titled "The Schools of Manitoba" and a 1965 M.A. thesis in Sociology bears the title "Variations in Social Control Styles of High School Teachers."

The *Directory* is, however, more than a telephone book of thesis titles, their authors and sponsors. On the one hand, it is a definitive record of McGill's thesis achievements since the second half of the last century. On the other, it is a portrait of an institution in transition, of how a nineteenth century university steeped in the teaching of liberal studies gives way in the twentieth century to a university oriented more to scientific research and advanced study. Thus we find that the theses listed in the years before 1900 at McGill were exclusively in Law or Divinity. By 1940 the situation had changed dramatically. Of the seventy-five thesis titles listed in that year fifty-eight were in the Sciences.

The compilation of this work was a major undertaking for which the University community owes the compilers a vote of appreciation.

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**Sidney Hook, Paul Kurtz and Miro Todorovich, eds.**
**THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE CURRICULUM: THE NEED FOR GENERAL EDUCATION.**
**New York:**
**Prometheus Books, 1975.**
**281 pp. $10.95.**

This book consists of twenty-eight essays, most of which were presented at the second national conference of the University Centers for Rational Alternatives held at Rockefeller University in September 1973. The general theme has to do with the need for general education and the necessary components of the university curriculum. These are dealt with in sections headed: The Humanistic Disciplines, The Place of Science and the Scientific Outlook, Problems and Dilemmas of the Social Sciences, and Reflections on the Curriculum. The contributors are primarily academics, with some administrators and a reporter from the *Wall Street Journal.*

On the whole, one could ask the same questions of the book as it asks of the curriculum: why are these topics dealt with? to what end? how are they connected? There is not much interplay among the authors and little basic disagreement. Detailed proposals for curricular change are skimpy; nor is it made clear what is the relationship between "the philosophy of the curriculum" and "the need for general education." Surely the former need not entail the latter. Nor is the latter necessarily based on philosophical analysis and arguments.

A philosophy of the curriculum should attempt to bring out presuppositions about the subjects to be studied (Why astro-physics but not astrology?), critically examine proposed general aims (What constitutes an "educated person?"), and consider possible means to desired ends (Is it appropriate to indoctrinate students to become good citizens?). Some of the authors in this volume take one or the other of these approaches but none effectively includes them all. None of them pays much attention to the work of Dewey on the curriculum, which is unfortunate since he is one of the very few modern thinkers who took care to consider presuppositions, arguments about ends, and the feasibility of means. A quick look at his *The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago, 1902) would raise a number of basic questions that do not get asked in this book.

Sidney Hook, in his contribution, "General Education: The Minimum Indispensables," does list the student needs which define required areas of study in the curriculum: the need to communicate, to have at least a rudimentary knowledge of his/her mind and body and his/her place in the world of nature, to understand how society functions, to know of the conflict of values and ideals in our

time, to acquire methodological sophistication, and to be inducted into the cultural legacies of our civilization (pp. 32-33). These needs, says Hook, may not represent what students want or think they need, but then "as a rule, they no more know what their educational needs are than they know their medical needs" (p. 29). The task of the educator is to transmit the minimum indispensables in a creative, orderly fashion. Although it is not necessary that we all agree on curricular details, Hook maintains that a theoretical analysis of objectives is of paramount importance so that we have some guide to curricular practices.

Mortimer Kadish chides Hook for ignoring the costs and probabilities of achieving the ends he espouses. He stresses the limitations of what liberal education can accomplish and describes the organization of a curriculum as "the careful and infinitely complicated adjustment of means to ends in a world we never made, over which we have but slight control" (p. 209). I think this is a valid objection: how "indispensable" are areas of study for which students have no apparent interest and society is not in an economic position to provide? How do educators convince the general public that these are the things their children need to know?

Wants and needs are treated in a different way by Stephenson and Sexton, who claim that students will become interested if they can participate in experiential learning, spending fairly large amounts of time outside the classroom immersed in experience pertinent to their studies (p. 184). In such learning situations, abstraction is merged with experience (p. 181). Even if the experience completely shakes the student's confidence in the theory, the authors suggest that "from the educator's point of view it may be more advisable to have the theory tested under supervised field conditions, in which the instructor and the student can rebuild, defend, or refurbish it, than to have the theory destroyed forever as a result of one bout with a hostile, non-theoretical situation" (p. 188).

I am bothered by the implication that theories are to be saved at all costs. Surely if one were examining a theory of presidential politics, for example, and it seemed to fall apart in light of the Watergate scandals, so much the worse for the theory. Why try to rebuild, defend, or refurbish it? If the non-theoretical situation is hostile to the theory, then perhaps the crucial step is to make sure the students properly understand the theory so that they can deal with the hostility when they experience it. After all, it is the truth or falsity of the theory that should be our main concern.

Herbert London in "Questions of Viability in Non-traditional Education" makes another objection to experiential learning: "There is . . . no reason to believe that because a student engages in field study he has necessarily had a learning experience" (p. 222). Stephen and Sexton seem guilty of the same sort of identification of experience with education that led Dewey to protest strongly in his *Experience and Education* (New York, 1938) and formulate his distinction between educative and miseducative experiences. Not only are there experiences that educated people should avoid (Dewey's example is that of the burglar), but many experiences do not actually provide the kind of education the teacher has in mind. To take their own example of the student of politics who works as an intern in a government agency, what does he or she learn? The subtle interplay of pressure groups and their function in a democratic society? Or, more mundanely, the tedium and waste of human potential in a nine to five desk job? Or, more romantically, the name and phone number of the person at the next desk?

Stephenson and Sexton suggest setting up a course called "Social Literature of the 20th Century" in which students spend a term (with a minimum of 20 hours per week) working in "a setting similar to that of the setting of the literature: a migrant-labor camp or an agency serving

migrants, another laboring situation, or in an inner-city setting similar to those in Wright's books" (p. 193). Second term they read *The Jungle, The Grapes of Wrath, Native Son,* discuss and write papers about them in the light of their own recent experience. Besides the impropriety of "playing at" being a migrant-worker, this suggestion has little appeal. A good novel like Steinbeck's can, by itself, make one feel what it was like to live during the Depression; Richard Wright can make one ashamed of how whites have treated blacks. I can neither resurrect the Depression (though some governments seem determined to try) nor change the color of my skin; but then I don't have to to appreciate the works in question.

Another danger in the "field-work" approach is that it can lead to an indifference to the less dramatic human problems right at hand in the school environment. How do students treat their classmates or the maintenance staff in their schools? What of the army of filing clerks trapped in the school's administrative structure? All this enthusiasm to get out and experience the real world bypasses the reality of a student's day-to-day living. In my opinion, getting students to reflect on life as they are presently experiencing it can be an effective means of relating subject-matter to needs and interests.

Other authors deal with science and social science in the curriculum, and a mini-dispute arises between those who think that science needs to be enlivened and those who feel the problem lies in how far we've strayed from the tried and true paths. There are a few more bizarre contributions such as that of Gray Dorsey in "A Proposal for a New Division of the Curriculum" who says we must develop "ethicists" to deal with potentialities for technological and social changes, and the suggestion by Feliks Gross in "Thoughts on a Social Science Curriculum" that we can regain our sense of direction in higher education by having colloquia in ethics (p. 272)!

I would not recommend rushing out to buy this book because it fails to take account fully of the how and why of curricular reform. Little attention is paid to past work on the curriculum (with Dewey as the most glaring omission) and not much is said in detail about the future. No mention is made, for example, of the new methods being developed for presenting the curriculum at Britain's Open University. Finally, not enough effort is spent on clarifying key terms like "experience," "educated," and "learning."

It is disappointing to see so little come out of a conference with such good intentions. Now that the rhetoric has died down on most of our campuses, the time is ripe for a reasoned appraisal of what we're up to. All too often, budgetary constraints, power struggles, or pressure tactics dictate how and what we teach. Our students deserve better. The best response to this book would be for faculty to use it to initiate discussion of the curriculum. If we, from our specialized perspectives, cannot take a broad view of university education, then the very idea of a curriculum of studies as an ordered whole seems laughingly out of date.

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**Garnet McDiarmid, ed.**
**FROM QUANTITATIVE TO QUALITATIVE CHANGE IN ONTARIO EDUCATION.**
**Toronto: OISE, 1976.**
**190 pp. $6.00.**

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