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### Bloom for the lay reader

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professional plan. For instance, some plans may expect to use teaching skills in industry, museums, research institutes or educational television rather than in more conventional teaching situations. Some teacher education programs would be able to accommodate such diverse plans and others would not. The latter group would need to counsel students to seek more appropriate programs elsewhere.

This does not mean that because professional plans can be diverse and unique that teacher education would necessarily have to continue to expand to be all things to all people. For one thing not all professional plans are realistic in terms of student abilities and the available programs; other plans feature aspects which contradict sound educational principles and therefore would need modification. For instance, a plan based on using rote learning as the principle learning device would need to be altered.

Those programs most likely to be able to meet the diversity in plans would be those which seek to identify the basic principles and common understandings that tie together this diversity and render it more intelligible and meaningful. This common base of knowledge and principles drawn from educational research and the foundations of education would serve as a source of unity as students

acquire specialized skills and supervised practice related to their plan.

As Nietzsche said, "If we have our own **why** of life, we shall get along with almost any **how**." The **why** of life lies in the life plan. Schools respond to that **why** by early help in understanding and choosing a life plan, and teacher education responds further in satisfying the **why** by helping to fulfill the professional plan.

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Charles E. Silberman, *Crisis in the Classroom* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>See my article, "What is a School?" *Journal of Educational Thought*, 10, No. 1 (1976), 119-25.

<sup>3</sup>In my article, "A Rationale for the Liberal Education of Educators," *Journal of Teacher Education*, 31, No. 3 (1980), 27-30.

<sup>4</sup>Charles W. Morris, *Varieties of Human Value* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956).

<sup>5</sup>John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass: Howard University Press, 1971), pp. 407-16.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 424-33.

## Review

# Bloom for the lay reader

**All Our Children Learning: A Primer for Parents, Teachers, and Other Educators.** by Benjamin S. Bloom, New York: McGraw Hill, paperback edition, 1982. 275 pp. \$6.95

The purpose of *All Our Children Learning* is, according to Bloom, to communicate his ideas and research to a wide audience. For this purpose, Bloom has chosen 13 papers which were "originally given as presentations to large and varied audiences for some special occasion" (p. vii).

Within the education community Bloom is a fertile and productive thinker, gifted in producing conceptual frameworks like the taxonomy of educational objectives. He has more recently clarified and stated pragmatically important concepts such as "formative and summative evaluation" and "mastery learning" in ways that educators have adopted and adapted. After notable success and a long career in education as a popularizer of ideas (if not an originator), Bloom understandably wishes to spread these ideas to a wider audience.

In his introduction titled "New Directions in Educational Research and Educational Practice," he states that contemporary research in education is moving from the study of "fixed or static variables to variables which are alterable either before the teaching-learning processes or as part of these processes" (p. 1). He presents the following five fixed versus alterable variables:

Fixed	Alterable
Time Available for Learning	Time the Student is Engaged in Learning
Intelligence	Cognitive Entry (Behavior)
Summative (Evaluation)	Formative Testing
Teacher Characteristics	Qualities of Teaching
Parent Status	Home Environment Processes (pp. 2-12)

Emphasis on alterable variables is characteristic of Bloom's pragmatism. He maintains that the shift to alterable variables "enables researchers and educators to move from an emphasis on prediction and the classification of students to a concern for causality and the relations between means and ends in teaching and learning" (p. 1).

The thirteen papers in *All Our Children Learning* are presented in four sections, "Overviews of Education," "Home and School," "Instruction and Curriculum Development" and "Evaluation." Three papers make up each of the sections except "Instructions and Curriculum Development" which contains four. Within each section the papers are arranged from the more recent to the earlier papers.

"Innocence in Education," the first paper in section one, "Overviews of Education," presents a paradox: Professional educators have very little definite knowledge of educational processes to act upon while "journalists, reformers and faddists" have panaceas. Bloom advocates

"systematic ordering of our basic knowledge [about education] in such a way that what is known and true can be acted on, while what is superstition, fad and myth can be recognized as such and used only when there is nothing else to support us in our frustration and despair" (p. 15). He calls for "conceptual and empirical research necessary to establish more complete causal relationships" (p. 17).

He identifies seven areas for research. One is individual differences in learning, where the kernel of Bloom's idea is that students vary in the rate at which they can learn much more than in their capacity to learn. Under the right learning conditions, he claims, 90 percent of the students can learn school subjects "up to the same standard that only the top 10 percent of students have been learning under present conditions" (p. 18).

A second topic is school achievement and its effects, both positive or negative, on personality. A third is teachers versus teaching; "it is not what teachers are like but what they do in interacting with their students in the classroom that determines what students learn and how they feel about learning and themselves" (p. 20). Fourth is the question of what can be learned. Emphasis on learning of information is practically universal, at least as judged from teachers' tests and examinations. In the last 20 years schools have also attempted to stress "interests, attitudes and values in the affective domain" (p. 21). Bloom points out that knowing what to teach and how to teach it also involves what **ought** to be taught. Fifth, he relates the "manifest and latent" curriculums. The latent curriculum is powerful, but not obvious, teaching about "time, order, neatness, promptness and docility" as well as competition and "the consequences of the social pecking order" (p. 23). Sixth, he treats testing and "how testing and evaluation may serve education rather than dominate it" (p. 25). Seventh, Bloom points out that education extends beyond schooling and that education is part of a larger system. The home environment is one obvious part of the larger social system and the economic system of the nation is another. Also parts of the social system affecting education are religious institutions, mass media, the political system and the status system. He states, "It is in these interactions of the subsystems of a nation in relation to both education and the great social problems that new understanding will most probably develop" (p. 27).

"Innocence in Education" contains mention of all the main content of Bloom's succeeding papers in the book. The remaining papers simply elaborate the themes established.

Bloom's impact on international education is illustrated in "Implications of the IEA Studies for Curriculum and Instruction." As a founder of the International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement, he advocates curriculum reform by "highly creative workers who use appropriate evidence and research at each step to insure that the new is really an improvement over what it is to replace" (p. 49).

In the last paper in the first section, "Twenty-Five Years of Educational Research" (Bloom's presidential address in 1966 to the American Educational Research Association) he states that of the 70,000 research studies from the 25 year period preceding 1966, he regards only 70 as being crucial and significant.

In the second section, "Home and School," Bloom gives ideas about the importance of early learning in the

home and the positive effects of nursery school and kindergarten programs "to overcome some of the educational deficiencies commonly found in culturally deprived children" (p. 67). This is from a paper written in 1965 when cultural deprivation was a popular idea. A second paper reviews research in home environmental processes related to elementary school achievement including a checklist of such conditions adapted from a 1963 dissertation by R. H. Dave. The last paper in the section on home and school suggests that schools be reorganized to accommodate individual development by supplying an environment marked by "special groupings of children with common problems, new strategies for learning, more adequate techniques for defining the problems in educationally meaningful terms" (p. 111).

Section three begins with a paper that Bloom presented as a keynote address at the 1978 Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Conference, "New Views of the Learner: Implications for Instruction and Curriculum." The new view of the learner is from Bloom's *Human Characteristics and School Learning* (1976). One of the "constructs" that Bloom presents sums up the new view as follows (his italics): "**Most students become very similar with regard to learning ability, rate of learning, and motivation for further learning when provided with favorable learning conditions**" (p. 135). The second paper, "Learning for Mastery" (1968), describes the background and approach for creating such favorable learning conditions. The third paper, "The Role of Educational Sciences in Curriculum Development" (1963), describes a plan for a center for curriculum development and research. The final paper in this section, "Peak Learning Experiences," identifies and describes those rare classroom sessions that are "so powerful that many students have almost total memory of it twenty years later" (p. 193).

The final section of the book, "Evaluation" begins with "Changes in Evaluation Methods" (1978) which differentiates evaluation as a part of instruction and learning from evaluation as a means to determine the effectiveness of instruction and learning. The second paper, "Some Theoretical Issues Relating to Educational Evaluation" (1969) sets up the rationale for explicit objectives for curriculum, or what came to be known as behavioral objectives. In this paper he also discusses formative and summative evaluation, particularly emphasizing formative evaluation as a "healthy corrective to the teaching process, since it finds difficulties early enough to do something about them as the sequence of learning-teaching develops" (pp. 242-3). The final paper, "Changing Conceptions of Examining at the University of Chicago" (1954), describes the extensive effort beginning in 1931 to develop objective, reliable, and valid examinations for the general education curriculum at the University of Chicago.

**All Our Children Learning**, though an admirable attempt does not, in my opinion, communicate to a wider audience better than the more technical or complex presentations in Bloom's other books. I would have preferred that he write an entirely new summation of his ideas and research. This collection suffers from repetition that could confuse and possibly frustrate the parent, teacher or other educator for whom it is intended. What is needed from Bloom to communicate to a wider audience is an elaboration of the perspective provided from contrasting static versus alterable variables. Compared to his **Human**

bargaining and affirmative action (why affirmative action was included here instead of under personnel administration is beyond me), and fiscal aspects of educational management. The final section, Part III, focuses on the leadership context. Here the authors finally discuss the concept of contextualism. They describe context as "the interrelated conditions in which events occur and thus a useful term for attempting to characterize the connections and coherences that define the ethics, esthetics, and epistemology of administration as a special kind of human activity." Therefore, contextualism would have us view educational administration in terms of its context in the total human and natural environment. Unfortunately, this chapter would have made much more sense early on in the book instead of at Chapter 10. The remainder of the chapters in the final section focuses primarily on administrative leadership in terms of interpersonal behavior, admin-

istrator-board relations and the principalship. The authors conclude with a brief discussion of administration as a continuous beginning with some behavioral requisites necessary for survival: action orientation, decision making, objectivity, authenticity, (in an existentialist sense) and tolerance. Unfortunately, the contemporary context the authors write in seems to be the 1970's with little reference to the future of public education.

All three books provide a diverse approach to the study of educational administration. A much closer reading will be necessary to make an informed judgment about the impact on the field of educational administration.

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## Review

# Democracy in education

**Democracy In Education — Boyd H. Bode** by Robert V. Bullough, Jr. (Bayside, New York: General Hall, Inc., 1981). 258 pp.

Robert Bullough's book has been around since 1981. But it has scarcely received the attention it deserves. It is a book about a man who was immeasurably successful as a champion of progressive education, but who nowadays seems to have been almost forgotten along with the ideals and good sense he professed.

Boyd H. Bode was a friend and follower of John Dewey. But he was no mere servant of the master. He began as a Dewey critic; and while both men could be described as products of their age, each displayed a rather rugged independence when it came to their intellectual outlook. Bode was a Dewey-follower primarily in the sense that he came to terms with changes in tradition somewhat more slowly and reluctantly than Dewey.

Like Dewey, his passion was democracy, and he saw education as the means for promoting and improving democratic life. To us this passion might seem a little quaint, even naive. Perhaps we have become jaded, but we are inclined to think of education as more narrowly focused, as serving the special interests and needs of individuals or groups within the larger society. Curiously enough, Bode was part of the modern tradition in western culture that considers it impossible to transcend self-interest. However, he did not interpret this, as many have, to mean that genuine communication and real community are unattainable. On the contrary, he saw it to imply that we have a tangible and practical starting point for developing the kind of society that supporters of the classical tradition can only dream of.

For Bode our modern conception of democracy has come about through science and the struggle of the ordi-

nary person to participate more fully in life. The democratic movement found its underlying unity in the demand that standards be established through reference to human experience and that judgments be made in terms of circumstances and function. It was a revolt against limitations. But however much this has changed our way of life materially and institutionally, our understanding of these changes, what Bode called our "outlook" or "philosophy" has lagged far behind. What has resulted are "cultural cleavages" which force people to believe and act in contradictory ways and, therefore, to lead a kind of schizophrenic existence.

If at one time schools presented students with a more or less coherent way of life, now there is only mass confusion. To the young everything looks absurd. They can discern no central purpose with which to ally themselves, or more accurately, they have no clear perception of the fact that there are conflicting tendencies in our civilization that compete for their allegiance. In their aimlessness most young people have defected somewhat from the views of their parents and in the process they have become skeptical or cynical, which means a disregard or disbelief in moral values.

Bode's advice was to give education, and, therefore, students, a sense of direction or purpose. What could this be except democracy? Bode put the challenge this way: "... are we willing to accept the principle of a free intelligence as a basis for our social outlook or philosophy of life? It is in reference to the creation and recreation of a democratic social outlook that education finds its meaning and, as far as I can tell, American education has no such program. This is its greatest defect." (p. 61) We must begin by making our situation clear, and to do this by bringing out the conflicts in our culture. Then we must show students how to think straight, how to study, investigate, verify and discriminate. The aim is to "prove all things" and ultimately to prove democracy, to help bring about and validate a truly moral existence.

Here Bode had a problem, for he also suggested that in democracy we have no choice, it is our karma. If history is not ours to deny, and if it is already the case that democracy, i.e., science and the struggle of the ordinary person to participate more fully in life, has already changed the way we live materially and institutionally, one wonders what there is to worry about. It would seem to be just a matter of time before our outlook or philosophy would fall in line with the facts. "On our part," Bode tells us, "we