

may observe in Professor Burton's work the influences of the late Paul Goodman's anarchism and the socialist humanism of Erich Fromm. The reformers of the Kohl, Dennison, Kozol ilk are there too.

It may well be that because Burton's is an eclectic philosophy of life and education, *The Horn* will be dismissed by ideologues of all shades. Still, one of the most challenging aspects of the book is the author's ability to provide more than an explanation of Paulo Freire's Marxist conception of *praxis* in education. Burton's involvement with the X-Kalay Foundation and with the Lyceum (a Winnipeg "free school") give ample testimony of his ability to make the leap from thought to action. Few of us in the world of academia ever try!

The range of "Problems and Possibilities" is too great to be even hinted at in this review. Perhaps an explanation of the metaphors in the title will suggest the general thrust of the work. The "Horn" is the cornucopia, the technocracy we've too uncritically accepted as both inevitable and a positive good. Burton reminds us that if we couldn't get to heaven in a model T, a '73 Imperial serves the purpose no better, that the nirvana which consumerism promises is as remote as ever. And so it is with the rapid growth of "ed bizz", the "Beanstalk," which likewise promises, but can't deliver. Tony Burton announces that if ordinary people are to free themselves from the seductiveness of the horn and the smothering embrace of the beanstalk, the struggle must begin now. And the schools may be the ideal place to begin the fight.

Even for those of us unwilling to take up the cudgels for personal liberation and social change, *The Horn and The Beanstalk* will provide an encounter with a creative response to problems which should be of concern to all.

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Everett Reimer.

SCHOOL IS DEAD

New York:

Doubleday & Co., 1971.

Though inappropriately and rather sensationally titled, Mr. Reimer's book is a thoughtful and sincere, if uneven, work. As another of the publications which had its genesis in the CIDOC seminars of Cuernavaca, Mexico, in essence it is similar to Illich's *De-Schooling Society and Celebration of Awareness*. The message is clear — technology has encompassed human individuality, destroyed initiative and perverted man's values. The school is the perpetuator of this state of affairs by its elitist tendencies, authoritarian and bureaucratic nature and coercive tendencies. Ringing very close to the educational criticisms of Paul Goodman's *Compulsory Mis-Education* and Jules Henry's *Culture Against Man*, Reimer states: "Schools treat people and knowledge the way a technological world treats everything, as if they could be processed." Continuing with arguments similar to Holt, A. S. Neill, or Jonathan Kozol, on the conforming, repressive and soul-destroying effects of schooling, Reimer concludes: "Contradictions in the world are best illustrated by the school and best corrected by freeing education from the school so that people may learn the truth about the society in which they live." To correct the unequal distribution of educational opportunity Reimer suggests that nations think in terms of educational networks which free men from compulsory schooling, that funds be diverted from public schooling to the student himself in the form of educational credit and that teachers compete for

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clients just like doctors, lawyers and night-club singers.

Undoubtedly, Mr. Reimer's ideas are admirable yet hardly sufficiently analytic or based upon a comprehensive knowledge of educational systems. Though in his introduction Mr. Reimer states that he does "not expect to satisfy the norms of academic scholarship", he can hardly expect to write a book about education without clarifying certain major issues.

One extremely disturbing fact about *School is Dead* is that the author makes no attempt to distinguish between countries in his analysis of the 'schooling' phenomena. For Reimer the school, be it in Mexico, Europe, or U.S.A., is a total institution which strives to prevent individuals from achieving any degree of self-realization. Schools everywhere indoctrinate, oppress and sustain social stratification — all in the guise of giving people an education. An elementary knowledge of comparative or international education data and theory could have assisted Mr. Reimer in clarifying his overly general conception of schooling. Certainly there are gradations of power or influence held by the 'school' depending on a country's political structure and the manner in which curriculum is legislated.

Mr. Reimer and other advocates of 'de-schooling' fail to see that schools reflect a society's stage of modernization and democratizing tendencies. Blaming the school for society's ills is rather like blaming an individual because he manifests a disease. Schools reflect the dominant ideological base of their society and eliminating them would only mean that 'new' kinds of institutions or structures possessing similar value orientations would spring up in their place. If Mr. Reimer had allowed his book to be a critique of technological society with all its attendant evils it would have been a more substantial work in the humanistic tradition of Fromm and his *Revolution of Hope*. As it stands it criticizes industrial values soundly and

forcefully but then rather simplistically singles out one institution as the bearer of all ill-tidings and evil. Though public schooling in North America is undoubtedly much too oppressive and totalitarian, massive efforts at change are taking place daily, e.g. Project PLAN in Southern California, the Philadelphia Parkways Project, attempts at an open classroom, Jencks' voucher plan, systems analysis and the science of utilization of information and dissemination of knowledge as applied to education. In no way has Reimer grappled with the possibility that the school changes its function as an oppressive institution as a society becomes more literate and politically conscious. Is it not conceivable that schools as institutional forms might reflect changes in man's consciousness so that they serve different purposes as his society evolves? Might schools actually become (as Kenneth Galbraith has suggested) the last bastion of reflection against technological advances?

Reimer's ideas for opportunity networks, though interesting and imaginative, must be considered more cautiously than either he or Illich has done in their writings. It would seem that corporate interests, true to their past performance, would only be too glad to profiteer from this kind of educational de-institutionalization. Neither Illich nor Reimer has shown clearly that commercial interests will not bastardize learning as they have the mass media. In an era which is moving ever more closely to the public control of health and law in the form of medicare and judicare, de-schooling seems more like a reactionary proposal than a plea for viable radical reform.

Yet, *School is Dead* does hint at some interesting ideas which, unfortunately, are never developed. Speaking of institutions, Reimer suggests that we must make every attempt at understanding them, their historical processes and their organizational structures so that

we can change them. He suggests that we work at achieving a "general theory of institutional change" and "a language in which we can speak with precision about the needs of modern man."

Reimer is to be commended for calling our attention to the grave injustices of public schooling. He does his readers a disservice, however, by over-generalizing and by over-simplifying complex issues.

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**CHANGING VALUES:
THE HUMAN IMPACT OF
URBANIZATION.**

Scarborough:
Bellhaven House Limited,
1971. 125 pp.

About two years ago I saw the award-winning Canadian film *Goin' Down the Road*. Though I've lived in large cities all my life, I was able to relate to Donald Shebib's portrayal of the experiences of Pete and Joey, two Maritimers who leave the Atlantic region, where they've spent their childhood and youth, and arrive in Toronto in a flashy car with about \$30 between them. I know that my having read *Changing Values* in recent days enabled me to bring new insight to my recent second viewing of *Goin' Down the Road*.

The struggle of Pete and Joey when they first arrive in Toronto, the noise and colour of the city at night, the difficulty in securing employment, the adjustment to somewhat different attitudes regarding privacy, the fear of loneliness, the conflict between perceived values of the metropolitan community and those formerly held regarding individual worth, family relationships, and social re-

sponsibility — these are all depicted in the film, and also in Dr. Smith's very readable and useful social studies book on the impact of urbanization on the way people live, work, think, feel, and behave.

I am impressed with the extent to which the author has been successful in bringing to bear on contemporary urban issues not only the discipline of history, with which he has been primarily identified, but also the concerns, the questions, and the modes of analysis associated with the various social sciences. An example of this is the section on residential mobility in Winnipeg. The student is encouraged to consider questions that relate to the political makeup of the metropolitan area, the demographic patterns over a period of time, the effect of movement on various ethnic-cultural groups, and the impact on the economy of urban changes. Another fine example of the author's success in utilizing a truly integrated social studies approach is in the chapter entitled "Responsibility" which provides data relating to people on social welfare in Vancouver. The complex of personal, family, educational, medical, and financial concerns of an unemployed divorcee on welfare are pursued.

A great deal of material on urbanization is available for the imaginative teacher and learner to use in creative ways, and so the book is true to the aim enunciated in the foreword by Professor Eric Winter, the editor of the series of which *Changing Values* is the third publication (the first two were *Urban Landscapes* and *Urban Areas*). In this book we have access to numerous data, tables, maps, pictures, newspaper and magazine articles, and case studies. From time to time the reader is invited to "Check Your Values" on topics such as the building of expressways in large cities, the need for privacy, and the importance of human interaction. At the end of each section questions are suggested for investigation and discussion.