



## Book Reviews

**Basic Education for Adults.** Angelica W. Cass. New York, New York: Association Press, 1971. 159 pp. \$5.95.

*Basic Education for Adults* is a brief overview of some major areas of concern that adult educators assert are important in the quest to be more effective in helping adults learn. However brief, it does provide a perspective of adult basic education (ABE) in rather quick fashion. To the new teacher or beginner in ABE who is part-time with other full-time obligations and pursuits, the advantage of quick, ready reference is obvious.

The 16 chapters listed in the table of contents, one for each major area, provide an excellent guide for the new teacher to follow in establishing his or her own individual staff development program. The first topic "Why Basic Education?" is the most extensively treated in comparison to others in the book. The subject is adequately covered in terms of providing background information and establishing the need for ABE.

The remaining topics, with the possible exception of the second and third, "Psychology of Adult Learning" and "The Adult Learner," were disappointingly brief. Topic 12, "Teaching Arithmetic to Adults," is 2½ pages, including the bibliography. Several topics weren't much more than brief outlines with little or no suggestions on how to apply the items to the adult situation. As a matter of fact, the book is surprisingly devoid of the "how-to-do" so often needed and sought by teachers in ABE.

In view of the extreme brevity of some of the topics, it would have been helpful if the bibliographies for further reading had been more extensive. While some familiar, and old, publications were referred to, very few of the more current publications relevant to the topics were cited.

No mention was made of published tests developed for use with adults in basic education.

References to fairly recently published text materials designed for adult students were also lacking. The author's explanations given on factors to consider when developing materials were good. Beginners or new

teachers, however, usually need professionally developed materials as examples and to supplement their efforts.

In spite of the limitations of depth and documentation, and the high level of generality, this book has merit as a ready reference for all teachers of adults, especially those new in the field. It would be appreciated more by the beginner and this may well have been the target of the author. If so, she has hit the target if not the bull's-eye.

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**Community Organization and Social Planning.** Robert Perlman and Arnold Gurin. New York, New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., and The Council for Social Work Education, 1972. 292 pp. \$8.95.

This graduate *text* book summarizes theory and practice in programming by social practitioners involved with social planning and community organization. Relatively little attention is paid to the practitioner in these fields who conceives his role as being primarily educational. Its historical analysis includes efforts of the 1960s and helps you set recent events into a broader context.

Chapters are devoted to the emerging discipline, the roots of practice, a framework for practice, voluntary associations, working with voluntary associations, service agencies, planning organizations, practice in planning organizations, comprehensive planning, and suggestions for future practice.

The book has a great deal to offer to the Extension practitioner who: (1) is willing to deal with a conceptual approach as opposed to a "how-to-do-it" reference, (2) is aware that practice is complex and that oversimplification is dangerous, (3) believes that Extension should be making a major contribution to helping America deal with social problems, and (4) believes that more is needed in such programming than a curriculum development approach.

The number of Extension personnel who qualify on all four criteria are probably few. Therefore, the book isn't recommended to the average Extension person. However, it should be considered carefully by all those within Extension who are responsible for establishing program process directions. Some will find it extremely helpful in broadening and enriching the traditional perspective of programming; others will find a few ideas compatible with their philosophy and be able to use them; others should read it to keep up with what other fields are proposing as problem-focused program procedure. Students may find it a useful entry to the literature of this particular field.

The authors refer to three elements that enter into practice in problem-focused programs: the value premises and choices that are fundamental to actions taken or not taken, technical knowledge on which action can or should be based, and patterns of influence that affect decision making. Extension processes probably pay too little attention to the value choices and patterns of influence. This book probably gives too little attention to roles relating to provision and use of technical knowledge (that is, educator roles).

There's a tendency in some parts of Extension to talk highly about Extension's role in problem solving. However, if we in fact espouse this role in terms of problems of society, we must be very careful to avoid naivete. This book is helpful in getting a better perspective on the idea that simple solutions are usually not possible, that there may be multiple conflicting approaches to a given problem and no one approach is apt to conclusively prove better than others, and that problem coping or solving usually requires more than an informational input. One of the book's strengths is its analysis of real experiences.

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**Materials and Methods in Adult Education.** Chester Klevins, ed. Canoga Park, California: Klevins Publications, 1971. 373 pp. \$4.95 (paper).

This book is a collection of 31 articles authored or co-authored by educators who are well known for their contributions to the field of adult education. Content is catalogued under the six divisions: Introduction, Curriculum Development, The Instructional Process, New Aids to Learning, Staff Development, and Adult Education: Resourceful Program Development.

In reviewing the contents, it's impossible to delineate in space allotted even a sketchy review of each of the papers. Consequently, in referring to the contents of several of the papers, much will be omitted.

Each of the papers has something applicable to the role of an Extension professional or other type of adult educator. However, in this quick review only certain topics and their editors can be discussed.

If you're concerned with history, definition, or adult education philosophy, the papers by Sheats and Knowles provide fundamental concepts. A case in point—the modern era of adult education by Knowles and

Klevins provides a background of dated events as well as a generous bibliography of references. Aker discusses the ever-present task of program development via an overview and a model that should help anyone involved in the process, whether as a teacher or practitioner. Coupled with Paige's dimension of community, you have both process and application in program development. Monroe and Quinn review three dimensions of measurable objectives and cite examples.

If you're interested in criteria for judging materials and techniques, Neff and Minkoff give practical, realistic learning combinations and show how to perform these under specific circumstances. Those interested in the general equivalency degree in adult education can profit by Howards' article on this subject. John B. Holden discusses the learning community from the standpoint of the individual, as a learner, and the development of a learning environment. Kreitlow describes theories of adult learning related to patterns for individuals and small and large groups.

Individuals working with the underprivileged will find insights, special information, and a challenge through studying the nature of the culturally unique, as explained in Udvari and Luke's human relations article.

Articles on classroom adjustment (Neff) and individualized instruction (Weinhold) will provide helps in the "ways" and "means" of adult education. Much of the "nuts and bolts" of teaching comes in articles on "New Aids to Learning" (Dellefield), "Audiovisual Media" (Curl), "The Learning Lab Approach" (Peters), "Still Projection and Auto Media" (Reynolds), and "Individualized Laboratory Instruction" (Wooden).

"Staff Development," reviewed by Brown, gives pointers on "Self-Evaluation" (Seaman and Dutton), "Guidance and Counselling in ABE" (Barron, Scher, and Stedman), "A Proposed Rationale for the Use of Paraprofessionals" (Lindskoog), and considerations in joining organizations by Cortright.

In talking about "Adult Education: Resourceful Program Development," including current changes in adult education, Easley characterizes changes under the five major areas of: (1) student-teacher partnerships in learning, (2) criterion standards, (3) learning programs based on "human trajectories," (4) learning how to learn, and (5) learning beamed to a noncompetitive system of internal rewards. He continues by discussing 15 typical program considerations and a series of major changes needed to accommodate the pressures of technical and knowledge explosion.

Hopefully, all adult educators have some access to ERIC. Roger DeCrow presents an excellent clear-cut explanation of the ERIC system's content and use.

Make-up and special program designs in the field of manpower are explained by Hubelbank. Page's article on using your library gives numerous suggestions for the use of this valuable resource.

This is a book to be valued for its parts which present many views, ideas and challenges. Although printed on smooth paper and very legible, the print is small and a great deal of information is packed into its 373 pages.

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**Social Change in Rural Societies.** 2nd ed. Everett M. Rogers and Rabel J. Burdge. New York, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1972. 472 pp. \$9.95.

This book, as was true of the 1960 edition, will be a leader. It's authoritative, interesting, and censuswise up-to-date. Although "written for students enrolled in introductory rural sociology courses," it's certainly relevant also to many others no longer on campus. I refer particularly to the growing legions of rural community development workers who have never had the benefit of as much as a single course in rural sociology. Among the latter would probably be a substantial proportion of our county Extension agents throughout the nation.

The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 delineated the field of operation for the Cooperative Extension Service as "agriculture, home economics, and subjects relating thereto." Interpretation of the expression "and subjects relating thereto" has been greatly broadened during recent years. Publication of the "Scope Report" and "A People and a Spirit" gave new impetus to the community development component within the Cooperative Extension Service.

Today we have the recently enacted Rural Development Act of 1972, a federal revenue sharing program, and the possibility of a cabinet-level Department of Community Development. These developments pose a significant challenge for the Extension Service—a challenge that must be met not only by a thorough "tooling up" at the USDA in Washington and at land-grant colleges and universities everywhere, but also . . . and perhaps primarily . . . by a program of systematic study and self-education on the part of the local county Extension agent. If local Extension personnel lack vision, enthusiasm, and basic knowledge relative to the community development star now appearing on the horizon, it really matters little what happens in Washington or the land-grant institutions to facilitate its fulfillment.

The Rogers-Burdge volume provides a solid starting point for any Extension agent who wants to engage in a reading program to provide him/herself with a stronger background of knowledge concerning the rural milieu in which he/she works.

After a rather comprehensive introductory chapter on the concept of social change and a bird's-eye view of some of the major, long-term changes in rural society, the authors devote four chapters (Part I) to a discussion of basic concepts in sociology: culture, role, socialization, interaction, social classes, and groups/organizations, with an enlightening section on bureaucracy.

Part II follows with a treatment of the major rural social institutions: farming/agribusiness/cooperatives; the rural family, church, and school; rural and suburban communities; farmer organizations and agrarian movements; and governmental agricultural agencies.

Part III concludes, with three chapters on the process and consequences of planned change: diffusion of technological innovations, disadvantaged rural Americans, and the modernization of peasants in less developed countries.

In relation to community resource development (CRD), perhaps the most important chapter is that on "Rural and Suburban Communities." It gives the reader a good overview of the current scene and major trends. It would have been helpful, however, if a little more attention could have been devoted to the so-called area development concept. The county agent who is concerned with CRD finds himself literally surrounded by functional area delineations, both formal and informal, relating to planning, economic development, health, law enforcement, education, recreation, and a growing number of other community concerns. In this connection, Rogers and Burdge refer to Roland Warren's "great change," describing briefly four pertinent types of change in U.S. rural communities. The magnitude and potential impact of this change, however, would seem to have warranted a more extensive treatment.

The book is well worth reading and should be on the shelf of every Extension office.

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