Book Reviews

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A Dialogue on Education and the Control of Human Behavior. *Carl R. Rogers and B. F. Skinner. New York: Jeffrey Norton Publishers, Inc., 1976.* A 6-Cassette Album edited by Gerald A. Gladstein. *—Reviewed by Philip L. Hosford, Professor of Education, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, and President of ASCD, 1976-77.**

Carl Rogers and B. F. Skinner have been engaged in their dialogue for over 20 years and one can easily determine why this is so by listening to these tapes. Both men speak with compassion and show an earnest, sincere desire to understand the point of view of the other while they speak from different corners of ontology and epistemology.

This particular dialogue was recorded in 1962 at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, and grew out of the controversy created by their earlier "friendly debate" held at the 1956 American Psychological Association convention. Their debates seem to have stimulated much of their later writings and, I suspect, much of the writings of others on the general subject of behaviorism vs. humanism.

This package of six cassettes is accompanied by a 19-page pamphlet in which Gladstein wastes no words in presenting the background and pre-dialogue historical context, his own personal account and observations of the dialogue and two-day conference, post-dialogue developments, and a review of selected writings of the two men up through 1975, beginning with Skinner's *Walden Two* of 1948. One also finds a helpful synopsis of the content of the tapes and an excellent selected list of publications by Rogers and Skinner



illustrating their ideas prior to and after the 1962 dialogue.

Each of the six cassettes is clearly labeled to indicate topic and number of minutes recorded on each side. The series begins with introductory statements by Rogers and Skinner of 15 to 20 minutes each, followed by two hours and five minutes of recorded dialogue between the two men. The last two tapes include 50 minutes of the question and answer session and 20 minutes of final summarization.

In my perception, seven areas of agreement and only two areas of disagreement seem to stand clear after listening to the tapes.

Both men agree:

1. On the vast untapped potentials of humans that have not been fully developed;
2. Behavioral science will play an important role in redesigning our cultures;
3. Humans are conditioned, but they can use conditions to achieve some desired effects;
4. Too much amateur psychiatry impedes objective study of human behavior;
5. We must be concerned with the important practical consequences of human behaviors;
6. Humans can be seen as determined by their genetic and cultural influences when viewed objectively only from the external world;
7. Positive reinforcement is an important valuable concept, but is not sufficient to explain everything.

Areas of disagreement:

1. Rogers believes that we are subjective and that fact is more primitive than anything else. Our subjectivity influences our experience.

Skinner holds that feelings

* As President of ASCD, Philip L. Hosford will be seeking a synthesis of Behaviorism and Humanism in dialogue with two scholars, Art Combs and James Popham, during the Second General Session of the ASCD Annual Conference to be held in Houston, March 19-23, 1977.

result from experiences. Even such things as knowledge of self-courage have been put in us by experience and conditions, not drawn out as some innate thing. Rogers insists that subjective feelings of freedom to choose are not predetermined. Although we do need to study cause and effect, our science must be broad enough to include subjective aspects of human behavior. Skinner states he is trying to develop a philosophy void of inner initial explanations which seem to have served their purpose and are now outmoded.

2. Because of the above disagreement it naturally follows that the men disagree on how humans should set about improving their lot. Rogers would have us set values first and then design a culture to bring those values about. Skinner would suggest that we study the present set of conditions and reinforcements and design changes therein according to the known consequences.

Although the dialogues are on a theoretical level, the views of the two men were immediately and easily applied to practical situations in the Question-Answer Session. To illustrate, several questions and answers are paraphrased:

Q: *How do you differ in teaching students?*

S: I treat them as rational beings.

R: Outcomes are not set, students are in the process of becoming.

Q: *Can a high school counselor use both approaches effectively?*

R: Little research is available; one study shows best effectiveness through Rogerian style of counseling.

S: I would opt for more preventive work—examining schedules, reward systems met by students in a school. One can't do much with just one student across the desk.

Q: *If we eliminated all tensions would we also be eliminating geniuses?*

S: No. We will always have geniuses of relevance to the times.

R: No way to eliminate tensions. Constructive tensions are needed and good.

But one must listen to the tapes to gain the full flavor of the two men in 1962 as well as a better understanding of their writings since that time. Because both men are obviously concerned with improving the future of humanity, the tapes reflect much more than "just another philosophical discussion about free will." Skinner's summary statement regarding the possibility that "planning injures the product planned" is eloquent. So, too, is Rogers' plea for a broader science to include aspects of subjectivity.

During the past 15 years, their dialogue stirred much debate about choice and values, and societal understandings of the issues have not yet reached the consensus stage. As I have stated in other writings, we confront today an appropriate time for synthesis. The availability of this primary source in attempting any such synthesis of the two fields of thought is critical to all interested scholars as well as to practitioners hoping to refine their own guidelines in the arena of curriculum development and instructional improvement. We owe much to Gladstein for his efforts in finally arranging for the release of these tapes.

Learning to Play, Playing to Learn. *Eli M. Bower, Kendra Bersamin, Amy Fine, Joy Carlson, et al. University of California at Berkeley, School of Education. New York: Human Sciences Press, 1975. 158 pp. —Reviewed by John W. Hollomon, Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education, The University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio.*

The exceptional power of the learning-playing relation has been stressed by childhood educators ever since Plato advocated young children's spontaneous and imaginative play as an educational device. Viewing play and learning as being intimately intertwined, the authors of this document found it not too difficult to demonstrate a logical relationship between a child's developing intelligence and the development of skills. The book deals succinctly with the differences between learning to play and playing to learn. In this manner, the authors deal not only with the power of play and games but also with the comfort and fun of being sensibly foolish—the joy of living, learning, and playing.

Competitive play is equated with a struggle for competence oriented toward winning; whereas playing for fun is associated with zest and challenge in human relationships. The thesis that emerges is that it is probable that learning to play may be more critical and significant to the child than playing to learn. The thesis is developed from the point of view that "play can enhance learning as learning can incite the spirit of play" (p. 3). That is, if children are to learn to play and play to learn, they must be left to choose. It is in free choice that creativity and imagination are nourished.

The book is not coherently ordered and sequenced, but rather offers an array of fun and games designed to invite children to become active participants, to involve them in objective inquiry, and to apply their acquired knowledge and skills in both real-life and simulated conditions. The basic objective is to help children broaden their experiences and to feel a measure of success in coping effectively. The book emphasizes the importance of learning through educational play which requires contact with inquiry skills, the discovery and use of resources and other sources of knowledge, and experience within the range of educational concerns.

Educational play also requires the individual to deal both with self and others in order to be enjoyed. A further requirement is the guidance of mediating adults, who "are able to build affective bridges with children over which all kinds of conceptual cognitive-affective traffic can pass" (p. 31).

Such bridges allow play to be enjoyable, serious, and voluntary, although logically structured to roughly resemble the developmental universals of the human mind.

Perhaps the greatest strength of this document rests in its plethora of games, exercises, puzzles, and other playful tidbits, and in its side-by-side presentation of the humanizing ingredients of playing and learning. Its organizational structure—a potpourri of bits and pieces of events, experiences, wild thoughts, constant comments, creative beginnings, and sad conclusions—is to be commended. The reader can open to any page and get into any content of the learning-playing relation.

This book is an asset to any elementary school teacher who desires to make learning enjoyable, serious, and voluntary through fun and games.

Living with Preschoolers. *Willard Abraham. Phoenix, Arizona: O'Sullivan Woodside & Company, 1976. 145 pp. —Reviewed by John W. Hollomon, Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education, The University of Texas at San Antonio.*

It is unusual to read a book that is provocative, and that at the same time provides a variety of practical approaches to understanding and living with preschoolers which make it well worth reading. In *Living with Preschoolers,* Willard Abraham deals not only with the need for adult sensitivity to child development and growth but also with the need to understand that a child must manifest certain behaviors in order to become socialized into the adult value systems. The book conceptualizes a series of issues related to the daily crisis, uncertain boundaries, continuous ambiguity, and problems inherent in living with preschoolers. In 36 short but concise chapters, Abraham offers down-to-earth and straightforward advice to parents and preschool teachers for understanding the growth motives of young children. In this manner, practical approaches are suggested for living with the "terrible twos," the "trusting threes," the "frustrating fours," and the "fascinating fives."

The basic premise of the book is that a preschool child's growth motives are unpredictable to say the least, and challenging to adult sensitivity and understanding to say the most. However, Abraham recognizes that it is not always fun-and-games for either the parent or the preschool teacher to understand and appropriately respond to the child's curious, exploratory, inquiry, and testing behaviors. The book therefore espouses the need to legitimatize the manifestation of those behaviors necessary for development and learning, in order for the child to grow up and become enculturated into the social norms of adult society.

Abraham's basic argument is that behavior which causes concern for parents and teachers when manifested by a child of ten or twelve should only rarely be a problem when a child is still very young. That is, "The one thing we can be sure of with young children (and older ones too) is that the unexpected is likely to happen" (p. 5). The primary task of the adult is to see and listen to what the child does and says, and discover the child's own meanings in the messages she/he conveys. Such conscious efforts help the adult to understand not only the behaviors manifested but also to respond to these behaviors in caring and interesting ways. Thus, throughout the book, the apparent emphasis is on helping parents and preschool teachers to understand and deal effectively with the growing child, as she/he strives toward self-realization. However, Abraham cautions that this takes not only a little time and practice but also a predisposition to tolerate the child's growth motives.

Perhaps the strength of the book rests in its simplicity. In its numerous examples, the focus is on the role played by an affective climate on the activities in which young children participate, in accordance with their interests, pursuits, questions, purposes, and play. The book also accounts for mechanisms of social control, uses of space and time, and the adult-child and child-child interactional relation. In the process, Abraham appeals to parents and preschool teachers to examine carefully the extent to which they can respond to young children's behaviors with compassion and understanding, without hurting. Nevertheless, Abraham does not fail to recognize the fact that even parents and preschool teachers, knowledgeable about and experienced in living with young children, are at times ill-equipped to deal effectively with some behaviors when manifested within the contexts of some situations.

Although written with compassion, simplicity, and a profound understanding of the lives of young children, the book lacks coherence and orderly sequence. It is a series of bits and pieces which form a smorgasbord of events in the lives of preschoolers and the adults who live with them. Consequently, after reading the book, the reader may well be left with feelings of fragmentation and uncertainty. The reader may also be led to question the authority of one writer's suggestions for dealing with such a variety of issues. Otherwise, *Living with Preschoolers* is well worth reading. It has obvious appeal to both parents and preschool teachers, who live with children ranging from the terrible twos to the fascinating fives.

The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education. *David B. Tyack. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1974. 353 pp. —Reviewed by M. Donald Thomas, Superintendent, Salt Lake City School District, Utah.*

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Tyack's book should also be read by school board members. Why? Because those who are giving direction to public schools need to understand their basic task—to create schools which really teach students, which serve the quest for social justice, and which share decision making. It is a task which requires "persistent imagination, wisdom, and will."

The One Best System contributes to an understanding of the task. It provides a variety of new perspectives on the development of public schools: for example, the struggles for consolidation and standardization of schools. "The contests we have seen in microcosm in the countryside we will now trace as they developed in villages swelling into vast cities." The book also establishes a scholarly basis for needed reform in education.

Tyack's style, dramatic anecdotes and inspirational appeals reassert Horace Mann's admonition that one "should be ashamed to die until he has won some victory for mankind." "Yet in the old goal of a common school, reinterpreted in radically reformed institutions," Tyack states, "lies a legacy essential to a quest for social justice."

The book takes its title from the American tradition of trying to establish *the* one best school system. Public education began with rural governance, proceeded to consolidation and standardization, then turned to centralization of power and to the corporate model, and is now turning back to local control. Tyack presents a brilliant analysis of the actors, the struggles, and the forces which moved education from rural villages to sprawling urban centers. He brings into sharp focus the problems and challenges of urban education. Especially worthwhile are sections which deal with minorities.

Although Tyack is sympathetic to the contributions made by school people, he is also a wise and penetrating critic. While pointing out the successful assimilation of immigrants, he nevertheless laments the predicament of the "Italian boy suspended between two worlds"—that of the family and that of the school. While he extols the virtues of committed educational leaders, he deplores the treatment of blacks. "While groups like the Germans won expensive concessions like special language classes, blacks had to fight for crumbs."

The history of schools is worthy of being celebrated, and it is also the basis for national shame and sorrow. Tyack, however, continues to have faith in public education: "Despite the efflorescence of proposals for alternatives to public schooling, it seems likely that effective improvement of the education of the urban poor will occur within the public schools if, indeed, it is to come about at all."

The book contains a prologue, five units, and an epilogue. It has extensive references, a comprehensive bibliography, and an index. As an added bit of seasoning it utilizes nostalgic illustrations.

If you don't read *The One*

Best System it isn't because you don't have time or because you have not been urged to do so. It's because you really don't care about our schools, our children, and the desperate need for strong educational direction. Or it may be that you already have the imagination, the wisdom, and the will to establish schools that will teach, and teach justly, all the children of this great nation.

Supervisory Behavior in Education. *Second Edition. Ben M. Harris. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975. 438 pp. —Reviewed by James Esposito, Assistant Professor of Education, University of Virginia, Charlottesville.*

The second edition of *Supervisory Behavior in Education* contributes significantly to the evolving body of knowledge in the area of supervision of instruction. This edition is a completely updated and more comprehensive version of Harris' 1963 publication.

The book is divided into three basic sections. Part I, "Views on the Nature of Instructional Supervision," presents, as Harris states, "a framework of basic concepts for supervisory practices." This framework has been broadened extensively from the first edition. Harris deals with competencies in supervision as well as his already well-established functions and tasks. Chapter 3, "Systems for Operationalizing Supervision Programs" and Chapter 6, "Evaluation of Instructional Programs" are basically new chapters while Chapters 2, "Dynamics of Supervisory Behavior"; 4, "Activities for Supervision Program Implementation"; 5, "Organizing and Staffing for Supervision"; and 7, "Observing and Analyzing Instruction" have been expanded. Chapter 7 includes a section which presents various types of observational instruments. Practicing supervisors concerned with classroom observation will find this chapter most worthwhile.

In Part I no single theory is advocated. Harris has intended to set forth "an analytical view of the total school operation as a point of departure from which many supervisory approaches are possible." His intentions are realized and an understandable and meaningful conceptual base is established. In these first chapters, terms are defined, strategies analyzed, and alternative approaches presented.

Parts II, "Studies Related to Supervision," and III, "Reports on Supervisors in Action," are presented as supplements to Part I and do provide a reality base for the practical application of the theoretical framework previously established. He makes no effort to present fail-proof method or as he states "exemplary practices" but attempts to present descriptions of real supervisory problems.

Parts II and III may be quite valuable to professors of administration and supervision in classes where students may not have had experience in supervisory settings. (This reviewer has found that the cases presented in Part III have stimulated lively class discussions!) The work, as Harris sees it, was written with the instructional supervisors of *all* job titles and positions in mind in the hope that their understanding of the supervision function and "the ability to facilitate the more dynamic forms of supervisory behavior" will be furthered. Administrators and supervisors open to new techniques and approaches will certainly perceive this book as a worthwhile addition to their professional libraries.

The material in this work is conceptualized, organized, presented, and documented in a scholarly manner. *Supervisory Behavior in Education*, second edition, is valuable to anyone desiring to understand more fully the evolving concepts and practices of supervision.

Reviewers



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