing" students.

In this book Brandwein summarizes his reflections about schooling and education based on his extensive and distinguished career. He does not advocate abandoning or even drastically altering schools, but rather emphasizes an evolutionary process that builds on what we have. He sees that much of what is needed already exists, but it is not or-

chestrated into an integrated system. You may read the chapters separately, but the full impact of his vision comes only from reading the whole book.

Those who disagree with what our schools have achieved and what they are aiming to do will not agree with Brandwein. He assumes a rather traditional view of schooling but clearly urges significant reform of the schools and development of a broader educational system.

Available from Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, for \$14.95.

School Power: Implications of an Intervention Project.

James P. Comer.

New York:

The Free Press, 1980.

—Reviewed by Roy Pellicano, New York City
Board of Education, Teachers College, Co-
lumbia University.

School Power is about the processes "necessary to build effective schools." Accepting the premise that nothing will ever restore the natural, mutually supportive, and reinforcing relationships among community, home, and school that existed a generation ago, Comer states that "trust and mutual respect . . . can and must be restored" by focusing on the processes that make up the individual school and school system.

Restoration of respect and trust, along with "appropriate emphasis on mental health and related management skills," will empower a school to be a positive and influential force. Describing the project between Yale's Child Study Center and the New Haven School System, Comer reinforces current reform trends that focus on interaction of inschool variables (pedagogic practices and training).

The significance of *School Power* lies in the author's observations and conclusions regarding the complexities and realities of affecting change within a school building—grounded in his participant-observer role.

Available from The Free Press, 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022, for \$14.95.

Educating Through Partnership: Mediating Structures and Education.

David S. Seeley.

Cambridge, Massachusetts:

Ballinger Publishing Company, 1981.

—Reviewed by Roy Pellicano, New York City Board of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University.

In 1971, P. M. Blau and M. W. Meyer (*Bureaucracy in Modern Society*) wrote that the strength of bureaucracy resided in its instrumentality as an organizational form that "can accomplish large-scale administrative tasks by systematically coordinating the works of many individuals." Further, "bureaucracies are powerful institutions which greatly enhance potential capacities for good or evil, because they are neutral instruments of rational administration on a large scale."

Education Through Partnership presents an opposing view—that bureaucracy is neither neutral nor passive, rather it intertwines with governmentalization and professionalization (teacher unionism) "to work against productive learning relationships." Seeley focuses on dysfunctional consequences of bureaucratic depersonalization and rationalization. Advocating "de-bureaucratization" and "de-professionalization" as methods for empowering line-personnel and clients, Seeley suggests that the salvation of public schools resides in an active partnership among family, community, and school. In other words, each participant in the educational process will have an opportunity to develop and use "voice," "choice," and "loyalty." I recommend this book for all interested in contemporary debates over public school organization and governance.

Available from Ballinger Publishing Company, P.O. Box 281, 54 Church St., Cambridge, MA 02138, for \$27.50.

Cognition and Curriculum: A Basis for Deciding What to Teach.

Elliot W. Eisner.

New York:

Longman, Inc., 1982.

—Reviewed by Malcolm Evans, Montgomery Township Schools, Skillman, New Jersey.

This book, originally prepared as the

1979 John Dewey Lecture, acknowledges its roots in Dewey's *Art as Experience*. But it transcends that framework in an exciting exploration of the role of our senses in concept formation and in conveying experiences. Eisner decries our national obsession with number and language as the basis of curriculum. Extreme emphasis in contemporary schooling on these fundamentals fails to educate, according to Eisner. He asks a reader to share his view of conceptual learnings through the five senses. He argues not only for broader awareness of concept formation but also for the means of presenting concepts through alternative forms of representation—such as art, music, dance, and costume.

Arguing that a narrow curriculum dulls the senses, thwarts human aptitude, and undercuts possibilities of the human mind, he advocates curriculum change consistent with his perception of the breadth of the human mind. Unlike some reformers Eisner does not call for discarding existing content or for shifting the educational paradigm. He argues for expanding teacher and student awareness of the multiple sources of concepts and of the several forms of representation available for sharing those concepts. *Cognition and Curriculum* will appeal to teachers and other educators who seek alternatives to the crushing influence of a limited cognitive curriculum.

Available from Longman, Inc., 19 West 44th St., New York, NY 10036, for \$12.95.

Developing the Curriculum.

Peter F. Oliva.

Boston, Massachusetts:

Little, Brown, and Company, 1982.

—Reviewed by D. John McIntyre, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois.

Oliva thoroughly analyzes the curriculum development process. Students of curriculum, as well as school administrators and teachers involved in curriculum planning, will find his book a perfect blend of the theoretical dimensions and practical applications in curriculum development.

Each chapter begins with a set of goals and concludes with supplementary exercises to reinforce the goals. Consequently, the readers follow a step-by-step process for curriculum develop-

ment from beginning to end.

Available from Little, Brown, and Company, 34 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02106, for \$19.95.

The Solution Book: A Guide to Classroom Discipline.

Randall Sprick.

Chicago, Illinois:

Science Research Associates, Incorporated,
1981.

—Reviewed by Mildred G. Ness, James P. B. Duffy School No. 12, Rochester, New York.

It's hard not to suspect a book that offers "solutions" to classroom discipline problems, but if you have faith and can follow a detailed blueprint for success, this volume may be for you. And volume it is! It's a virtual encyclopedia of teaching that covers everything you ever wanted to know about managing a classroom. Conveniently bound in loose-leaf form, *The Solution Book* is in three sections. Nine topic booklets in the first section cover basic information for organizing and sustaining positive classroom environments. The second part consists of a series of one hundred "Solution Sheets," each one describing a behavior problem, the possible causes for the behavior, a plan for eliminating undesirable behaviors, and suggested consequences if negative behavior continues. The third section contains materials that can be reproduced, such as forms and checklists.

All the concepts and recommendations are part of an experienced teacher's standard repertoire, making the book a valuable asset for new teachers and a reminder of tried and true techniques for more experienced teachers.

Available from Science Research Associates, Incorporated, 155 North Wacker Dr., Chicago, IL 60606, for \$39.50.

Evaluating Educational Programs.

Mitchell Lazarus.

Arlington, Virginia:

American Association of School
Administrators, 1982.

—Reviewed by Gerald V. Teague, University of Maryland, College Park.

Program evaluation is conducted by many, understood by some, and used correctly by few. This compact publica-

tion seeks to alter this imbalance by enlightening one group of evaluation consumers: educational administrators.

By combining the results of a nationwide survey of educational evaluation practices with an introduction to the field and recommendations by experienced program evaluators, Lazarus presents both theory and practice. Supplementary tidbits of information appear in lists, charts, and graphs throughout. The comprehensive, though brief, coverage of considerations affecting evaluation—such as identifying goals, selecting tests, reporting results, and interpreting findings—are useful. Lazarus also warns users of potential pitfalls, most of which occur due to lack of prior planning or misunderstanding of proper usage.

Available from American Association of School Administrators, 1801 N. Moore St., Arlington, VA 22209, for \$10.95.

Evaluating Educational Personnel.

Anne C. Lewis.
Arlington, Virginia:
American Association of School
Administrators, 1982.

—Reviewed by Bill Ernest, University of Montevallo, Montevallo, Alabama.

Lewis' major message is that effective evaluation of personnel is one way of improving our schools. Extensive studies on personnel evaluation fill our library shelves, but too many of them simply describe evaluation systems. This small, practical volume not only describes evaluation systems gathered from over 400 school districts but includes the vital step beyond—how evaluation systems can lead to educational improvement.

I recommend this book for practicing administrators and teachers who want to read an update on evaluating personnel and who believe that successful use of personnel evaluation can improve teaching.

Available from American Association of School Administrators, 1801 N. Moore St., Arlington, VA 22209, for \$11.95.

Handbook for Developing Schools With Good Discipline.

William W. Wayson, Gary G. DeVoss,
Susan C. Kaeser, Thomas Lasley, Gay Su
Pinnell, and the Phi Delta Kappa
Commission on Discipline.
Bloomington, Indiana:
Phi Delta Kappa, 1982.

—Reviewed by James Nighswander, Springfield Public Schools, Springfield, Illinois.

In 12 of the last 13 years, discipline has been rated in the Gallup Poll as the most serious problem confronting public education. *The Handbook for Developing Schools With Good Discipline*, an outgrowth of a year-long study conducted by the PDK Commission on Discipline, was written as a guide to aid local districts in improving discipline problems.

Although I can argue with the methodology used in identifying the "schools with exemplary discipline," I find little fault with the listings of common characteristics of schools with good discipline or the recommendations and guidelines for planning discipline improvement programs. Two points of particular merit in the handbook are references to the importance of (1) a balance between preventive and corrective approaches to discipline improvement and (2) the involvement of the community in planning discipline programs.

Achieving substantive change in student discipline can be facilitated by using this handbook. While not a complete guide to discipline improvement, it serves as a valuable resource to local school officials who wish to take the initiative in coping with the discipline problem.

Available from Phi Delta Kappa, 8th and Union Ave., Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402, for \$3.50.

Directory of Schools Reported to Have Exemplary Discipline.

Gay Su Pinnell, Thomas Lasley, William
W. Wayson, George Wynn, and the Phi
Delta Kappa Commission on Discipline.
Bloomington, Indiana:
Phi Delta Kappa, 1982.

—Reviewed by James Nighswander, Springfield Public Schools, Springfield, Illinois.

A companion to the PDK *Handbook for Developing Schools With Good Discipline*, the directory serves as a reference guide to activities and procedures that are reported to be successful in maintaining good discipline. In addition to a simple listing of schools and districts, one section contains a "program activity index." With the index a reader may select specific discipline activity categories and identify schools that provide those exemplary activities.

My criticism of this directory is the same as that for the handbook. They relied on self-reports and nominations in selecting the schools included and did not validate the selections, thus diminishing the list's credibility and value to a potential user.

Available from Phi Delta Kappa for \$6.

The Parents' Handbook on School Testing.

Ann E. Boehm and Mary Alice White.
New York:
Teachers College Press, 1982.

—Reviewed by Joan Seliger Sidney, Eastern Connecticut State College, Willimantic, Connecticut.

Anything a parent has ever wanted to know about school testing can be found in this comprehensive handbook. Several chapters concentrate on standardized testing: IQ, achievement, aptitude, interest, and personality tests; how to read test scores; how scores are used; and questions parents should ask at conferences along with sample dialogues demonstrating how. Other chapters cover understanding school records and their potential abuse, testing special needs children, helping your child prepare for tests, and choosing a school.

Written by educators who have sat on both sides of the desk, the handbook's dual perspective and reams of information make it relevant for educators, too.

Available from Teachers College Press for \$14.95.

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