

Book Reviews

Problems of Youth: A Social Problems Perspective. By Charles E. Ramsey, 1967. Available from Dickenson Publishing Company, Inc., Belmont, California 94002. 122 pp.

The author is concerned with youth (ages 13-21) in the context of social problems. He assigns three dimensions to the problem of youth: cultural, social, and psychological. The cultural dimension arises from the norms and values that encourage, limit, prohibit, demand, and set standards of behavior. The social dimension is derived from the social groupings in which the adolescent participates. The psychological dimension is grounded in the developmental task concept which Ramsey feels is the nearest psychological approximation to the social and cultural frame of reference used in the selection of problems for his book.

The bulk of the text is divided into five major sections: (1) the adolescent in the family, (2) the adolescent in the school, (3) economic problems of the adolescent, (4) the adolescent and the government, and (5) the adolescent and the church.

Ramsey hypothesizes that through history, there has been a sequence of three major patterns of adolescent response to family authority. In each era the majority of adolescents have reacted in a similar way—beginning with the apprenticeship era, the adolescent rebellion, and finally the cool generation. He goes on to identify sources of parent/youth conflict and sex problems.

His thesis in regard to school is that adolescents are separating themselves from adults into a subculture and a specialized social organization. His contention is that, as a side effect of this separation, adolescents are beginning (1) to articulate and aid each other in their developmental tasks, (2) to search for insincerity in adult culture, and (3) to take control of the means of the educational and family institutions. The economic problems enumerated are related to occupational choice, work world, and socioeconomic status. Ramsey's interpretation of problems concerning the adolescent and government is largely in the area of delinquency. He states that for the most part the adolescent does not participate in, nor has he generally been interested in, government.

In relation to the church the author notes that the beliefs of parents are the beliefs of adolescents but the degree of acceptance of doctrinal concepts varies during childhood and adolescence. He notes that adolescents' criticism of the church is based on the failure of the church to

present appropriate codes for living. A number of conflicting values in the adult world which confront the adolescent as he searches for values are noted.

The presentation of evidence from related research and documentation adds an increment to the discussion which places this text well above most that expound on the adult's view of the world of adolescents. This book should be a "must" on the "books to read" list for all personnel concerned with developing programs and guiding the adolescent.

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Human Dilemmas of Leadership. By Abraham Zaleznik, 1966. Available from Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, N.Y. 10016. 230 pp. \$5.95.

Many frameworks have been developed for a study of organizational structure and analysis. This book presents a comprehensive framework for an analysis of organizational problems. This framework is built around Freudian psychology in which the developmental and dynamic forces within the individual are all-important. Man's individuality and acceptance of leadership responsibility in organizational work are dependent on his growth and training from childhood throughout his work life.

A recurring theme of the various components of organizational structure and problems runs throughout the author's treatise. The basic steps in Freud's model of work during man's developmental years weigh heavily in the analysis of leadership responsibilities in organizations: a growing tension within the individual, action resulting from that tension, and the discharge of tension resulting from gratification. The individual's motivation and behavior is closely linked to his background experiences. Any unresolved conflicts in mastering developmental tasks will recur throughout an individual's lifetime.

The individualistic theme of the book presents a challenge to those working with organizational structures and problems. While Zaleznik makes his presentation in the framework of the industrial organization, his concepts are applicable and challenging for Extension workers.

The reader becomes personally involved as the author leads him through case studies of the various types of individuals and problems within an organization; the types are familiar to the Extension worker. Of interest are his discussions of the power structure in small group formations in an industrial organization. These give insight into the behavior of those same workers as they might participate in educational programs.

The concept of self-management as an elementary step in mature orientation of the individual becomes increasingly important as every individual meets problems of conflict, authority, subordinacy, power, equality, competence, status, self-esteem, and of establishing a standard in analyzing his own place in an organization. Attention is directed to a discussion of problems occurring in bureaucratic (closed) organizations as contrasted with the author's proposed framework for open systems. Particular problems discussed are: equality, excellence of performance, rivalry, aggressiveness, and the ability to meet crises which develop from outside the organization.

This behavioristic approach is a very stimulating presentation of Freudian psychology. It can provide self-analysis as well as insight into the many "people-problems" of organizations. Essentially, organizations become a vehicle for people. It is people who establish, maintain, and change the organization if that organization is to be a dynamic force. Thus the book places a rightful emphasis on the individual's acceptance of leadership responsibilities as he works to shape and re-shape the organization rather than the organization ruling him.

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Communication and Organizational Behavior: Text and Cases (revised edition). By William V. Haney, 1967. Available from Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1818 Ridge Road, Homewood, Illinois. 534 pp. \$8.00.

Communication is essential and unavoidable in all human endeavor. Person-to-person, face-to-face interaction is the most common means of communicating, and it is this type of communication with which Haney deals almost exclusively. The book covers communication problems which confront Extension workers daily, although emphasis tends to be on administrative communication in an industrial setting.

The content of this book stresses semantic meanings and is similar in content to that of the "Talking Sense" television-film series which featured Irving J. Lee, late communication authority at Northwestern University. The book is also influenced by S. I. Hayakawa and contains many of the points he made in the "Language in Action" films. His article, "Conditions of Success in Communication," and the Carl Rogers and R. E. Farson article, "Active Listening," are high points in the book.

After discussing organizational climate and administrative theory (X and Y, but not Social, Fusion, Decision Making, etc.), Haney expertly treats perception, reality distortion, defensiveness, self concept,

and openness. Motivation, frustration, and needs receive equally good treatment.

In Haney's discussion of the communication process, the "medium" is almost completely ignored. This is unfortunate in an electronic age when large-scale technological advances in media are commonplace. Patterns of human interaction are most definitely influenced by the medium—an inseparable part of the message and communication environment.

According to Haney, miscommunications occur when there is: inference-observation confusion; bypassing or missed meaning; allness or false assumption of ultimate knowledge; an inability or unwillingness to differentiate or discriminate (a hardening of the categories); stereotype formation; polarization (seeing things only as black or white, never in between as shades of grey); or, finally, frozen evaluation (assumption that people and things never change). Correctives, based on what appears to be good logic and experience, are given for each communication problem; however, findings from empirical research, especially from the field of social psychology, could have been used to add support to the theoretical arguments advanced.

The final chapters deal with the dangers of reacting to words as if they were "reality," of confusing the pointing and associating values of words, and of allowing culture-built "blindness" to block or distort communications. Haney concludes with the caution that reflex-like communication responses may harm ourselves and others. He suggests the habit of "delay-while-evaluate before acting."

The text portion of this book is quite informative and should interest most Extension workers. The cases which comprise at least half of each chapter make interesting reading but may seem remote and of less value.

The book is highly recommended to anyone engaged in communication, sensitivity, or group dynamics training.

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