

In Search of Mind: Essays In Autobiography.

Jerome Bruner

New York:

Harper & Row, 1983.

—Reviewed by Frances R. Link, Curriculum Development Associates, Washington, D.C.

Jerome Bruner has written a serious, engaging, and mysterious set of autobiographical essays. This new volume exemplifies Bruner's power to write elegantly and to extend our thinking and knowledge about psychology, education, and the human condition.

The *Essays* recount Bruner's book and research, including *A Study of Thinking* (1956) and *The Process of Education* (1959). The latter, a report on an international conference on science education at Woods Hole, transformed the nature of curriculum development, a surprise even to Professor Bruner. *Toward a Theory of Instruction* appeared during the development of the curriculum, "Man: A Course of Study."

In the chapter, "The New Curriculum," Bruner describes how the "Sputnik shock" was transformed into a curriculum reform movement. In this essay he likens the "ideal curriculum-maker to Socrates instructing the slave in the Meno—one who arranges things in such a way that everybody will understand, all will be among the 'cans' rather than the 'cannots.'" In contrast, Bruner says most psychologists typically construct tasks or tests that separate the children who can from those who cannot, the former being labeled "smarter" or "more mature." He reviews the history of the curriculum movement when university scholars and teachers worked in collaboration. His tentative interpretation of what "killed" this curriculum movement is worthy of analysis and continued discussion. The far "right" attack on "Man: A Course of Study" has made clear for him that any inquiry into what makes human beings human is a plunge into a central political issue of education, particularly in the United States. The fact that "man" is still taught in many classrooms in the U.S., Australia, and the United Kingdom makes it a classic. Bruner believes that

teachers and students remain the greatest influence in the process of change and in determining what is worth knowing.

Early in the *Essays*, Bruner discusses the mainstream psychology that he encountered as a graduate student at Harvard. He says he did not realize that the intellectual tide was turning. He writes:

What happened of course was that psychology's world was turned topsy-turvy not by psychology itself but by modern theories of computation, of linguistics, of anthropology, indeed even of biology.

In the chapter, "Ornaments of Consciousness," Bruner introduces the idea of the narrative mode of thinking rather than the logical mode, and discusses *On Knowing: Essays For the Left Hand*, published in the 60s.

Each autobiographical essay is analytical, interpretive, and musical. Themes reoccur related to new concepts and experiences, always developing intellectual harmony and new personal insights into relationships among the disciplines. In one sense the essays are Bruner's personal history and commentary on developmental psychology, psycholinguistics, and education. In another sense, they are an adventure where one is privileged to meet extravagant people.

Professor Bruner taught at Harvard from 1945 to 1972. From his position as head of the Center for Cognitive Studies, which he helped found in the 1960s, he continued his research and teaching at Oxford University until 1981, and is now at the New School for Social Research in New York City. Professionally and personally, he has come full compass. He shares important memories of his youth in New York, tender glimpses into several marriages and being a "sensitive" father, personal psychoanalysis, and a voyage to England as a skilled navigator. He is a caring and daring psychologist who continuously explores the nature of human nature. *In Search of Mind: Essays in Autobiography* is one of a series of career studies of eminent scholars sponsored by the Sloan Foundation.

Available from Harper & Row, 10 E. 53 St., New York, NY 10022, for \$20.00.

Schooling In America: Scapegoat and Salvation.

Seymour B. Sarason

North Babylon, New York:

The Free Press, 1983.

—Reviewed by William Leary, North Babylon Union Free School District.

Seymour Sarason discovered in 1983 that learning might better take place in educational settings other than traditional classrooms. He argues that schools, both public and private, are not "interesting" places to be or to learn. This applies to students and teachers alike. He points out that he does not use the word "interesting" to be a synonym for "happy." The learning process, should be satisfying, he says, and cites complaints by students and teachers that learning is *not* a satisfying experience. He includes in the learning process such elements as questioning, challenge, frustration, and difficulty.

What, then, does Sarason offer in his book as possible alternatives to public and private schools as we know them? Very little specifically. He does not believe that changing the structure of the schools, or vouchers and tax credits, will help. He supports rethinking traditional educational patterns and devising out-of-classroom alternatives to learning, but leaves it to others to design the alternatives.

Sarason's call to society is not a bold one, but an old one. As a member of the educational establishment, I predict that few in the schools will pay attention. It is too vague a banner to rally 'round.

Available from The Free Press, 836 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022, for \$20.00.

Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Stephen R. Graubard, Editor

Waltham, Massachusetts:

Daedalus Subscription Department, 1983.

—Reviewed by Ira Schwarz

This is a useful work for researchers and educators concerned about the "tide

of mediocrity" in America's schools. Presenting both "good news and bad news," this collection of 12 essays offers positive and negative aspects of the contemporary status of arts and humanities education.

According to editor Graubard, this study is the first phase of a report "that will eventually touch on humanities instruction more generally in the country." Undoubtedly, the materials of this issue are significant, but there are numerous "loose-ends"—a differentiation between "arts" and "humanities" education, for example—which, it is hoped, will be resolved as the investigation continues.

Serious students may find *Coming to Our Senses*, by the Arts, Education and Americas Panel (McGraw-Hill, 1977), and *Arts and Humanities: Perspectives* (ERIC Microfiche, ED 170, 208, 1979) helpful comparative supplements to the *Daedalus* study.

Available from Daedalus Subscription Department, 1440 Main St., Waltham, MA 02254, for \$5.00.

Widening Circles.

Elizabeth Lyttleton Sturz
New York:
Harper & Row, 1983.

—Reviewed by Roy R. Pellicano, City University of New York.

At a time when critics and reformers are focusing upon in-school variables to "rebuild" schools, *Widening Circles* reminds us that schools cannot ignore the multiplicity of social and economic forces that paralyze those who drop out of or fall through the institution, be they clients or staff.

Elizabeth Sturz relates the need for resocialization of alienated youth using work, counselling, peers and trained staff to recreate nuclear and extended family structure and support. The author describes how a narrow circle of encouragement and nurturance in the South Bronx can generate individuals capable of self-assurance and self-reliance, the building blocks for success in

contemporary society. The significance of this project is its emphasis on social support and traditional values to foster positive role models and widen vistas.

Widening Circles will provide sustenance for those who seek balance in and relief from reforms that emphasize extrinsic motivations for staff and students.

Available from Harper & Row, 10 East 53rd St., New York, NY 10022, for \$15.95.

Measurement and Evaluation in Education and Psychology, 3rd ed.

William A. Mehrens and Irvin J. Lehmann
New York:
Holt, Rinehart and Winston

—Reviewed by Robert Crumpton, Minnesota State Department of Education, St. Paul.

The basic rationale behind this text for practitioners is that effective educational decisions are based on accurate information, and that the responsibility of gathering, using, and imparting that information belongs to educators. The contents of this book are clear and comprehensive. There are certain knowledges, skills, and understandings for which classroom teachers, counselors, and school administrators should be held accountable if they are to collect accurate and useful information. No formal course work in either testing or statistics is necessary to understand the text. Each chapter presents what the learner is expected to know after studying the material: the theory and comments with examples; a summary; points to ponder; and references. The introductory chapter discusses the relationship between information gathering and education decision making as well as the purposes of measurement and evaluation. The remainder of the book gives an encyclopedic coverage of basic and current issues in measurement and evaluation.

Available from Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 383 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10017.

Comprehension Instruction: Perspectives and Suggestions.

Gerald C. Duffy, Laura R. Roehler, and
Jana Mason, Editors
New York:
Longman, Inc., 1983

—Reviewed by Phil Vik, University of South Dakota, Vermillion.

The research on comprehension and the teaching of comprehension from the Institute for Research on Teaching and the Center for the Study of Reading is synthesized by the editors in this volume. The book is an effort to improve the practice of teaching comprehension in reading and other content areas for public school personnel and teacher educators.

Part 1 of the book sets the stage for examining comprehension instruction; part 2 focuses on constraints of instruction; part 3 examines various kinds of texts and readability formulas; part 4 emphasizes how to teach comprehension, including teacher questioning, instructional strategies, direct explanation and others; and the last part is a single chapter which summarizes parts 2-4.

Available from Longman, Inc., 1560 Broadway, New York, NY 10036, for \$29.95.

Perspectives: A Teaching Guide to Concepts of Peace.

Cambridge, Massachusetts:
Educators for Social Responsibility, 1983.

—Reviewed by Bethene LeMahieu, Montclair Public Schools, Montclair, New Jersey.

What does peace mean? How can it be preserved? Who can be considered a peacemaker? These are the kinds of issues dealt with in the book. Many K-6 and 7-12 activities and many, often opposing, views are collected for the teacher.

Reviews

Some may regard the material as political. The contributors, eighty of them, are sensitive to that problem. Issues are presented in their complexity.

A chapter on conflict resolution—skills to give students practical experience in peacemaking—is included in both the K-6 and 7-12 sections. Students are encouraged to imagine the future—to see choices and alternatives—and to be confident that the future is theirs to control.

Teachers, primarily, but also administrators and parents, will find a wealth of material in this book. Extensive bibliographies are included.

Available from Educators for Social Responsibility, 23 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138.

Putting Computer Power in Schools

Jerry and Janice Patterson
Englewood Cliffs
Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1983

—Reviewed by Arthur Steller, Superintendent of Schools, Mercer County Public Schools, Princeton, West Virginia

Computers are the latest educational tidal wave to sweep over the nation's schoolhouses. Public and professional interest in this technology can be overwhelming. The terminology and the hardware itself are hurdles for the computer novice. This practical volume demystifies computer jargon and offers step-by-step guidelines for implementing a computer program within a school district.

Educators can draw from the numerous examples of applications in schools across the country. Two computer literacy model programs are described in sufficient detail to be helpful for curriculum developers. After reading this book, administrators will likely revisit the sections on establishing management information systems, reducing paperwork, creating startup plans, and developing long-range plans for computer education. Chapters on computer assisted instruction and computer managed instruction will draw the attention of teachers and supervisors.

Purchasing a computer is made easier by following the authors' "Computer Selection Checklist." Another item even more useful is the "software evaluation form." This new guidebook doesn't answer every single question about computers, but it goes a long way in aiding those concerned with *Putting Computer Power in Schools*.

Program Evaluation Sourcebook, Design Manual, and Sourcebook Casebook

Robert O. Brinkerhoff, Dale M. Brethower,
Terry Hluchy,
and Jeri Ridings Nowakowski
Hingham, Mass.:
Kluwer Boston, Inc., 1983.

—Reviewed by Edward Garten, Director of Libraries and Media Services, Tennessee Tech University, Cookeville.

These materials, developed by the Evaluation Training Consortium project at Western Michigan University, are designed to be used in professional development programs and projects in private and public agencies, public schools, and colleges and universities. The materials are about designing, conducting, and using evaluation, emphasizing its power to improve current and future training efforts. The materials can be used by one person or a group. The package contains several parts: (1) Sourcebook, containing guidelines, resources, and references for each of seven evaluation steps, for example: focusing an evaluation and clarifying its purpose; designing an evaluation; collecting information; analyzing information; reporting, interpreting, and using the findings; managing evaluation activities; and evaluating evaluation efforts; (2) Casebook, a collection of 12 stories about evaluation applied to real-life projects and programs; and (3) Design Manual, containing a programmed set of directions, worksheets, and checklists to help design an evaluation. This reviewer was impressed with the evident comprehensiveness of the materials,

their high level of readability, and overall practicality. Moreover, organizational and graphic attractiveness add to their usefulness. Its lucid and compelling approach to evaluation should receive wide attention among educators and school administrators.

Available from Kluwer-Nijhoff Publishing, Kluwer Boston, Inc., 190 Old Derby St., Hingham, MA 02043, for \$75.85.

Electronic Life: How to Think About Computers

Michael Crichton
New York:
Alfred A. Knopf, 1983.

—Reviewed by Albert L. Goldberg, Wayne County Intermediate School District, Wayne, Michigan.

We now have a new genre of writing: confessions of prominent people who reveal "How I overcame my fear of computers," "How I learned enough jargon to get on with it," and "How I learned to love my computer."

Crichton—physician (Harvard Medical School), writer (*Andromeda Strain*), and movie director (*Westworld*, *Coma*)—is a highly readable author who offers an abundance of good sense to the computer innocent. Today's and tomorrow's computers, he says, are as easy to use as the telephone. To make the hardware and software do our bidding, we need a minimum of technical expertise and jargon—about as much as it takes to be able to discuss most sports. It's a new language, but not an impossible one.

The book is upbeat; the layout makes for easy browsing, to pick up and put down. It is organized alphabetically, with a number of cross-references.

Crichton believes people should develop a positive attitude about computers, with realistic expectations, yet be wary of the hype from vendors, and especially from recent converts to computers.

Available from Alfred A. Knopf, New York, NY, for \$12.95.

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