

author's commitment to the importance of effective teaching as she stresses the significance of accountability, the humanistic approach to education, and competency-based teacher education. However, the book ultimately suffers as a result of its encyclopaedic approach. In its attempt to be all things to all readers it fails to come to grips with some major issues in a meaningful and substantial way. For example, the author lights upon current issues such as cultural pluralism, bilingualism, women's liberation and child abuse, but gives them only passing attention. Other areas are dealt with in such detail that they become tedious, as in the suggestions for classroom organization, or school visits.

It is unfortunate that the author's emphasis on current trends such as accountability and competency-based education dates the book. Such issues are already regarded by some educators as *passé*. Nevertheless, much of what the author has to say is relevant to the teacher of young children, and this book would be useful to those searching for yet another interpretation of educational theories and their practical application to the classroom.

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David Nyberg (editor).
THE PHILOSOPHY OF OPEN EDUCATION.
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The word "open" is a definite "yum" word, writes Brian Hill, in the first essay of this collection of papers from a working conference on open education held at the State University of New York at Buffalo in March, 1974. That is to say, "open" calls to mind such positive notions as "free, candid, generous, above board, mentally flexible, future-oriented," and can be contrasted to "yuk" connotations such as "closed, restricted, prejudiced, or clogged." "Open education," then, is a powerful though non-specific slogan which usually elicits a sympathetic response without conveying a very clear meaning. To oppose open education is not necessarily to espouse education of the closed variety. Any argument pro or con must begin with a definition of terms, which several of the contributors set out to do.

Don Tunnell makes a useful analysis of the concept and claims that in its primary sense "open education" refers to educational practice characterized by the following rules. 1) The freedom rule: students are free to pursue educational activities of their own choosing; 2) the environment rule: teachers are to create an environment rich in educational possibilities; 3) the individual instruction rule: teachers are to

start with student interests and guide the students along educationally worthwhile lines; and 4) the respect rule: student ideas and feelings are to be taken seriously and uses of authority are to be minimized. Each of these rules points to a different aspect of open education which in turn can be further clarified and argued about.

For example, Leonard Waks criticizes the Summerhill ideal of freedom as non-intervention with student wants by adults. For Waks, doing what one wants is not simply a matter of avoiding external restraints. Children need the material-environmental conditions as well as the appropriate ability and skills to be truly free to do what they want. Waks claims that Neill makes so much of masturbation as an action paradigm, in his argument against adult interference, precisely because "it is almost unique among action types in having neither material, environmental, nor skill conditions." In most other cases of learning, more than natural inclination is required.

Donald Vandenberg picks up this theme and explores the contours of what he calls the "pedagogic atmosphere," or the "aggregate of underlying moods that the pupils and the teacher bring to the classroom." He speaks of "life-feelings" which are "primal affective presuppositions of the pedagogic relation." They include cheerfulness, morningness (the joy of being alive and looking forward to the new day), gratitude for life, respect, obedience, and love. He even provides a diagram of the pedagogic relation, complete with levels of "world-attunements" and "life-feelings" and swirling arrows pointing ever upward, all of which calls to mind a chart of the inner workings of a vacuum cleaner. I find Vandenberg too full of existentialistic jargon and too unrealistically cheery about education to be of much help.

More down to earth is the selection by Donald Arnstine, who warns us that the bureaucratic organization of schools tends to absorb any efforts to innovate, and it has done this so effectively that today's schools seem remarkably unchanged. As a remedy he suggests better education of teachers and more freedom for them to make decisions about their work. Somewhat ironically, he says that "Ideally, teacher organizations and university faculties in education might work together on problems of mutual concern." Hardly the bodies to lead the fight against bureaucracy! Michael Simons, Junior, calls for more revolutionary changes because he feels that any attempt to create a truly humane and liberating education must go hand in hand with radical changes in the existing social order. In fact, proponents of open education face a dilemma in regard to socialization, according to Kathryn Morgan. They seem opposed to normal psychological mechanisms by which the schools socialize their students, and yet they implicitly seek to produce members of an open community. Which is to say that open education stresses strong community ties and thereby opens itself to the charge of setting up very powerful forms of socialization.

All of these questions about the school and society are pertinent

to the more basic issue of the ideal product of the educational process. Kieran Egan asks of open education, "What criteria determine what experiences are educationally more valuable than others?" For Hugh Petrie the answer to this question requires that we give an epistemological interpretation to the two fundamental principles of open education — the view that knowledge is a personal construct and the demand that student integrity be respected. Taken in the strong sense such principles are self-defeating, says Petrie; for how can one assert or argue for a position which holds that nothing is true unless the individual accepts it as true? If truth is only subjectively justified, how can I convince you of the truth of my position? You could always resort to the claim that our views differed and that that was that. What defenders of the open education ideal must do is allow for objective conditions for knowledge and truth, while insisting upon the importance of the individual being educated.

For Kenneth Strike, this means that there can be legitimate influence on the young by their teachers so long as this promotes autonomy. The truly autonomous person possesses the evaluative skills and attitudes needed to arrive rationally at a true picture of the world, and a correct understanding of himself and his role in it. These points are nicely made in the article by Richard Peters on "Subjectivity and Standards in the Humanities." For Peters the humanities are a kind of public inheritance made up of men's attempts to explain and assess their behaviour, and to express how they feel and reflect and try to justify what they think and do. They "represent various paths that men have taken in their exploration of what it means to be human."

This is the key to the whole issue, as I see it. We cannot "open" the minds and lives of our students by depriving them of the best means at our disposal for doing so. The tradition of human thought, feeling, and action — what Peters calls our "collective memory" — is a very large part of what it means to be human. We can indeed disagree about methodology and how best to initiate the young into this heritage. We often do underestimate the potential of our students and the contributions to inquiry they can make based on their own experience. We all too frequently fail to convey the excitement and usefulness of abstract ideas, perhaps because some of us have lost it ourselves. Yet our subject-matter originated in human experience and ultimately should relate back to it. The challenge of open education is not for its critics to find faulty reasoning in its arguments, linguistic ambiguity in its formulations, questionable presuppositions of its educational directives. Much of this is done quite competently in this volume. The best response to the challenge is that of Peters, who uses it to develop a well-reasoned defense of the more traditional approach. What we must all be open to in education is the demand, by the young, to know what we expect them to learn and why.

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