

social institution, is "matched" to the needs and personality of an "average" adolescent.

In Part I he condemns the school system as being inhumane and insensitive to the needs of the adolescent. He argues that the curriculum is irrelevant to the adolescent's search for identity and suggests that more emphasis be placed on human relations. He stresses the need for greater communication between the school and the community and recommends modifications in teacher preparation programs, emphasizing attitude changes toward adolescents and school. The adolescent's individuality should be respected; he should be given more responsibility in the maintenance of discipline and in the choice of curriculum.

In Part II, Buxton attempts to measure various attitudes of adolescents towards school. He administered an anonymous questionnaire to students in grades 7 - 12 in four different school systems. Each school varied in socio-economic level and achievement orientation. The questionnaire consisted of seven attitudes (each having approximately fourteen statements) to be measured on a seven point scale ranging from -3 ("very untrue of me") to +3 ("very true of me"). The attitudes measured were the following: positive and active liking for school, generalized dislike of school, conscientiousness, anxiety and guilt about school, favorable attitude towards teachers, social distractibility, and orientation towards the future. An eighth attitude was later added to measure favorable attitudes toward the school as a social system.

Although there were variations in the results, especially between the sexes, across grade levels and in different schools, the overall results are shattering. The adolescents had no positive and active liking for school, yet they denied disliking it. The general idea conveyed was one of apathy or indifference. It seemed that school was a "joyless duty" expected of them. They rated themselves as being

fairly conscientious, generally liking teachers and concerned about their futures. Good students viewed school as a stepping stone to something else; others viewed it as an obligation or social gathering place. None saw it as a worthwhile experience in itself. Anxiety and guilt about school were extremely high; social distractibility was a problem especially in lower socio-economic schools and with poor students. All condemned the school organization: they resented being treated like objects, wanted more power of decision, disliked schedules, methods of evaluation and strict controls.

Buxton concludes that this dismal picture can be changed only by an attitude change. Parents, teachers and administrators must realize that schooling must be adapted to the adolescent and not vice versa. Without this attitude change, education will continue to deteriorate.

I believe Buxton's book is of definite value to parents and teachers, in fact to anyone who may have serious doubts about the future of our educational institutions as they exist today. There are some who interpret the present failure of schools to adapt themselves to the needs of society as the precondition of their downfall. Buxton would have us believe that, given the necessary reforms, there is still hope.

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Colin and Mog Ball.
EDUCATION FOR A CHANGE:
COMMUNITY ACTION AND
THE SCHOOL.
Don Mills: Longman, 1973.
212 pp. \$2.15.

The title of Colin and Mog Ball's book, *Education for a Change*, is intentionally ambiguous. One half of the message intended is epi-

tomized in the descriptive notes about the authors: "Colin Ball's education was interrupted by the usual ration of school and... university..." (Frontspiece) It is the authors' contention that education must be made real, or "relevant," if we are to bring about essential changes in our relationships with each other and in our relationships with the institutions we have established.

Education can be made relevant, say the Balls, by making it take place in the relevant location (hospital, mental institution, on the street corner, in the home of an aged person) and with a relevant focus (sculpting in the hospital ward, production of a musical tape for replay in local institutions, design of a playground for nursery children).

The wedge to initiate the massive restructuring needed in British education is the concept of "community service as an educational resource." (p. 10) By this the authors do not mean volunteer dogooderism with its patronizing air of self-sacrifice. Nor do they mean scheduling "early leavers" to "help" an old lady with her garden on Thursday afternoons. "'Community service and the curriculum' means... exploring the ways in which all the present, established school subjects (i.e., the curriculum) can contribute to a young persons' [sic] knowledge about society and its problems, and by doing so provide a springboard for action." (p. 28)

Education for a Change attempts to convey an optimistic message. Unfortunately, however, the overwhelming preponderance of the discourse paints quite a depressing picture of the actual state of, and the potential for change in, education in Britain (and surely, by application, in Canada and the United States also). In detail the Balls describe "the impregnable institution" which "makes cunning use of 'jargon,' 'hierarchy,' and 'personal relationship' against outside attack" (p. 41), and of the

formidable "they" (the administrators and the professional teachers) who must be broached or outwitted to introduce reality into the curriculum and life into the system.

The potential value of *Education for a Change* lies not in further stirring the murky pot of discontent with all organization, but in the glimmer of an idea for one possible method of attack on the undesirable effects of over-institutionalization. For Colin and Mog Ball do not propose to do away with schools, nor even with professional teachers. They propose to reorient the goals of the schools and to change the role of the teacher from "master" to "enabler." These are sweeping changes, it is true, but changes as acceptable to intelligent professionals as to frustrated clients. *Education for a Change* would have been a more powerful book if its focus had been on the action proposed, and if the potential of that action for meaningful education had been more clearly and forcefully presented.

"Community service as an educational resource" is no panacea for educational ills; it, too, as the authors themselves point out, could easily become "institutionalized." Moreover, usefulness to others is not the sole, nor even perhaps what the authors assert it to be, "the fullest expression of our humanity." (p. 138) Humanity does have other facets which hold potential as educational resources. Community service as Colin and Mog Ball conceive of it, however, as community *inter-action* for mutual gain, is one resource through which man's humanity can be expressed and developed; it is indeed a valuable educational resource. *Education for a Change* has, sprinkled through it, many creative examples of how this resource has been employed by educators, and for these examples alone the book deserves examination.

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