

Book Reviews

Leadership and Dynamic Group Action. By George M. Beal, Joe M. Beal, and J. Neil Raudabaugh, 1962. Available from the Iowa State University Press, Ames, Iowa. 365 pp. \$6.00.

The authors say this book is for the "millions of people who make up the myriad of groups operating within democratic societies. . . ." They have written the book in terms that people unfamiliar with the terminology and theory of group dynamics can comprehend. Some understanding of the leadership process and experiences of working with people, however, would make the book even more meaningful. *Leadership and Dynamic Group Action* is straightforward and readable, dealing with the "why" and "how" of the group process as it applies to leaders or participants.

Part I provides some reasons why groups function as they do. The importance of maintaining democratic group processes in our society is stressed along with important factors that come into play when people work formally or informally. Understanding the basis of group interaction is essential before techniques are selected for working with them. The authors provide this basis.

Without dealing directly with basic theories and principles in sociology or social psychology, the authors are quick to point out that much of what they are saying is based on research in these and related areas. But they warn against oversimplification in dealing with problems of human behavior.

Part II of the book places emphasis on the "how." Several techniques, such as small group discussions, panels, interviews, lectures, and brainstorming, are reviewed in outline form. Description, selection, uses, and variations of these and other techniques are covered. Emphasis is placed on being creative and perceptive in the use and combination of techniques which use depending upon the objectives established in any group situation.

The third section of the book stresses the importance of evaluation, not only of the group process itself but also of individual contributions and participation. Several suggestions are made for conducting evaluation studies, including types of questionnaires to use and specific techniques valuable to group observers.

A complete listing of suggested readings pertinent to each chapter appears at the end of the book. Any reader wanting to gain further insight

in leadership and group dynamics can find a wealth of resources in the suggested readings.

This book should be of real value to Extension workers at all levels. It provides a clear view of the ways and means of strengthening group activity, which is such a vital part of Extension's organizational leadership role. It should prove helpful to the experienced as well as the inexperienced Extension worker; to those having had formal training in the behavioral sciences as well as those who have not.

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The Inquiring Mind. By Cyril O. Houle, 1961. Available from the University of Wisconsin Press, 430 Sterling Court, Madison 6, Wisconsin. 87 pp. \$1.50.

"The desire to learn, like every other human characteristic, is not shared equally by everyone." Consequently, Dr. Cyril O. Houle, adult educator at the University of Chicago, set out to analyze the nature, beliefs, and actions of the continuing learner—the man or woman for whom the desire to learn constitutes an approach to life itself. *The Inquiring Mind* is a report of this study. In this small, very readable book, Houle shares insight into the motivations of a small cross-section of adult education's most active participants.

Three major groupings are suggested as primary orientations of adults in their selection of learning experiences. These groups are described as either goal-oriented, activity-oriented, or learning-oriented. These orientations can determine the "when," "where," "what," and "why" of motivations to learn.

For the *goal-oriented*, content is of primary importance. The desire to learn is initiated by a specific and practical purpose. Roads to learning are selected on the basis of what they will achieve. Utility of the subject matter is important. They seek education in episodes. Unless practical education has no point.

For the *activity-oriented* learner, subject matter is of little importance. "It was the social contact they sought, and their selection of any activity was essentially based on the amount and kind of human relationships it would yield." The activity-oriented learner does almost no reading.

The *learning-oriented* are in striking contrast to both these groups. For them education is a goal in itself. Learning is their pre-occupation. The desire to learn provides the basis for most major decisions. They have "the itch to learn."

The significance of such differences between groups lies in the percep-

role of the learner and the ways these perceptions determine the client and outcomes of adult education. Such differences are related to the growing complexity of human needs in modern society. "It is no longer possible to assume that seekers for education will all have consistent views or that their conceptions will agree with those of the providers of education," Houle says.

The *continuing learner's* perceptions of how he is viewed by society led to the conclusion that "many of the attitudes and values of American society are directly and specifically opposed to the idea of life-long learning. . . ."

Findings reported in this book represent a small sample from a rather small geographic area. Conclusions based on such a sample can be questioned with justification. However, recognition of this does not detract from the insight into adult learning behavior.

It should be noted that considerable overlapping can exist between orientation categories—they are not mutually excluding. Conceivably some individuals may have more than one orientation. Other adults may not fit any of the three orientations. Still, for Extension personnel and other adult educators, *The Inquiring Mind* can provide a new and enlightening reference.

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Selected Readings and References in 4-H Club Work. Compiled and edited by G. L. Carter, Jr., and Robert C. Clark, 1961. Available from the National Agricultural Extension Center for Advanced Study, University of Wisconsin, Madison 6, Wisconsin. 138 pp. \$3.00.

The purpose of this publication is accurately described in the Foreword: "These readings and references are designed primarily (but not exclusively) for use in graduate programs of Regional and State Summer schools and regular semester courses in 4-H Club work. They may also be used in undergraduate courses that deal with Extension programs and methods, for personal study on the job, and to serve as a special reference."

There are 26 contributors to this useful volume of practical information, much of which is based upon recent studies in the field of 4-H Club work. The selected readings are classified into five parts: I, History, Philosophy and Purposes; II, Basic Needs of Youth; III, Factors to Consider in Programming; IV, Adult Volunteer Leadership; and V, Role of the Professional Worker.

Part I provides information useful in comparing the early beginnings of the present objectives and the educational potential of 4-H. It can

also stimulate thinking for considering new objectives for the program to meet changing conditions.

Part II is fundamental information from anthropological studies, information relating to the Citizenship Improvement Study conducted by the National 4-H Club Foundation, and two less conclusive articles relating to competition and its effect on boys and girls.

Part III is a valuable guide to developing the 4-H program, with special emphasis upon program planning and evaluation, controversy, enrollment, re-enrollment, dropouts and older members.

Part IV expertly summarizes recent research on adult volunteer leadership. The selection, training, and motivation of leaders is covered in a very constructive and enlightening manner. However, material on studies of literature on leadership not directly related to 4-H work is inadequate and, in this writer's opinion, conveys a misconception of leadership.

Part V describes the role of 4-H staff members, with special attention given to attitudes, role perception, time use, and qualifications needed to do the job.

The busy Extension agent or specialist will find this publication a valuable source of readily available information and inspiration. Surplus words and paragraphs have been kept to a minimum. A copy should be in every county Extension library and every staff member with responsibilities for 4-H Club work should have a personal copy for ready reference and use. The California Agricultural Extension Service has provided a copy for each 4-H staff member and is using it as a discussion guide for a Statewide 4-H Staff Training Conference in 1963.

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Changing Dimensions in Agriculture and Home Economics: Impact of Cooperative Extension Administration. Edited by E. J. Boone and C. M. Ferguson, 1962. Available from National Agricultural Extension Center for Advanced Study, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin. 96 pp. \$3.00.

This is a compilation of eight papers presented at the National Agricultural Extension Center for Advanced Study in 1961 by recognized authorities in Home Economics, Agriculture, and related subjects. Authors have drawn upon their many years of experience, observation, and study to bring forces into focus that are charting the direction of Extension work today.

The authors come to grips with such topics as modernizing Extension demands for education in agriculture, tomorrow's agriculture, what homemakers expect of Extension, new dimensions in home economics, and

starting the course in Extension. The viewpoint expressed in each of these articles discipline one's thinking to continued respect for the profession of the Extension agent, dispel any concept that Extension is in a period of status quo, and project new opportunities for helping families help themselves.

Emphatically we are told to be masters rather than victims of changes going on about us. If we are to be the masters, one of the pertinent responsibilities is that of combining research findings with Extension teaching. Continual adaptation of research re-emphasizes the educational responsibility we have with people whom we serve. Federal Administrator E. T. York, Jr., one of the authors, says, "Extension has never had a greater opportunity to exercise a more significant and meaningful leadership role—to make a more significant and meaningful contribution to the welfare of our people than we have now."

The Scope Report and *Guide to Extension Programs for the Future* are described as signposts for developing action programs. It is suggested that periodic examination of these publications would help us evaluate progress in terms of clientele needs within the framework of Extension teaching.

Need for alertness in identifying programs in keeping with needs of the family is expressed repeatedly. Families today share an increasing concern in financial management, consumer problems, community responsibilities, and public affairs. It is said that the program planning process (program projection) must continue to help families identify needs and methods of solving problems that result in challenging study, judgment, and adaptation.

Families make up communities. Thus Extension's responsibility is amplified in order to cooperate with existing organizations and to maintain good public relations. The development of strong leadership within local groups continues to receive major emphasis. Rural Areas Development and the Civil Defense assignments are segments of the changing dimensions. These assignments are described as placing Extension in position to act as catalyst in motivating people to make intelligent decisions and to strengthen relationships with other public agencies.

If you want to clarify in your own mind the recognized needs in Extension's program today, identify some of the major changes, grasp the significance of factors contributing to these changes, and apply, in part, the philosophy that stems from these papers, you will welcome this book as a unique contribution to professional improvement.

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