

Chronicle of Human Growth

The Reasonable Adventurer, By Roy Heath (University of Pittsburgh Press, \$1), classifies types of personality found among undergraduate men and analyzes their development in the college community. The reviewer, now a Roman Catholic priest, was an assistant to Dr. Heath while an undergraduate in psychology at Knox College.

By DAVID YOUNT

THE utopian experiment, once so much a part of American enterprise, has not been wholly abandoned. The faith that a good society can produce good men still finds expression in the American college and university. On the campus as nowhere else, idealized communities set themselves to the task of developing their members both in their individuality and in their social responsibility. Unfortunately, the university community is hampered in its function of fostering integral human growth. The ideal character it presents to the student, while loftily conceived, is but vaguely delineated. What is worse, precise paths of growth towards the ideal are not fitted to the individual student with any confidence, for the academic community knows so little about him.

Psychologist Roy Heath faced the frontier problem of personal development in the college community when a Carnegie grant enabled him in 1950 to take a cross-section of the Princeton freshman class and follow these men through their integral development in the university setting. *The Reasonable Adventurer* is a critical chronicle of the development of these thirty-six men through Princeton and ten years beyond. Heath began his study equipped, as any clinical psychologist, with the rich lore of abnormal typology, but with the sparse and relatively naïve tools of normal psychology. Abnormal dynamics were useful in the understanding of normal development, but abnormal typologies proved next to useless. It is easy to recognize severely unhealthy conditions and their variety, but to distinguish normal personalities and to define a common ideal that each must reach by parallel but distinct paths is something quite different.

The typologies and the ideal charac-

ter that Heath drew from his study have a directness and simplicity that make them graspable tools, not only for the counselor of students, but for anyone seeking to analyze or direct the growth of the normal individual. David Riesman indicates this in his preface:

Students of American culture may find these types suggestive, as I have. One might one day be able to classify social strata, whole countries or colleges in terms of the hegemony of these types or relationships between them.

Heath's typologies began to take form from the very beginning of the interviews. His group of thirty-six reflected four rather distinct approaches to the interviewing process itself. One group consisted of "one or two-worders," cooperative enough, but in need of constant prodding and direction in the interview. A second group Heath calls the "prepared-statement men." They said their piece and defended it. There was little real dialogue. A third group was dubbed the "roller-boys." Their conversation bounded from one subject to another, leaving loose ends and making few connections. Finally, a small group engaged in real dialogue, evincing curiosity, initiative, and reflection.

The more Heath considered these simple conversational characteristics, the more he found them to be clues to distinct temperamental differences. In time Heath devised a scale for temperament that both distinguished and related all his men on a continuous dimension of ego-functioning, based on the individual's impulse control. The "one-worder," for example, was found to be generally conservative and non-committal. He had a relatively low-burning inner life that was damped before it affected his behavior. Impulses hardly ever bubbled up to the surface. The "prepared-statement" man tussled to control strong impulses. With him it was a seesaw battle, manifested in a rigid striving for success. He was as much driven as driving. The "roller-boy's" impulses were always ahead of his control. He was forever erupting, acting first and thinking later.

With this continuous dimension of impulse control on which to place his group members, Heath was still left with the few members who were reflective, who retained initiative, whose

outer selves truly mirrored their inner selves. These men had obviously moved in another dimension. Temperament was not a drag on their personalities. They had temperamental differences that indicated that they came from the three groups already noted, yet they could not be circumscribed by categories. They were distinctly themselves.

Heath came to call these men his Reasonable Adventurers. They suggested to him that there was a vertical dimension of growth towards an ideal. The Reasonable Adventurers were curious and critical, capable of close friendships and independent value judgments, tolerant of ambiguity because of their stable self-image. Moreover, they evinced a breath of interest even in the commonplace, and they had a sense of humor. Taking temperament as a horizontal scale, Heath now constructed a vertical scale of growth measured according to degree of satisfaction in life and work, self-understanding and acceptance, and depth of interpersonal relations. Heath noted that through the course of his study his students did not move horizontally. That is, they wore their basic temperament like their skin. But all were capable of upward movement, in the process of which they shrugged off the debilitating effects of temperament and came to grips at once with the inner self and the outer world, being true to each.

Able at last to plot his subjects on a graph according to temperament and satisfaction, Heath filled out his casebook of strengths and weaknesses proper to each type and sought to discover the pitfalls each might run and the best way to help each type to grow. The temperamental dimension was a continuum, so it was not surprising that Heath found intermediate types. The more students were studied in depth, and the more colleagues learned his system and applied it to student populations elsewhere, the richer and more reliable the system became.

Heath arbitrarily assigned letters to his types. The non-committer or X avoids tangling involvements. He is a believer, a security-seeker, a truly neutral man. Oddly enough, the X maintains the myth in his own mind that he could really be great if he chose to try hard enough. In fact, he never tries, for fear that his mask will slip. Non-directive techniques work well with the X. He requires a challenge for him to think, then act. In the academic situation, literature often supplies the motive force for the X to express his inner self and take the reasonable risks that will make him grow.

The "prepared-statement" man or Hustler is dubbed a Y by Heath. He

seeks purposeful activity, is aggressive and competitive. Actually he is at war with himself and must keep having successes or pretending successes in order to live with himself. On the whole he is insensitive to others, which complicates things, since he needs affection from others in order better to accept himself. While tough-minded, the Y rarely gambles except when there are good odds of success. A tough censor of his strong emotions, the Y overintellectualizes and overidealizes. Often highly competent because of his drive, he is nevertheless unoriginal and lacks reflection because his inner and outer selves are not only strangers but virtual enemies. The Y cannot come to grips with himself as long as he is fairly successful at reaching goals projected by his pseudo-self. Non-directive counselling is wasted on him, because he has a "party-line" of his own that he believes in and will defend to the death. The Y can sometimes be "melted" into self-acceptance by sustained love and affection. More often, he can only be faced with his real self after a calamity, when he is stripped of his mask.

The "roller-boy" or Z is impulsive and disorganized, a victim of his moods. He lives on internal criteria, never sufficiently taking cues from the world he lives in. Spontaneous and often highly likable, the Z is often battered by a world unprepared for him, so he retreats further into his inner life and lives on an emotional island, longing all the while to build bridges to the world. The Z needs someone who has come to understand him and can tolerate his swings of mood. In direction, he must be urged away from rash action until a more favorable mood hits him. If he is given a niche of sustained interest in which he can perform well, the Z can find some of the form and order he needs in his life. Possessed of a broad philosophical basis, he can compensate for the poorly integrated threads of his life.

Heath has found that all types can move towards the ideal of the Reasonable Adventurer. The interviewing process itself, while only investigative, provided a reflective and interpersonal dimension to the members of the group. Xs had more spark, Ys more warmth, Zs more control. Some became Reasonable Adventurers, true individualists who were yet true members of the community that nurtured them.

The numbers of Xs seem to be equal to the total of Ys and Zs combined. This can be presumed to be true in the American population as a whole, at least that part of it that goes to college. Heath's typing of persons is much more easily applied to students than those beyond college. College students are much

less guarded than adults; they have not as yet molded the facades they will later wear in the world. The college environment is so isolated and purposeful that direction there is more easily managed.

ONE wishes that the book made more specific inferences as to the application of the typologies and growth-directives in the world beyond college. With apologies to Princeton, this reviewer has to admit to a certain Frank Merriwell glow to the Reasonable Adventurer, as Heath depicts him. It would be helpful to see him described in terms of a man of more mature years, already in the world and with a family. Heath began his study in a college setting. He is now director of the Counseling Center at the

University of Pittsburgh. It will be forgivable if one outside that setting wishes that the Heath typologies were demonstrated elsewhere, in selections of mate, occupation, religion, men to be advanced, and so on. Heath hints at these, only whetting the reader's imagination. Hopefully the continued study will justify further volumes. For all its narrow setting, *The Reasonable Adventurer* is, as Riesman has noted, suggestive of broad and helpful application.

One further word for those who may read the book. Those who know Dr. Heath will recognize it as the work of a well-integrated Z. The reviewer's remarks should be weighed as coming from a thoughtfully-aggressive X-Y, so dubbed by the author long ago.

Advice for Adult Students

Continuing Your Education, by Cyril O. Houle (McGraw-Hill, 183 pp., \$4.95), is a guide for post-college-age adults who want to continue their formal education. The reviewer is a frequent contributor to SR.

By ETHEL STRAINCHAMPS

THERE are about 28,500,000 post-college-age adults in the United States who are now engaged in the pursuit of formal education. This book makes it clear that many of those millions are enduring easily remediable handicaps. Since the youthful school days of those who are now middle-aged, techniques of study have been formalized and laboratory-tested for effectiveness, and much has been discovered about the psychology of adult learners. Adult students could and should be profiting from the results.

Other investigations have disproved a theory that has probably deterred several more millions of adults from resuming their education in the first place—namely, that the ability to master academic material deteriorates with age. In one recent study, for example, it was discovered that women over forty who are taking courses at two universities made higher grades than college-age girls in the same classes, and that the older women maintained their superiority regardless of the subject, the instructor, or the method of teaching.

Dr. Houle, a veteran in the field of adult education, has aimed his how-to-do-it book at two groups of adult knowledge-seekers—those who are faltering

and those who are holding back. He offers advice to the study-group member and the student (or potential student) in school-connected adult education classes. He recommends this last.

The second half of the book, which consists of detailed discussions of specific techniques for studying, memorizing, writing papers, reviewing for exams, and taking exams, will be helpful to any student. The "SQ3R" system of mastering the content of "organized nonfiction"—such as textbooks—is recommended. This is the survey-question-read-recite-review program worked out at the University of Ohio under the direction of Professor Francis P. Robinson. Dr. Houle gives a working description of the method and directs the interested reader to Professor Robinson's own book on the subject for fuller details. Dr. Houle's suggestions on how to organize material and get it on paper for writing assignments will strike the experienced writer as sound and practical.

THE rather elementary tone of his own writing style is pointed up (literally) by his frequent use of exclamation marks. These are now so rarely seen in print that they have come to have the effect of small intermittent bursts of self-applause. Equally distracting is his compulsion to pause and identify the authors of the numerous aphorisms he quotes: "Descartes, the famous French philosopher"; "John Stuart Mill, the great English economist." This sort of thing would lead one to suspect that Dr. Houle is writing down to his audience—except for the internal evidence