

Overview

RON BRANDT

Ronald S. Brandt
Executive Editor

Nancy S. Olson
Senior Editor

Nancy Carter Modrak
Managing Editor

Al Way
Art Director

Sally Banks Zakariya
Contributing Editor

Teola T. Jones
Advertising Manager

Gayle L. Rockwell
Administrative Assistant

Jo Ann Irick
David Gibson
Editorial Assistants

September 1983

Volume 41

Number 1

Educational Leadership is intended primarily for leaders in elementary and secondary education but is also for anyone interested in curriculum, instruction, supervision, and leadership in schools. ASCD publications present a variety of viewpoints. The views expressed or implied in this publication are not necessarily official positions of the Association. Copyright © 1983 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.

ISSN 0013-1784
Sept. 83 stock no. 611-83306

QUE SERA, SERA?

On the eve of 1984, most of us are fascinated by, but uneasy about, the future. We realize, as many of the authors in this issue point out, that educators have a special need to study the future because our students will live there. But we aren't sure we can really divine its secrets.

Harold Shane (p. 11) believes we can, not with absolute certainty, of course, but with reasonable accuracy. He cites predictions by the Rand Corporation and other groups and individuals that were surprisingly correct. An early advocate of futurizing in education, Shane has written three books and numerous articles on the subject. His writings and speeches catalog stupendous problems that by now are depressingly familiar: pollution, depletion of natural resources, nuclear proliferation, overpopulation. But he is not discouraged; for every problem, he can suggest ten things we should be doing.

Jesco von Puttkamer (p. 4), a planner for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, is even more optimistic. Drawing on the work of French philosopher Teilhard de Chardin, von Puttkamer muses on the pattern of human achievements and prophesies our continuing evolution to higher and higher forms of consciousness.

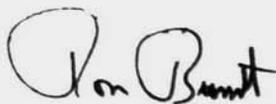
Because the computer is rapidly reshaping the world, both in and out of schools, we include in this theme issue a symposium on the future of computers in education. We wanted a variety of views and we got them, ranging from suggestions that schools are obsolete to the skepticism of Charles Suhor (p. 30) who believes that as computers become familiar tools, the notion of "computer literacy" will be superfluous.

Joseph Kirkman and his co-authors join in lambasting the commonly accepted definition of computer literacy, calling it "already a ghost of an education past" (p. 38). They report work on an "information technology" curriculum intended to teach all students ways information can be encoded, stored,

processed, and retrieved. They also agree with the Task Force on Education for Economic Growth (p. 14), sponsored by the Education Commission of the States, that higher-order reasoning skills are tomorrow's basics, although their curriculum will stress *intuitive* reasoning rather than traditional logical models.

With technological and other changes coming faster every year, schools and school systems need ways to sense what's ahead. John Naisbitt's *Megatrends*—criticized, incidentally, by Louis Goldman (p. 55)—dramatizes the use of scanning and related techniques for detecting major national and international trends. William Renfro and James Morrison (p. 50) explain how state and local school systems can use a scanning process to anticipate and manage change. As an example of how local schools can look to the future, Paul Houston (p. 47) reports results of a school-community task force organized by the Princeton, New Jersey, public schools.

In a song made popular by Doris Day in the 1950s, a mother advised her daughter not to think about the future: "Que sera, sera; whatever will be, will be. The future's not ours to see, que sera, sera." Futurists reject such fatalism. True, we can't foresee exactly what will happen, but we can make informed projections about what is possible and probable. Then, with planning, we can increase the probability that our preferences become reality. □



Copyright © 1983 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.