

**Theodore Brameld.**  
**PATTERNS OF**  
**EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY:**  
**Divergence and Convergence**  
**in Culturological**  
**Perspective.** New York:  
**Holt, Rinehart and Winston,**  
**1971. pp. xvii & 615.**

This volume by the well known Reconstructionist represents a revision of his massive study of 1950. A significant sub-title has been added: "Divergence and Convergence in Culturological Perspective." As the 1950 *opus* projected Brameld onto the scene as a very significant philosopher of education, so will the new edition enhance his reputation. Brameld has kept intact the well delineated outline of what may be referred to as his "four categories of educational philosophy" while, at the same time, he has added important new material. And he has strengthened his philosophical approach by showing a greater flexibility.

Virtually everyone who has taught philosophy of education is aware of Brameld's categorizing of leading philosophies (and philosophers) in terms of: Progressivism, Essentialism, Perennialism and Reconstructionism. Such delineation may result in a certain over-simplification; but there is also merit in the method. So many teachers in our schools and departments of education have included in their lexicon his four categories that, if Brameld had done nothing more for teaching and scholarship in this field, it would have been quite a bit! But he has done more than that.

In expounding his own Reconstructionism, he has veritably "forced" faculty and students of philosophy of education to face problems which have been created within society *vis-à-vis* the educational system. In 1950, Brameld was a pioneer in the sense of his great emphasis upon the *culture* as the basis of his thought. And the cultural impact is considerably more emphasized throughout the 1971 volume. This will doubtless

cause certain philosophers — such as those whose major concern is with linguistic analysis — a great deal of pain, that is, if they bother to read the book at all. I do not shrink from adding my opinion that all philosophies, even when those who write philosophy do not intend it that way, have their roots in what some have called "the material conditions of society." Theodore Brameld recognizes this fundamental fact!

Regardless of the degree to which they agree with his basic Reconstructionism, it is likely that a number of readers of the latest Brameld book will believe that he has over-worked the word "culturological." Such a term, at first blush, seems somehow new and alien. But terminology is really an author's prerogative. He must take the risks. And if "culturological" sticks, if it becomes more widely accepted in the philosophy of education in the USA, it would not be surprising. Nor would it be the first time that Brameld has helped develop the lexicography.

In the circles of philosophy of education — regional meetings of the Philosophy of Education Society and the like, where such subjects are discussed — it is well known that Brameld has been described by his critics as "dogmatic," or even "stubborn." This latest volume, if judged fairly and equitably, should do much to dispel such epithets. "Divergence and Convergence" in the sub-title are not just words placed there for an effect. They are fused in a descriptively meaningful way with much of what has been included in the book. In short, Brameld has put the dialectical method to work, and he actually seems to be going out of his way to invite the statement of contrary viewpoints. The new Brameld is more flexible and, as such, is a better Brameld!

Although I am enthusiastic about *Patterns of Educational Philosophy*, there is of course no such thing as the perfect book. In at least one instance, it may be said that Brameld's new flexibility has been pushed almost too far, with a

resulting effort to "fuse" that which really does not bear fusion. I refer to his endeavor to include philosophical analysis in the broad spectrum of those philosophies from which Reconstructionism might borrow, or — perhaps more validly stated — Brameld believes that linguistic analysis may make a contribution to Reconstructionism. As one who deeply sympathizes with Brameld's philosophy, on this point I have to disagree with him. True, Wittgenstein, Ayer, *et al.* are major philosophers. True also with no linguistic analysis, philosophy becomes virtually impossible! But the run-of-the-mill analysts seem to have been searching for some kind of escape-hatch. They really do not want to face the problems which really do confront us — a goodly number of them are cop-outs.

Brameld is no cop-out! As regards the deep conflicts of our culture in its various crises, and the chasms between our stated beliefs and what we in the USA practice, Brameld is as cogent and as determined as ever. Yet more than ever, he wants to preserve that which is best in our social system, build upon it, and build in terms of constitutional processes. And consistent with his other writings, he wants the schools to contribute more significantly than they have in the past.

This review is really quite inadequate. I have failed to touch upon Brameld's new treatment of Zen Buddhism, Existentialism, and Neo-Freudianism. There are some books which really cannot be "reviewed" because they must be read in their entirety in order to do them justice. This is such a book. Brameld has again brought us face to face with what are literally the world-shaking issues of our day. In posing problems and suggesting possible ways out of our manifold dilemmas, he has shown that he is the single, most important philosopher of education on the contemporary American scene.

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Betty Boyd.  
THINKING ABOUT INQUIRY.  
Toronto:  
McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972.  
113 pp. \$4.50.

*Thinking About Inquiry* is an apt title for this paperback. It is just that! Originally written for the student, it explains at an elementary level the processes involved in the inquiry method.

The book is divided into two parts: Part I, "Introduction to Inquiry, a Learning Activity" and Part II, "Guidelines for the Investigation." I particularly liked Part I, in which the author traces the pathways used by three students to solve a problem. The three investigations illustrate that there are many pathways to take in finding answers to a question and that the answers obtained may be different, yet still correct. The topic investigated, "Food Habits," has much relevance in today's North American society and makes for interesting, informative reading. The stage is well set to develop an awareness of the inquiry process.

The author's stated concern in Part II is "to assist the reader in becoming a more effective learner." (p. 42) Considerable use is made of the processes of science inherent in the inquiry method. Activities such as defining a problem, observation, recording and organizing data, interpretation, forming and testing hypotheses, drawing conclusions, are clarified. Ideas formulated from each operation evolve into guidelines (59 in all) "to help the student guide or direct his own inquiry." (p. 42)

In selling a product it is most important that the producer understand the needs of the consumer. By addressing her book to a much wider audience than the student, Betty Boyd creates a dilemma for the reviewer. This book should stimulate an awareness of what is involved in inquiry for the student and neophyte inquirer or educator. The experienced professional educator will find little to whet his