

Reviews

claim to have the solutions to poverty but their general recommendations are worthy of consideration by those who are concerned about the social difficulties experienced by children from low-income families.

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Morris Freilich.
THE MEANING OF CULTURE:
A READER IN CULTURAL
ANTHROPOLOGY.
Toronto:
Xerox Publishing, 1972.
325 pp. \$3.95.

Morris Freilich has produced a very useful book for students and anthropologists interested in the meaning of "culture." His purpose is to state some of the classic definitions of "culture" and to attempt to reconcile these definitions in an integrated interpretation of the concept.

The collection of articles by well-known anthropologists presents the views of Tylor, Boas, Sapir, Malinowski and Kroeber, to mention a few. Each article is preceded by a brief comment by Freilich relating the theories just presented in the previous article to those about to be presented in the one following. This is a very useful device which allows the reader to clarify the distinctions being made by the different scholars.

The concluding essay, by Freilich himself, attempts to reconcile all the views presented and to arrive at a synthesized definition of "culture." Freilich points out that in any society there exists both a proper or traditional method and an improper or "smart" method of solving human problems. The first he calls "culture" and the second, "social information." For example, there is a proper way of handling our income tax returns and a smart way

of handling the same problem — both are guidance systems for solving human problems. Man chooses which to use in any given situation. Additionally, man is continually processing social information into culture, and thus he is a manufacturer and processor of knowledge — a scientist. This concept of culture as an informational system has the advantage of integrating the previously opposed views of man as passive receiver of culture and as an active creator of culture. According to Freilich, he is both.

I would recommend Freilich's book to students and anthropologists for two reasons. First, the presentation of the classical interpretations of "culture" is very clear. It is very helpful in arriving at an understanding of the growth of anthropological theory in regard to the meaning of "culture." Secondly, Freilich's lively illuminating final article helps extricate us from the problems inherent in the coexistence of many limited definitions of "culture" by providing us with a new interpretation based on a reconciliation of the older theories.

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Ronald Goldman.
READINESS FOR RELIGION:
A BASIS FOR
DEVELOPMENTAL
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.
London:
Routledge and Kegan Paul,
1970. 238 pp. \$2.40.

Goldman, in this book that is now in its sixth impression, develops the thesis called for in his earlier *Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence* (1964). In his words: "Helping children understand religious truths was a struggle simply because little attention had been given to the development of children, with all

their limitations of ability and experience." (p. ix)

Although it was inevitable that the question of readiness for learning and reacting should finally spread to the field of religion, it was, nevertheless, a long time coming. There seemed to be a surmise that religion, unlike other areas of learning, was "protected," as it were, from developmental rhythms and could be moved into with total trust in the child's power to grasp things religious at even the most tender age.

The present work shows that the child's ability, here as elsewhere, calls for a developmental education. Goldman states that religion must be learned as a frame of reference, a cohesive principle, covering the whole of life, where material must be graded in an ascending order of difficulty. Research has shown that we must look for an approach which offers a realistic alternative to the study of dogmas seemingly unrelated to life. This suggests a content which more closely approximates the real world of children, using their experiences and their natural development rather than imposing adult forms of religious ideas and language upon them.

Following his introduction, the author offers a rather thorough study of the psychology of child development related to religious education. Whereas "child development" enjoys a rather extensive literature, "religious growth" is a relatively new study. Nevertheless, Goldman, in five well organized chapters, surveys this subject from a basis of general developmental patterns to the phenomenon of readiness for religion, with the fifth chapter touching upon the sensitive area of the place of the *Bible* in religious education.

It is stated that a clear distinction must be made between "teaching the *Bible*" and "teaching from the *Bible*." Goldman argues that we must try to help children encounter, at suitable stages of their de-

velopment, the experiences of which the *Bible* speaks. If life themes are couched initially in terms of the children's experiences, biblical material can then be used to illustrate them, since they are then seen in a life context. This use of the *Bible* may well shock fundamentalists but would be seen by the "readiness" pedagogue as thoroughly consonant with the reality of child religious development. Further, in the final chapter of Part II the author presents Jesus as a life-theme teacher: ears of corn, coins, sick people, foxes . . . just to name a few. An appeal to experience was central to His teaching.

This book is seen as a much needed pioneer effort carried out with scholarship and precision. An excellent index is provided. The bibliography is adequate, but more precise and complete reporting of the author's experimentation would have helped the scientific researcher.

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C. Morton Shipley et al.
**A SYNTHESIS OF
TEACHING METHODS.**
Toronto:
McGraw-Hill Ryerson,
Third ed., 1972.
383 pp. \$6.50.

The third edition of this elementary methods textbook is a good example of how not to revise a book. Although the textbook includes many practical and valuable suggestions for teaching, the original contradiction between its philosophy and procedures remains, to the continuing confusion of readers.

Revision, for this book, means merely addition. Very little has been omitted from the first edition (1964), and nothing I could find has been changed within the