

## EDITORIAL

Interest in the education of minorities has increased recently as a result of two major developments, among others. First, much excellent work done by educational psychologists and sociologists has led to a greater awareness that legal or formal equality of educational opportunity which does not take account of unequal social, psychological and economic circumstances is largely a sham. Second, racial and ethnic minorities, as never before, have been asserting their dignity and demanding that their rights be respected.

As a result of the foregoing, emphasis in the study of minority groups has also shifted. One such shift may be seen in recent analyses of problems arising from majority-minority relations. Minority groups are no longer considered "deficient" when compared to the dominant or majority groups.

*The Journal* has contributed to the debate on this subject through a variety of articles, among which were:

Norman L. Friedman, "Cultural Deprivation: A Commentary in the Sociology of Knowledge," August 1967.

Elmer N. Lear, "On Educational Philosophy, Civil Rights and the Schools," April 1968.

Charles W. Hobart, "The Influence of the School on Acculturation with Special Reference to Greenland." August 1968.

More recent articles have touched on the education of religious minorities (December, 1969; August, 1970), the minority status of students (August, 1969) and the meaning of the concept "equality of educational opportunity" (December, 1970).

The first three articles in this issue are addressed to questions of majority-minority relations in education. We are, therefore, pleased to designate them formally as constituting a theme: Education and the Minorities.

How can a minority racial or ethnic community maintain its identity in the face of all kinds of blandishments the majority communities can offer? This has been a classic dilemma for many scholars and policy makers. Henry Burger, in our first article "Ethno-Maieutics", recommends "adapting the curricular content to fit the native tradition." The recommendation is not new but it is framed within a refreshing anthropological perspective. Recognition of the dilemma posed earlier has led the author to point out the implicit dangers and limits of his recommendations.

The idea of "cultural deprivation" to explain the educational shortcomings of children from minority racial or ethnic groups was first advanced by educational psychologists. It was controversial from the start. J. P. Das advances a threshold hypothesis and calls attention to the importance of parental expectations in our second article "Cultural Deprivation: Euphemism and Essence."

Black studies came into vogue in the United States in the late Sixties. Herman Hudson, who has been personally involved in a Black Studies programme, discusses the *raison d'être* of Black Studies and the various functions they have been designed to serve. His discussions of a controversial American problem have relevance for Canada and other countries.