

Editorial

Educational Change: Internationally and in Canada

Although this issue of the *Journal* is not devoted to one special theme or topic, there is a core of three articles dealing with international perspectives on education and educational assessment. These articles are followed by other broad issues that focus on Canada and Canadian schools.

Professor Tarvin and Faraj have made extensive studies of the changing objectives of the school systems of certain South and East Asian countries in the last two or three decades. It is of interest to us in light of our own Canadian Charter of Human Rights to see how other systems of education view the school's role in terms of nationalizing, language, ethnic or minority groups, and religious beliefs.

Previously accepted practices of educational assessment, especially in the area of intelligence testing, are being questioned, particularly in view of the unique problems that are presented when students from multicultural backgrounds must be assessed. Professors Lewis and Samuda summarize and discuss some of the current approaches to multilevel types of assessment of children from different cultural backgrounds.

The developing nation of Trinidad and Tobago is an example of a nation whose school system is still dealing with "inherited" issues that come with a colonial heritage. Professor London succinctly and clearly shows how difficult it is to bring real change in a school system that still incorporates some of the previous socioeconomic and cultural stratifications.

Professor Clifton and Professor Oosterhuis have both dealt with issues that are perennial to education, but they are issues that will always

need fresh thinking, as is the case here. Professor Clifton's two different encyclopedias, knowledge and mythology, strike at the heart of some blind assumptions made about the content of teacher education. And Professor Oosterhuis debates the current topic of learning styles. She considers several ways of determining whether or not the present excitement about learning styles is essential to quality education.

Adult women's education and sex education round out this issue. Professors O'Brien and Whitmore have dealt with the issue of empowerment, a critical component in the successful educational career of adult women. Sex education, so long confined to biological or physiological or reproductive approaches, is given a different meaning by Professor Murray. A point, not to be ignored, is that young people will receive sex education one way or another. Will the school take the responsibility to see that it is taught and that it is presented in a way that depicts sexuality as a real part of an individual's life – not as moral indoctrination and warnings, or biased and uninformed opinions?

WMT