

## BOOK REVIEWS

by MORTON I. TEICHER, PH.D.

**Positive Aspects of Child Psychiatry; as Developed in the Selected Writings of Dr. Frederick H. Allen.** W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., New York, 1963. 300 pp. \$6.00.

THE Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic Alumni Association has put us all in its debt by sponsoring the publication of this volume which contains the major scientific papers of Frederick H. Allen. Dr. Allen organized the Philadelphia clinic in 1925 and served as its director until his retirement in 1956. The clinic was and continues to be an important training center for child psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers.

Dr. Allen was a pioneer who helped to open a new branch of psychiatry and to lead its development. His book, *Psychotherapy with Children*, published in 1942, is still one of the best introductions to the dynamics of child psychiatry. The present volume likewise exemplifies a clear style which is easy to read and which conveys the full depths of the therapeutic situation.

Writing in 1930, Dr. Allen laid down a basic tenet when he stated that the avoidance of specific suggestion "is one of the most difficult tasks that confronts the psychiatrist and the social worker. . . . The fewer the specific suggestions given to them for handling this or that type of child reaction, the easier it will be to re-establish their con-

fidence in themselves and their own maturity . . . to decide specific points themselves." Here is a first principle in the helping relationship, reiterated and rediscovered by each new school of psychotherapy, whatever its outward elaborations may be.

A second major theme is developed in series of eight papers, written between 1929 and 1963 and reprinted in this book. "The growth of the child viewed as a dynamic, differentiating process." This is a simple yet deeply meaningful concept, one to which we can return again and again, since new experiences and new learning allow us to realize new significance and new understandings of the growth process. An example of such a re-evaluation and a reworking of the meaning of growth is the Fourth Annual Karen Horney Lecture in 1956 entitled "Conception of the Basic Conflict" in which he states, "I have attempted to give a brief sketch, emphasizing the meaning of these directions—the away, toward and against—in the growth process of the child. In doing this, I have tried to build a skeleton outline of a point of view about human growth and development that gives a balanced emphasis on the interaction between the biological and social forces always in operation, and always in relation to each other".

Allen approached each patient with

implicit faith in him as a human being. As a therapist, he used this faith to break through resistances and to free the patient for growth and self-determination. Always the emphasis is on the forward progress and growth—not the past or the restraining emotions.

Frederick H. Allen died in 1964. His legacy is large. He left the profound thoughts of a man who explored the process of human relationships that favor growth and individualization. He favored clear thinking and sound judgment. He had humility with regard to the powers of the therapist and faith in the potential of the patient. He emphasized the therapeutic value of the here and now over the past and gone. He was on the side of not what was, but what is to be and to become. These essays will continue to contribute a great deal and deserve a readership beyond the boundaries of child psychiatry.

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**Selecting Foster Parents**, by Martin Wolins. Columbia University Press, New York, 1963. 233 pp. \$6.

DR. WOLINS is to be commended for this well-organized, soundly formulated report of his research studies on foster care theory and practice. The Child Welfare League of America, sponsor of the project, also deserves plaudits.

This lucid, sinewy book asks more questions than it answers. It pin-points current dilemmas and complexities in a field where professional dissatisfaction and doubt are prevalent. There are about 250,000 children in the U.S.A. who live in foster-homes; it is estimated that some 1,800,000 children will spend at least two years in such care during their childhood. \$300,000,000 is spent an-

nually to sustain them. Is such care adequate? Why are so many children either overlooked in foster-care or experience repeated replacements? Maas and Engler have shown that many children are severely neglected or damaged by the present foster-care system. Can research and objective knowledge help to correct deficiencies and strengthen this system of care?

Utilizing ingenious social science methods, the author focusses on two vital questions: how do social workers decide on the quality of foster-families? and on what basis do they accept or reject foster-home applicants?

Alas, there are no final or positive answers to these vexing questions. Dr. Wolins demonstrates the importance of knowing how a caseworker appraises the applicant, how he reacts to agency requirements, and how colleagues respond to his decision. What "ideal" does the caseworker have of the good foster-family? Does he use any rule other than intuition in deciding? What objective ingredients make up the profile of the acceptable foster-family? Will colleagues concur in his judgments?

Even when the criteria for a good foster-family were developed out of case workers' responses, in practice the acceptance decisions were not implemented.

Policymakers, administrators, practitioners and social work educators will find little reassurance but much to ponder on these subjects. There is apparently a great gap between the ideal and the reality of foster-care, especially foster-family selection. Between 1959 and 1961, the research staff conducted six projects. The results demonstrate continuing confusion and ambivalence on the part of foster-parents regarding their role-performance; community opinion is ambiguous as to the role and authority of the placement agency. The "good" foster-family is a projection

of the middle-class practitioner sub-culture. The selection of foster-parents is not based on objective criteria. In the end, it is the personal biases, preferences or idiosyncratic responses of the caseworker that count, says the author. Is this not true of all casework relationships whatever the field of practice?

This book is full of perceptive observations and implications. A penetrating review is given of the changes in values and approaches to children in placement over the years. Although there have been advances and the child of today is viewed as an individual in need of nurture and opportunity for fulfillment, the current system of foster-care still falls short. Confusions in perception and performance of role by foster-parents are presented, and by implication, the new emphasis on viewing foster-parents as staff members paid for services is seen as a possible answer. The trend toward agency group foster home residences staffed by paid foster-parents seems to offer a possible alternative to a system of foster-care that may be obsolete.

There is a great deal more in this book—the dubious influence of agency contacts, the content and volume of case records, the recruitment deficits in screening foster parents, methods of conflict—adjustment between agency and foster parents, and the confusions among the four-cornered relationships of the foster home drama. Certainly clearer role definitions, fees for services, smaller caseloads, better board rates, scales for predicting foster-parent performances all would seem necessary to improve the interaction among the various *dramatis personae*.

This book identifies the many problems to be resolved in the changes which are on the way in this field. Dr. Wolins has focused a research microscope on a situation that is painful. Perhaps, as he says, we need depth studies of successful

foster-parents comparable to those of Oscar Lewis' Mexican studies. Perhaps, anthropological, psycho-social research can provide answers to our continued quest.

For Jewish and other sectarian foster-care agencies, there may be some question as to whether or not the participants and the respondents are truly typical. Dr. Wolins worked with nine county welfare departments and two voluntary agencies, located in three different sections of the U.S.A. He involved 4,790 foster families and 326 social workers. Though this "universe" appears to be slanted by predominantly middle-class Protestant values, the messages of this book are applicable to the sectarian field.

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**Behavioral Individuality in Early Childhood**, by Alexander Thomas, Herbert G. Birch, Stella Chess, Margaret E. Hertzog, and Sam Korn. New York University Press, New York, 1963. 129 pp.

THIS is the first of a series of planned publications on a longitudinal study of 130 children from the first month of life onward. The purpose of the whole study is to identify primary characteristics of infants, to explore how persistent these characteristics are and to what degree they can be modified through environmental influences. The present volume is concerned with 80 children during their first two years of life. These children were followed at five points in time from the age of three months. While the sample was relatively homogeneous (parents mainly Jewish, middle-class, college-educated), there remain enough variables to affect the outcome. The ma-

major method of investigation was standardized interviews with parents.

A questionnaire addressed itself to some vital statistics and medical data and then primarily to specific behavioral details of daily living. Fourteen behavior areas were systematically and specifically explored from the beginning. (Soiling and wetting, bathing, nail-cutting, hair-brushing, washing of face, doctor-contact, dressing and undressing, sensory mobility, response to people, response to illness, crying). Special pains were taken for all answers to be descriptive rather than interpretative. Follow-up interviews were held every three months during the first year and every six months thereafter. A number of new items was added to the standard outline (e.g. play, learning of limits, verbalization, haircuts) as they appeared in the child's development. By a process of content analysis, nine categories of functioning were then established into which the behavioral data were classified. These served as the measuring units of the study and include: (1) activity level; (2) rhythmicity; (predictability of time of specific function); (3) approach or withdrawal (nature of response to new stimulus); (4) adaptability (ability to modify responses in new situations); (5) intensity of reaction; (6) threshold of responsiveness (intensity of stimulus necessary to evoke response); (7) quality of mood (amount of pleasant—versus unpleasant behavior); (8) destructibility (effectiveness of extraneous stimuli—altering ongoing behavior); (9) persistence (attention span and continuation of activity).

This detailed information, secured from the parents, was carefully scored by two independent judges and validated by two observers. The characteristics, thus established, were submitted to a longitudinal analysis, rated in a three point scale, and weighed in terms

of preponderance models, rank, and percent rank index.

The results of this study thus far confirm the major hypothesis of the authors; namely, (1) that initially identifiable characteristics are persistent features of the child's behavior throughout the first two years of life; (2) that such characteristics seem less dependent on the environmental influences than on the initial endowment.

The chapter on general issues in long range longitudinal studies is an excellent and clear exposition of the methodological implications of longitudinal studies in the field of child development. One wonders, however, why such longitudinal studies as Jerome Kagan and Howard Moss' (Birth to Maturity) were not mentioned. More surprising are other theoretical claims. Thus, the description of Freud's theory as merely being "environmental" and as seeing individuality as "the product of circumstances" is enormously over-simplified. Freud's life-long respect for the biological realities is too well recognized to require documentation here. The description of the psychoanalytic concept of the constancy of drive characteristics as a static formula is naive.

Similarly, the chapters on practical implications are over-simplifications and, therefore, unusable. For example, "our findings suggest that exclusive emphasis on the role of the environment in child development tells only part of the story, etc." This modest discovery hardly heralds a new era of research in child development.

The reader who is less than dedicated to research, having worked his way through the laborious procedure of scientific methods and strategy to these meagre findings, may well experience some disappointment—"Is that all? I've always known this."

However, since this volume is only the first report about an ongoing study, one

must reserve judgment as to its ultimate contribution and as to the ultimate appropriateness of the proportions between process and findings. It is quite possible that the method used will in time point the way for other long range longitudinal studies. Until further findings are reported a positive attitude of modest expectancy seems justified, one hopes that this careful research method may bring more substantial results in the future.

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**Theory and Practice as a Single Reality: An Essay in Social Work Education**, by Ruth Gilpin. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1963. 139 pp. \$4.50.

THIS book grew out of a dissertation for the School of Social Work of the University of Pennsylvania.

"How it can be that a student who is asked to learn in two places can complete his educational experience with his academic and experiential learning integrated within him"? In attempting to answer this contentious, perplexing question, so basic to effective education for practice, Dr. Gilpin examines in detail the educational structure and practices developed in one school—the University of North Carolina School of Social Work, which operates a Block Plan program. This lucid description of a school in action is buttressed by a critical disciplined analysis of the concepts and principles underlying the specific practices.

Recognizing that diverse theories of learning as well as diverse conceptions of the essentials in social work practice have influenced the development and operation of specific educational pro-

grams, she clearly enunciates her own frame of reference,—a functional orientation to learning theory and casework practice. In a succinct historical review of the quest by social work educators to bring together the professional school and the practice agency in a program in which the student can interrelate and integrate theory and practice, she assesses from her point of view what has been helpful or lacking in encompassing the two essential but distinctive components in social work education. For the reader who brings a different conceptual configuration and emphasis to learning theory, the basic pedagogical concerns posed by Dr. Gilpin are nevertheless cogent and provocative.

Dr. Gilpin contends that "one school's exemplification in practice of a theory born of the Block can legitimately be of import to schools which are concurrent." Though very few schools operate on the Block plan, this careful exposition of the special educational problems confronting such schools opens up new considerations of the nature of the concurrent plan. Questioning how the student can sustain his role as student in a school in spite of learning in two different places within sequential periods of time without rejecting one for the other and with school and practice setting maintaining their separate functional nature as institutions, Dr. Gilpin examines the meaning of the term concurrent. She distinguishes between concurrent as co-existing in time and the act of concurrence when within the teaching and learning process, the field instructor and the school consultant arrive at that kind of mutual agreement about the student's learning which enables each to clarify their distinctive roles and responsibilities in relation to the student. The close juxtaposition in time between learning in the class-room and learning in the practice setting that exists in the concurrent plan and the

student's overt recognition that these two learning situations have some connection to each other, has presented a questionable base from which to define the nature of school-agency involvement in the education of students. A non-critical reliance on co-existence in time has tended to promote an attitude in which the practice setting becomes an adjunct of the professional school. This has resulted in tensions and conflicts which mitigate against effective collaboration between school and practice setting. It has also dulled the school's awareness of its special task in enabling the student to achieve an internal integration of theory and practice and the school's dynamic use of the relationships available to the student within the school as he works towards this end. The concept of concurrence brings into sharper focus the school's distinctive task in this direction.

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**Standards for Services of Child Welfare Institutions**, by Director, Standards Project, Zitha R. Turitz, and Consultant, Gisela Konopka, Child Welfare League of America, New York, 1963. 141 pp. \$2.25.

**The Residential Treatment Center, Children, Program, and Costs**, by Lydia F. Hylton. Child Welfare League of America, Inc. New York, 1964, 251 pp. \$5.00.

THE *Standards* for child care institutions put out by the CWLA is the latest addition to its already existing list of similar compilations for foster home care, day care, homemaker, adoption, unmarried parents, and protective serv-

ices. Essentially such standards represent a crystallization of concept and practice, sufficiently tested and in wide enough use, of a kind and on a level with the best prevailing opinion. This material was worked up, under the auspices of the League, by two large committees consisting of institution executives drawn from all parts of the country, university teachers, and members of government bureaus and welfare organizations, and was also brought under the critical judgment of member agencies. Representation could hardly have been more broadly based or more authoritative.

The child welfare institution is seen as the placement of choice for children over 6 with social and personality problems. Program is based on a far more sophisticated understanding than ever previously existed of the "core components" of institutional placement, and is presented in rounded form as "total service." Aims are different from the old-line custodial-training institution in that they focus on the family-child problems. Service begins at Intake where the nature of these problems is determined and weighed as to the need for institutional placement. Separation, potentially traumatic, is carefully handled, in steps. Indigenous values of group living, and also its hazards, are analysed. As parental-child relations generally lie at the bottom of the child's problems, concurrent work with parents is essential. Termination and post-placement work are no less important than any other service activity. This conception of total service is the foundation on which these standards rest.

The material covers the detail of this program, defines the function, role, and duties of the various categories of staff, and, similarly, covers all aspects of plant and equipment needs, agency organization, administration, and community planning. Given the form in which

such publications are traditionally presented—essentially they are dicta arranged in sections, sub-sections, and elements, all coded for easy reference—there is not the historical background to make apparent the radical change in the nature and character of the institution during the past twenty-five years. The material had to be gathered and codified in the light of these changes, and, moreover, this had to be done in the midst of a still fast-changing situation. When it is realized that the primary task of a book on standards is to lay down more or less fixed references, it is no small accomplishment that this one fully reflects this fluid context, at the same time that it defines the institution in its new cast.

This leads directly to our consideration of *The Residential Treatment Center*. Briefly and simply defined, they are institutions for the treatment of emotionally disturbed children. In 1961, CWLA estimated that there were more than 80 such centers distributed over 19 states serving 4600 children. In this book, 21 such centers serving 923 children and two therapeutic day schools with 47 children were selected for a comparative study of costs in relation to types of children served and to program. The material was largely obtained from questionnaires and schedules (which are reproduced in the appendix) and also from interviews.

The result is a large accumulation of comparative data on details of plant and program, administrative aspects, characteristics of children and parents, staffing, and then costs followed by an assortment of opinions by welfare and community leaders on the validity of these centers in the light of costs. Using a method devised in an earlier study, costs are computed and given in various totals, but also there are tables showing distribution of expenditures by program, by service, by type of child, etc. In

connection with this latter correlation, an especially practical typology, descriptive rather than diagnostic, was devised, which categorizes not only the child's behavior per se but also his behavior in relation to family stability. Costs are high, as simply shown. To cite only the cost per bed, this ranges from \$4501. to \$14,059. a year, an enormous spread, with the main cluster of centers roughly in the \$7-9000. range. As one would expect, the medically directed centers, with one exception, fall in the highest brackets, and in the single instance where figures are supplied for day schools, the higher expenditures are for the clinical services and for special education.

The League accomplished in this project what it set out to do. But to what purpose? With no attempt to evaluate the service, it is simply a straight reportorial job, and, as such, little more than a mere collection of data. The impression left is of work unfinished. The prevailing assumption is that the residential treatment center is a different genre of institution. Yet whatever difference there is appears one of orientation, not of kind, with the *Standards* equally applicable to both. As matters now stand, the centers seem simply to be the advance guard in an ongoing development, for, given the continuing pressures that are forcing admission of ever increasing numbers of disturbed children in them (which is what has been happening all along) more institutions will be changing orientation accordingly. It is therefore regrettable that, in the face of this confusion, the League chose to limit itself to so constricted a study design, when by also undertaking evaluation it could have reached for definition and given the project more meaning.

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**The Expanding Theoretical Base of Casework.** (Ten papers reprinted from **Social Casework**). Family Service Association of America, New York, 1964. 71 pp. \$1.25.

**S**Ocial work's continuing struggle to integrate knowledge of individual and social forces in the human situation has generated the development of its methods and processes.

Casework method in its historical development has reflected the broader social context of which it is a part. The balance of concern with the "individual" and the "social" has shifted in theory and practice. The social dimension once again emerges as an area of inquiry in casework practice and theory, as worldwide social issues related to peace, automation, racial equality, civil rights and increased scientific technology involve all people with forceful insistence.

This publication will mark for many caseworkers a new direction in casework development. These papers attempt to integrate social science concepts with the theoretical base of casework. The lead article by Lifschutz is a well presented summary of the development of ego-psychology as a further extension of analytical psychology. The development of ego-psychology will provide for many caseworkers an avenue of reentry into the social arena of client life.

Papers by Coyle and Teicher deal with the group and culture respectively and convey substance and wisdom in cautioning the reader to utilize the content within the framework of professional social work.

This collection of papers informs, enriches, and yet provokes the practitioner to widen his scope so as to understand clients in wider dimensions, such as in-groups, cultures, sub-cultures, roles and value systems that provide either cohesion or conflict in living.

It is misleading, however, to offer the reader a work with a title of such magnitude without an editorial statement that locates in time the significance of the collection within the development of social casework method. Thus, the work as a whole lacks an orderly and systematic development in terms of a social casework base. If the lead article was intended to serve as the core work with the other papers serving as an addition to the theoretical base of casework, then there is an important misunderstanding of the theoretical base which antedates the development of ego-psychology.

The history of the profession may yet teach the necessity for perspective between the "individual" and the "social" that allows not so much for resolution, but for the kind of searching inquiry these papers signify. This is indeed a dilemma: to be a part of a culture and yet to find the way to stand apart sufficiently to develop the knowledge and understanding necessary for furthering client fulfillment and social work purpose.

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**Handbook of Counseling Techniques**, by Ernest Harms and Paul Schreiber. A Pergamon Press Book. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964. 506 pp. \$12.00.

**T**HE editors of this Handbook believe that a compilation of articles on counseling, limited to the field of human relations, can serve useful purposes of information and orientation to both professional and non-professional readers. They offer it as a "map and a guide" in a "vast and relatively uncharted territory", rather than as an integrated textbook. These purposes of information, orientation and reference are achieved in the 36 articles of which the volume is



composed. The organization is loose, in line with the purposes of charting a territory rather than defining it.

The content covers counseling practices in major areas of the life cycle, the history of counseling, its generic principles and special problems, giving a full representation of this vigorous and varied development in our society. The volume conveys the startling differentiation and variety of counseling services and practices in the field of human relations. It covers a wide range of problems, purposes, settings, methods, disciplines and training. No systematic effort is made to differentiate counseling from other forms of helping; on the contrary, counseling here functions as an umbrella for a large assortment of existing techniques, practices and helping methods in social work, psychology, medicine, psychiatry, education and nursing. Emphasis is placed on utilizing this ensemble of knowledge for what and where the human and social need is. There is no concern with jurisdictional disputes and there is none with duplication. Similar problems appear in different settings and under different helping auspices; they are handled with the emphasis specific to the counseling practice in the setting.

Is this bewildering variety held together by a "common core" of counseling practice? The volume goes on this assumption, and Cora Kasius in her paper on "Principles of Counseling" lucidly distills these common generic elements. "Counseling" as a field obviously is not a theoretical creation and has not branched out according to plan from a central theoretical concept. In reality, it is part of other fields of practice, and it is part of society as a whole. The impression in reading these contributions is that some applications of counseling are more determined by his common core and more identifiable by it while others are more determined by

needs and methods of their specific setting or of a particular vocation or discipline. Far transcending these considerations of definition and identification is the fact that counseling emerges from this volume as a phenomenon of great meaning to modern society and man. It is modern society's substitute for traditional forms of support, help, charismatic experience, learning and teaching. At the same time, it is something new, rational, organizational, scientific, putting a basic human quality into an organized form. Counseling integrates the traditional and the modern, the simple and the sophisticated. It adapts a basic skill in human relationship processes to modern conditions with all the vastly increased complexity and specialization of modern living. Thus, we see a generically basic quality in need and process taking specific and specialized form as it appears under most varied conditions. Counseling lends itself to application in settings and for purposes which originally were far removed from the expectation of seeking or finding help. There is something in the very informality of this instrument, in its not appearing in the heavy armor of highly specialized expertise which makes it eminently useful to our sprawling society.

The variety and differentiation of counseling practice are reflected in the vocations, professional associations and functions of the contributors. The editors were successful in enlisting "competent experts in their fields". Each author "was given the fullest latitude in his approach . . ." "This method presents . . . advantages and disadvantages". Some of the disadvantages might have been reduced if the editors, in assuring full latitude, had also specified some standards for the individual contributions which would not have interfered with this latitude. For instance, since the volume is designed to serve as a refer-

ence, bibliography (given by most contributors) should have been one of the standards. Reference to qualifications required and training of those practicing in the field is lacking in a few of these papers. Some papers are strong on philosophy, others on the theory of a field of practice, others on the reality prevailing in such a field, and some papers have a substantial evaluation and criticism of such practice, measuring it against desirable goals. Some authors present their own point of view primarily, while most also attempt to present the points of view and approaches which are held in their field. Many papers combine all these elements in a fine balance and synthesis while a few lack this balance. Integration of this varied fare into a coherent and cohesive system of philosophy and practice was not intended and probably would be unrealistic to expect at this point. Thus, overlapping was anticipated by the authors, and this is a small matter indeed. Conflicting philosophies and evaluations are revealed as one compares authors of related fields.

However, such contradictions add to the honesty, aliveness and reality of these contributions. Nobody pretends that "counseling" is a settled and finished matter, well defined and under solid scientific and professional control. It is, instead, a dynamic reality, full of developmental force and of developmental problems. The reference to these problems, the confrontation with them in these pages is one of the valuable results of the experience which this volume produces. Some of these contributions have special value because of their philosophical depth, lucidity of presentation, or power of critique. Many deserve specific evaluation and individualized consideration. This is not possible in this review. It must suffice to say that the editors have planned well for their limited purposes, that the contributors

have labored with intelligence and integrity, and that the results of their labors add up to a useful, attractive and fascinating Gestalt.

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**A History of the Care and Study of the Mentally Retarded**, by Dr. Leo Kanner. Charles C Thomas, Springfield, Illinois, 1964. 144 pp. \$6.50.

THIS small volume represents a "labour of love" by a distinguished child psychiatrist who himself has made notable innovations in the treatment of the retarded.

Its chief value is to be found as a history of a science by a skilled researcher who has gone to original sources in many lands to illuminate many obscure corners in the beginnings of the new science. Extensive treatment is accorded the development of the new science, the era of institutional development in Europe and America and early professional periodicals. Dr. Kanner introduces the reader to the pioneers in this new science, examining simply their motivations and dedicated efforts. Later in the volume, shifting goals of institutionalization, the emergence of etiological classifications, quantitative determinants of intellectual adequacy, special classes, the eugenics scare and "the dawn of a new era" are dealt with briefly.

The material is scholarly in scope and carefully traces the beginnings of the care and treatment of the retarded in Europe and America although sources from other cultures such as Africa and Asia were not consulted for their significant insights and contributions. The section dealing with the derivation of

terms such as "imbecile" and "idiot" is excellent. Some familiar material regarding Drs. Itard, Seguin and Howe is repeated here without adding any new insights or understandings for the sophisticated reader who might be attracted to the volume. One would have been delighted to find some material regarding the original methods and activities of Itard and Seguin.

Dr. Kanner's book will be of special interest to the student preparing a paper dealing with beginnings and to the sophisticated worker in the field of retardation seeking additional source material. It will be of limited interest to other Jewish communal workers.

Overall, we are indebted to Dr. Kanner for pulling together scarce and scattered historical materials into this comprehensive volume. It is carefully documented and the material is fascinating.

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**Assimilation in American Life: Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins**, by Milton M. Gordon. Oxford University Press, New York, 1964. 276 pp. \$5.25.

ONE of the essential characteristics of the American society has been the proliferation of "voluntary" groups. This phenomenon has its roots in Colonial and Revolutionary attempts to prevent the emergence of the kinds of European tyranny with which the colonists were familiar. In their political phase, as formulated by the Founding Fathers, they envisaged the multiplication of "interest groups"—primarily economic and regional—which, because they would

compete with each other, would inhibit the seizure of power by any one of them or any enduring coalition.

In their religious phase, as articulated by thinkers like Roger Williams, they perceived the separation of church and state and freedom of conscience as forestalling the use of the church as an instrument of political power or of religious passion to suppress religious freedom.

Both these formulations rested upon an assumption that the society was and would continue to be shaped by English patterns. No one foresaw the arrival of 41 million immigrants with a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. Yet, the basic framework provided for the adjustment of these groups to American society.

In this book, sociologist Milton M. Gordon seeks to describe and analyze the nature of these processes of adjustment. It should be noted from the outset that Dr. Gordon is not using the word "assimilation" in the invidious sense in which Jews have often used it to mean a traitorous abandonment of the ties and values of one's group to disappear into the general society. Rather, he uses it to describe those processes by which ethnic groups become part, or partners, of the whole American society—and the adaptations which occur as they do so.

He does this sensitively, with regard for the complexities and subtleties of these processes, and with respect for the maintenance of ethnic group identity and institutions. He describes the three historical hypotheses of what assimilation should be: "Anglo-conformity," in which members of all groups would take on the characteristics of the white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants; the "melting pot," in which the Anglo-Saxon and the other cultures would meet, influence each other, and ultimately evolve a new American culture with some of the characteristics of all the others; and "cultural

pluralism" in which each ethnic group would maintain its values and culture, forming an American mosaic of ethnic cultures, while each group's members would simultaneously participate as equals in the concerns of the American society as a whole.

He then examines sociologically the degree to which each of these could, should or did prevail. To do so, he has developed an "analytical scheme" of seven elements in the process of assimilation. He is thus able to point out, for example, the differences between the degree of "cultural assimilation" (the adoption of American values and patterns of personal behavior) and the amount of "structural assimilation" (the entry of the ethnic group into the institutions and primary groups of the majority).

This analysis is the most valuable aspect of Dr. Gordon's book. It reveals the differential rates of assimilation not only as among different groups or of socio-economic groups within the ethnic subsociety, but also within the various categories. Thus, for example, within cultural assimilation, there is a notable difference between the pace at which ethnic groups have assumed extrinsic cultural traits such as language and dress and the rate at which they assimilated the intrinsic traits such as internalized social values.

The weakest section of the book is the concluding chapter in which the author makes a series of recommendations for intergroup relations efforts. Some are good and some are bad which is to say that they agree or disagree with the reviewer's views. The significant fact is that they do not necessarily flow from the sociological analyses of the foregoing chapters; rather, they emerge from the author's values and predilection.

Nevertheless, Dr. Gordon's book is a major contribution to an understanding of how America and ethnic groups have

affected each other. For Jewish communal workers who are engaged in the institutions and agencies of one ethnic group, this well-written, perceptive and thoughtful volume provides essential knowledge and insights.

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New York

**Youth on the Streets**, by Saul Bernstein. Association Press, New York, 1964. 160 pp. \$3.95.

RECENT years have seen an upsurge of interest in the plight of disadvantaged minorities and their troubled, often troublesome, youth. Saul Bernstein who is professor of social group work at Boston University focusses on this interest by attempting in this book to summarize the experience of street work programs for these youths in nine major cities. His report is based on interviews and discussions with many qualified observers, including the staff and members of street club programs.

The central theme is the gap which "has become alarmingly great between youth at the bottom, the sublower class, and the respectable adult community." The author states that the rationale for street work is the failure of hostile youth groups to fit into building-centered programs. "The more aggressive youth groups either do not go . . . or if they go . . . frequently they are evicted." In New York, however, this reviewer has found the opposite to be increasingly true. Because of stimulation from the New York City Youth Board and because of their reaction to the very forces which have attracted Professor Bernstein's attention, more agencies now seek to serve these groups. Concomitantly, alienated

