

Editorial

Theory and Field-based Research

In recent years there has come to be renewed interest in the study of temperament. Prof. James R. Barclay has brought together in his paper an integrative summary of both historical and recent theories as well as empirical studies to give a broad overview of what has been published in regard to this construct. *The Regulative Theory of Temperament* suggests ways in which temperament may play an important mediating role in assessing and understanding individual differences, not only for the purpose of providing individualized curriculum but for understanding human development.

While this issue of the *Journal* is not devoted exclusively to a multicultural perspective in education, three articles in this issue look at cultural variables in three different settings that impinge on the way education is and can be conducted.

Prof. Jing Lin gives a chilling account of the turbulent years of the cultural revolution in China and how it affected the lives of teachers and students there. Her paper shows just how bad things can get when a government sets out to use the schools as their own political tools. Few of us in the West could ever imagine ourselves having to endure such humiliation and discrimination as that which Prof. Lin describes vividly.

Health education, as Professors Patel and Percival describe in their paper, can be a complex task when it is conducted in a country that has nurtured a system of traditional healers and herbalists who are highly respected by their society. In their research in southern Zimbabwe, they found unusual obstacles in teaching women westernized versions of family planning and sex education. In reading this paper, one becomes aware of the fact that health education in some societies requires a great deal of un-

derstanding of that society and how difficult it can be to present information in a form and manner that will be accepted.

Canadians of diverse cultural backgrounds take great pains to preserve their cultural heritage while at the same time developing their new Canadian identity. Prof. Anastassios Stalikas has done an intensive study in the large Montreal-based Greek community to find which factors in Greek families promote the speaking of Greek in the second generation. His findings will no doubt be of interest to those who are studying the ways in which different cultural groups preserve their language when immigrating to a new country.

The museum educator is not the kind of person we meet every day! Prof. Dufresne-Tassé and her colleagues, Kim Chi Dao and Thérèse Lapointe, give us some insights into the kinds of questions asked by an adult visitor to the museum, then categorizes these questions, and finally speculates about the way in which a visitor's unanswered questions may disturb the person's cognitive and affective functioning. However, if questioning is handled in a very skillful way adult cognitive development can be stimulated.

Prof. Héléne Poissant and her colleagues, Mireille Falardeau and Bruno Poëllhuber, define and characterize attentional processes. This paper highlights the importance of educative interventions that should be included in programs addressed to students with special needs. Certain cognitive processes are focused upon as being critical ones.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the death of Canada's famous humourist, Stephen Leacock, a long-time professor at McGill University. Professor Kulawiec makes a special plea in his paper for us to look beyond Leacock's fame as a humourist and see him as a serious educator, whose ideas presented in the classroom took firm root in the minds of his students.

This volume closes with three research reports from the field. All of the studies, while coming up with interesting findings, probably have their greatest impact by illustrating how meaningful research can be done in one's own work place, the classroom.

Prof. Colla MacDonald reports on a study done on student teachers' perceptions of who was important during their year in a teacher-education program. The anecdotal material included in the paper gives it a certain reality base that enhances this kind of ethnographic field-based research.

Prof. Angela Ward describes how young children talk and work in classrooms. Her analysis of their conversations in their peer-led groups shows some interesting patterns of language usage relative to carrying out assigned tasks, styles of interacting with one another, and their development of critical thinking skills.

W. M. T.

