

# We Are Not Testing Epstein's Ideas: A Response to Richard McQueen

MARTIN G. BROOKS

**B**rain growth periodization, and its potential application to educational settings, provides rich material for debate. If Epstein's periodization theory is accurate, the ramifications for education may be significant. If, as McQueen asserts, Epstein's theory is faulty, districts would be well advised to resist the temptation to base curriculum and operational decisions on it.

This debate, however interesting it may be, is speculative at this point because there are no hard data in the

educational arena that either definitely support or refute Epstein's theory, and there are no measures or research methods that can test it. For these reasons, much of the criticism leveled at Epstein is directed at his research and data collection methodologies, not his ideas.

*Martin G. Brooks is Director of Elementary Education, Shoreham-Wading River Central School District, Shoreham, New York.*

We presented Epstein's ideas in our article, "Cognitive Levels Matching" (May 1983) because, if accurate, they lend biological support to the observations and theories of Piaget, on whose work the CLM project is based. The Cognitive Levels Matching project, however, does not test Epstein's ideas. The thrust of our project is the process of cognitive development and how we, as educators, may facilitate this process through carefully planned interventions with our students. □

## Brain Growth and Cognitive Development: A Response to Richard McQueen

The Cognitive Levels Matching Project is entirely independent of brain studies. However, brain growth stages paralleling mental growth stages is an experimentally demonstrable fact.

HERMAN EPSTEIN

**I**am grateful for this opportunity to comment on an article that is so critical of some aspects of my analyses of brain development. The article itself is mainly irrelevant, partly wrong, and, in a small part, correct.

Most of what McQueen says is in the realm of anecdotes based on unpublished communications with a number of individuals. Such material should not

be published since it is hearsay and there is no way for anyone to verify that such comments were made, let alone intended for use in the given context. Nor is an educational journal the place for discussing brain data. While the

*Herman Epstein is Professor of Biophysics, Department of Biology, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts.*

education community may need to hear this criticism, I restrict my comments to items that relate to verifiable information.

McQueen's remarks about my use of the Shuttleworth data show the kind of erroneous thinking about which I always warn when discussing those data. It is inferred that just because there is differential brain growth at some age,

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