



Book Reviews

AAACE Communications Handbook. 2nd ed. American Association of Agricultural College Editors. Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers & Publishers, Inc., 1970. 180 pp. \$4.95 (paper).

At a time when many academic journalists are preoccupied with communication theory games, it's refreshing to see the reemergence of this useful book. In simple terms, it gives Extension personnel, struggling for visibility in the front ranks of today's social issues, clear answers to that basic question: How do you get your message across?

Nine chapters that deal with concepts and methods for speaking, writing, radio, television, photography, graphics, exhibits, and meetings provide the necessary instruction. It's all neatly arranged in a handbook format that makes the volume an easily accessible reference. Moreover, its crisp, understandable style and its profusion of appropriate illustrations keep faith with the honest dictums of communications the authors espouse.

The book is written by seven agricultural communication specialists under the aegis of their professional society, the American Association of Agricultural College Editors (AAACE). Members include agricultural and home economics communication specialists associated with the 50 land-grant universities, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and commercial media.

The book's original publication a few years ago received rather scant notice (see *Journal of Cooperative Extension*, Summer, 1968, p. 126). But poets claim the second time around is often more meaningful. So in the context of society's growing fervency for relevance, perhaps this revised, rewritten, updated version has reached its appointed time.

Communication skill may be a primary key to Extension stability in these times of a constantly reshuffling social order. However, many college courses in communication fail to include sufficient practical application of techniques to produce a student who knows how to get a message across. The down-to-earth treatment of the subjects in this book demonstrates that this knowledge is available on at least half a dozen land-grant campuses—institutions where communication techniques are being kept alive

much as monasteries preserved learning in the Dark Ages.

In all, this is a reassuring book. "Many of the conflicts of our time will be resolved when we learn better how to communicate with each other," states its foreword. What follows significantly advances this learning process. But the book's true meaning depends entirely on the response each of us is willing to give to another basic question: Now that we have the information, what are we going to do with it?

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An Introduction to the Art of Leadership of Community Service Organizations. Samuel Jonathan Schreiner. New York, New York: Vantage Press, 1970. 144 pp. \$4.50.

This book has been written primarily for both volunteer and professional leaders in community service organizations, such as the YMCAs. It's intended to apply to a wide variety of organizations—cultural, business, church, school, and civic.

Schreiner draws on his lifetime career as a YMCA executive and as a lecturer on administrative processes to write this text for practitioners in the field. After dealing briefly with "democratic leadership" and "democratic function," he focuses attention on the elements of administration in a community organization setting.

The book has several strengths. It's brief and easily read, and it's based on the practical experience of the author. The reader can readily identify the concepts discussed.

However, this book tries to cover too much, and thus there isn't enough detail for the reader to fully grasp the implications of the ideas and the underlying rationale.

Schreiner reveals little knowledge of the research and scholarly literature that's squarely in the field of leadership theory and practice. He uses a public administrative framework—planning, organizing, staffing, supervising, coordinating, communicating, interpreting, deciding, financing, and controlling—rather than one centering on leadership dynamics per se.

The adult educator with little or no formal training in leadership and group dynamics will find this a useful basic reference as long as he's aware that it's far from a complete treatment. Those more knowledgeable may want this on their reference shelf as a brief resumé of administrative leadership in community organization.

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The Reluctant Farmer: The Rise of Agricultural Extension to 1914.

Roy V. Scott. Urbana, Illinois: The University of Illinois Press, 1970. 362 pp. \$8.95.

The author presents in considerable detail the fragmented efforts to provide effective education for farmers before 1914. The approach isn't a chronological treatment of events, but rather a treatise on individuals and groups who made attempts in this direction. Woven into the book are the social and economic conditions in rural areas; the message is clear that farmers of that time were a bypassed segment of society.

A general overview of agricultural extension efforts before 1914 is presented in the opening chapter. These early attempts in farmer education met with little success, and there followed an era characterized by a "wave of agrarian discontent." In response to this feeling, concern grew among national leaders, both inside and outside agriculture, for the food- and fiber-producing sector of the economy.

The next chapters are devoted to the various media and approaches to farmer education, including the farmers institute movement, land-grant college efforts, and the endeavors of commercial groups such as the railroads and farm machinery manufacturers.

The concluding chapters contain a relatively complete treatment of the birth and early development of the demonstration technique in farmer education, including Seaman A. Knapp's efforts in the Southern region, and a movement led by William J. Spillman in other areas of the country.

Even those already knowledgeable about provisions of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 will find the final chapter interesting and informative. The conflict between the USDA and land-grant colleges is portrayed and the story is told of its resolution through the cooperative clause.

Readers of this book will be impressed with the amount of research that went into its preparation. Unfortunately, they may also be bored with excessive details. In spite of this minutiae, Cooperative Extension educators and those involved in developing educational programs for undereducated and disadvantaged adults may gain a great deal from this book.

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Social Disadvantage and Dependency. George W. Craddock, Calvin E. Davis, and Jeanne L. Moore. Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and Company, 1970. 138 pp. \$10.00.

If you like your books unusual, or if you prefer them coherent and conceptually consistent, then this one isn't for you. It's neither a text nor a

systematic treatise on disadvantage or dependency. It's, at best, a selection of reports from a vocational rehabilitation project that originated as part of the efforts of the Federal Joint Task Force on Health, Education, and Welfare Services and Housing, established in 1962.

Four rehabilitation demonstration projects were established by the task force. These projects were to use the "concerted services" concept, cooperatively involving the participation of several health and welfare agencies to serve multiproblem dependent families living in public housing. Rather than focusing on the physically, emotionally, or mentally handicapped, these projects were to provide rehabilitative programs for those with socioeconomic handicaps.

The project was located in Pittsburg, California. It was based on the idea that economically and culturally disadvantaged persons in a community can be deeply involved in the planning and implementation of social, educational, and vocational programs for their own socioeconomic and cultural improvement without strong imposition of middle-class value systems.

Even though the authors seem to ramble from one topic to another, especially in the first half of the book, they do provide an overview of the problems, methodologies, and small successes that were attained. It's apparent from this overview that the content of the project was unencumbered by predetermined experimental design or theoretical jargon, factors that seemed to lend both strength and weakness to the project.

In the first chapter, the authors try to justify the demonstration project in Pittsburg and explore some of the interagency conflicts that affected its establishment and operation. The second chapter deals with the "Nitty Gritty" scale, which was an attempt to base the project on the needs of the people living in the target area. The next two chapters deal with the community approach of the project and describe the methodology and results of efforts at community organization. A chapter based on a transcription of local residents discussing the program at a meeting is followed by one that tries to make explicit the relationship between community organization and individual rehabilitation operations.

The last 7 chapters of the book provide an overview of a special project in which 55 Pittsburg residents enrolled in a community junior college program. Overall, the results weren't phenomenal, at least in terms of the number of persons rehabilitated or community conditions changed. Anecdotal comments and informal observations were given as indicators of success, but there was little quantitative data.

Information presented in the report of this project clearly indicates the gross inadequacy of evaluative efforts so often used in action research to assess the results of local self-help programs. Those who have tried to justify the intangible aspects of such programs will appreciate the problems faced in this project.

Generally, this book is neither an adequate text nor an example of a good project report. The authors do have a story to be told, but it's of most value to individuals who anticipate becoming involved in community-oriented programs. It could well serve as a case situation for a class or workshop on community organization and action research procedures. Its chief contribution will be its historical value in documenting early antipoverty efforts.

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Woodruff: A Study of Community Decision Making. Albert Schaffer and Ruth Connor Schaffer. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1970. 325 pp. \$10.00.

Woodruff may be viewed at first glance as just another addition to the already long list of works dealing with community decision making; however, this study tries to overcome some of the shortcomings found in earlier works of this tradition. First, it's a longitudinal study covering a time span of more than 30 years. While much of the data for this lengthy period of time were gleaned from official files, newspaper reports, and recall interviews, the authors did live and work in Woodruff for seven years . . . the period of time that receives the greatest attention in the book. The authors' involvement in the community as researchers, as well as residents, has contributed to a richness of description atypical of most surveys.

Secondly, even though the authors don't claim this study is comparative in nature, it does have some of the elements of a comparative study. Woodruff City and Township constitute the comparative units considered. They've been matched on pragmatic rather than theoretical grounds and analyzed within the setting of a structural-functional framework.

Although the authors gloss over the impact of extralocal influences, they do take them into consideration when setting up an implicit typology of decision making that they choose to call "expansionist" and "restrictionist." In developing this typology, they point out that policy and decision making in the two municipalities were largely governed by the "extent to which public officials considered it necessary to provide the kind of facilities preferred by absentee-owned corporation."

Before the time period covered by this study, Woodruff City already had ties to the adjacent metropolitan center as well as the Midstate, in general. As the site of Eastern Midstate Teachers College, students were attracted from a relatively large geographic area; and the automotive plant in Woodruff was the branch of a major manufacturer in Metropolitan City.

Before World War II, Woodruff Township was primarily agricultural. However, the decision of the federal government to locate a major aircraft plant and construct housing for several thousand workers there rapidly moved this governmental unit from one of providing services for an agricultural economy to one faced with the full-blown problems of serving the needs of a rapidly expanding municipality.

The focal decisions around which this study is built are a series of attempts to consolidate the two municipalities, or to annex small portions of township land to the city, over a 20-year time span.

The book is organized into three major sections. Part I deals with the theoretical framework of the study, a description of the leadership of the community, and a review of decision-making patterns relative to critical municipal services. Part II analyzes three organizational units: the banks, the Chamber of Commerce, and the newspaper in relation to their influence on the community. Part III covers the patterns of action in the various consolidation and annexation movements during the study period.

The Schaffers have produced a valuable addition to the body of literature dealing with social power and community decision making. This volume will be of particular interest to Extension professionals who are responsible for implementing rural development programs. The study provides fresh insight into the very real obstacles facing these professionals, as well as citizens, who are trying to initiate change in nonmetropolitan communities.

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