

New Books

Education and Jobs: The Great Training Robbery, by Ivar Berg (*Praeger, for the Center for Urban Education, 200 pp., \$7.50*), challenges the commonplace assumption that education necessarily enhances a worker's ability to get the job done. Described by Eli Ginzberg as skeptic, sociologist, and student of manpower, Professor Berg lives up to each attribute in a penetrating analysis of blue- and white-collar occupations. In part supporting his skepticism regarding economic orthodoxies concerning education's dollar value is his observation that "deterioration of urban education has been unaffected by the rising educational credentials of teachers." This and other surprising conclusions about reliable indicators of the connection between training and performance render *Education and Jobs* one of today's most original statements on the topic.

Talking to Children About Sex, by Edna Lehman (*Harper and Row, 235 pp., \$4.95*), reminds one that, despite an alleged sex revolution, parents and teachers had better arm themselves with truthful answers to age-old questions. Arranged around hypothetical dialogues, the book proposes a straightforward response to sex curiosity marking the lives of youngsters from infancy through preadolescence. This is a no-nonsense book that reflects a demanding middle-class morality. Nonetheless, it should appeal to anybody who ever fielded that innocent bombshell of a question about human anatomy, human origins, or human behavior.

Social Foundations of Urban Education, by Harry L. Miller and Roger R. Woock (*The Dryden Press, Inc., 433 pp., \$6.95*), comes modestly priced and richly informative. Balanced about social and economic factors influencing city schools on the one hand and the schools' manifold communities on the other, this splendid work stresses such concepts as poverty, urbanism, family structure, and prejudice. Miller and Woock have written a broad, imaginative, impeccably documented book. Their presentation of such key sources as the Coleman report, their selective use of tabular and graphic statistics, and their attention to such controversies as that surrounding Arthur R. Jensen's recent contentions concerning genetics and IQ make for a noteworthy contribution to the literature. Wide readership awaits this title.

The Battle for Morningside Heights: Why Students Rebel, by Roger Kahn (*William Morrow and Company, 254 pp., \$6.95*), is a new interpretation complementing Jerry L. Avorn's earlier *Up Against the Ivy Wall*. Kahn is a gifted journalist. His narrative of events leading through Columbia's big bust to President Kirk's resignation, his colorful descriptive passages, and his striking dialogues capture the spirit of a university uprising. Especially arresting is Kahn's careful distinction between such immediate gains as an abandoned gymnasium or severed relations with the Institute for Defense Analyses, and the atmosphere of business-as-usual currently enveloping Columbia. His conclusion that Morningside's battle will continue as a national phenomenon appears amply justified at the nation's campuses, conventions, and courtrooms.

A Diabolical Dictionary of Education, by Richard Armour (*World Publishing Company, 141 pp., \$4.95*), guides you through the maze of educational terminology by employing irreverent definitions from "A" (the highest grade) to "Z" (Zoanthropy: the delusion of having been changed into an animal). If you have dipped into Voltaire's *Philosophical Dictionary* lately, you'll recognize Armour's literary kinship. In short, there is more here than mere wit. There is as well a forthright criticism of a profession stubbornly bent on achieving maximum misunderstanding. "Educationally illustrated" by Henry Syverson, this devilish lexicon will doubtless needle some of us to set higher standards of precision and clarity.

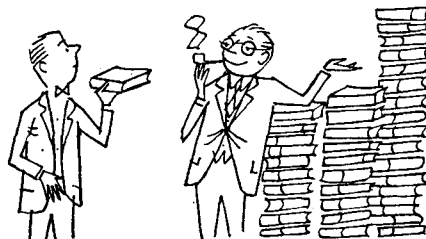
Schools Can Change, by Cynthia Parsons (*Stirling Institute Press, 118 pp., \$5.35*), arrives complete with that proofreader's nightmare, the "foreword." No matter. Those handwritten headings are always tricky. Besides, beyond the foreword, Miss Parsons produces some inspiring, rapid-fire advice. She attacks such myths as "it costs money to innovate." She castigates textbook publishers bent on worldly

gain. She praises Leicestershire's educational dynamism, Ontario's Hall-Dennis report, and Syracuse's Madison Project. Her book is full of children and teachers and principals working to improve the quality of children's lives. There are no pat solutions here. But there's enthusiasm and optimism. Systems analysts take note that the critical input is compassion.

Education in the History of Western Civilization: Selected Readings, by Frederick M. Binder (*Macmillan Company, 390 pp., \$4.95*), proffers a traditional collection of excerpts from Homer's Greece to Hitler's Germany. Like Robert Ulich's classic *Three Thousand Years of Educational Wisdom*, Professor Binder's book points to the identity of education with what Ulich called "total cultural evolution." A chapter on education in a technological age rounds out this quite useful presentation of primary sources.

Value Change and Power Conflict in Higher Education, edited by W. John Minter and Patricia O. Snyder (*Center for Research and Development in Higher Education, University of California, and Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 128 pp., \$3.50*), presents papers of the Eleventh Annual College and University Self-Study Institute. Here is exceptional breadth of opinion, from Chancellor John D. Millett's assumption that only a minority of students hold today's society as worthless to student Susan S. Lloyd-Jones's cry "join us!" to improve "a social order that is vicious, racist, warlike, authoritarian, immoral, and incompetent." This is an excellently organized book that gives a good sense of the institute's lively exchanges on value patterns, the public interest, student and minority concerns, and administrative preoccupations. Professor Henry David Aiken asks, "How late is it?" It is, he concludes, very late if universities are to serve their wider constituencies. A vital book well worth close attention.

The Acquisition of Syntax in Children from 5 to 10, by Carol Chomsky (*The MIT Press, 126 pp., \$5.95*), probes some ways in which a child's full grasp of adult language constructions awaits his tenth year, not his fifth, as is frequently assumed to be the case. Carrying out careful initial research at the Davis School, Newton, Massachusetts, Dr. Chomsky concluded that such experimentation promotes better general understanding of language complexity. Conceptually elegant, methodologically thorough, this crisp study adds significantly to the best writings on early childhood education. —JOHN CALAM.



Vermont Schools

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board, and occasional expense money. There is no tuition for students.

Ironically, although the school isn't the Plymouth, the car seems to be its central symbol. Particularly in the long, bitter winter, the daily twenty-two-mile commute between the farm and city quarters is a continuing struggle with ailing vehicles, gas, and repair bills. In addition, the school has traveled more than 10,000 miles by car on trips this year. As members of the school community (three of the kids serve as trustees), the students are part of the effort that goes into keeping everything in motion. Asked what project he would like to take on next, a student replied: "Get the bus fixed." Real transportation problems become educational experiences. The students went comparison-shopping for a new school car, and then visited the bank to decide on the best financing plan—a full day's math lesson.

"The kids are turned on to doing anything with their hands," a teacher said. "Abstract concepts don't make it, but then they don't make it with any kids. They're turned off to anything that looks like education. We have to make it fun. We do a lot in art, and now one kid is digging electronics."

Perhaps more than anything else, the kids are turned on by Indians. The interest began first through Buffy Sainte-Marie records, and then by a newspaper account of a protest by St. Regis Mohawks on the U.S.-Canadian border. With no advance notice, the group drove up to the reservation and were given a full welcome, with dances, by the Mohawks. Since then, they've traded visits regularly, and recently several of their Indian friends came to Burlington for the weekend as the main attraction in an Indian festival at a local junior high school.

Shaker Mountain students receive scholastic accreditation through the state's equivalency program. Last year Vermont requested that the students take standardized reading tests at the beginning and close of the term. The students averaged a 2.1-year increase in reading ability over the period. Mintz is not particularly proud of the gain. "You can't test the most important changes."

In January, Mintz received an achievement award from the Governor's Committee on Children and Youth. The community seems pleased that because of Shaker Mountain there are fewer kids "in trouble" these days in Burlington. But whether or not the public schools will be able to come to terms with the Shaker Mountain kids

in the future, no one can now predict.

A block down Church Street from Shaker Mountain is a trip to a different world: the BEAM School, an alternative for the kids for whom the public schools are ostensibly designed. The paneled walls of the second-floor offices, across from City Hall, are covered with announcements, statements, questions. A poster asks: "What is BEAM School?" And answers: "Democratic. Individual. Ageless. Fun. Community. Noncompulsory. Organic." BEAM is for the verbal.

In a small room a cluster of teenagers—some of high school age, some younger—are dissecting the *Communist Manifesto* in a seminar on Marxism. "How could it ever work with people?" one asks. "How could he ever have so much faith in people?" In another room, twenty students and a few adults gather for a meeting of the education class. The Vermont education law is up for revision, and a fifteen-year-old girl discusses potential changes in statutes, and explains the procedures by which BEAM members will testify before a legislative committee the following day. "God, that's really important," someone breaks in. "Why didn't I know about this?"

BEAM is the hangout, the after-school school for the kids born to succeed in the school system. The children of the university professors, the professionals, the middle class. The students who always swim through the grades, thrive on books and competition, and—until recently—have made everyone feel good about the public schools.

The school is the child of an older experiment with which it shares its offices, the Burlington Ecumenical Ac-

tion Ministry. Big BEAM—as the kids call it—is supported on an inter-faith basis, spawns task forces on social concerns within the community, and is headed by the Reverend William H. Hollister. He came to Burlington out of seminary fifteen years ago to build a new Presbyterian church. Instead, he established a unique city-wide congregation that gets tough about social problems and celebrates at "festivals" once a month in a converted TV studio. (A typical member of his congregation told Hollister: "I don't believe in God, but there's a spirit around here that's really great.") Somewhere along the way, the need for a church building was forgotten.

A year ago, BEAM's education task group, sensing something in the wind, called in a group of bright, articulate kids to talk about their attitudes toward school. The open sessions, which sometimes included the long-time chairman of the Burlington school board, revealed a lot: "What I don't want to know I can be taught for years and not learn." "School does not provide the experience in the community to get you involved in life." "School is turning people off. If that's education, thanks, but no thanks." Then the kids dreamed out loud about the kind of school they'd like, if they had a choice.

Out of these sessions grew the concept of the BEAM School. It would be democratic. ("Kids and grown-ups on same level. Caste system done away with. Everyone will help everyone else. Yeah!" a journal notes.) It would use the community, the "real world," as its classroom. And everyone would learn as an individual, moving in his own direction.

The group (kids and adults) thrashed through the practical problems of developing the school through the spring and summer. There would be no teachers, the kids decided, just "enablers," adults who would guide the learning and administer the programs. They interviewed candidates for the job. "It was a terrifying experience," recalls Sally Smith, one of two full-time enablers. "For fifteen minutes the kids told me what the school would be like. Then they set up problem situations and listened critically as I explained how I'd handle them."

In operation since September as an independent supplement to the public schools, BEAM School has thirty kids and adults who make up its core group, another thirty who float in and out. At first, projects emphasized social service to the community, through VISTA, OEO, and the Visiting Nurses Association. Since that time, "the kids have learned they're not as dedicated to saving the world as they talked," Sally Smith said. "They realize they're

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The object of the game is to complete the poem by thinking of one word whose letters, when rearranged, will yield the appropriate word for each series of blanks. Each dash within a blank corresponds to a letter of the word.

The mad old king, with age and
anger fraught,

_____ the days
when he was young and bold,

_____ his _____
_____ retinue for naught,

And shouts for _____
_____ to bring more gold.

—MRS. OLETA KORESKI,
Sunnyvale, Calif.

(Answer on page 82)