BOOKS

Alfred L. Baldwin. *Theories of Child Development.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1967. Pp. 618. $8.95.

This excellent book represents the author's continuing emphasis of the importance of theory in child and developmental psychology. Since developmental psychology is currently a very active empirical discipline, Professor Baldwin has a dual intent: to provide a broader perspective of the field and thereby attempt to mitigate parochial empiricism, and to provide a rich theoretical matrix which contains many suggestions for profitable research.

Theories of Child Development is divided into seven sections, each section devoted to an exploration in depth of a current theory of child development. In his analysis of each theory Professor Baldwin states the philosophical and methodological background and the effect this background has had on the development of the theory itself. The final part of each section is devoted to a critique of that theory.

The volume begins with an analysis of the common-sense notions of behavior. This is followed, in turn, by a survey of six scientific theories of child development: Lewin's, Piaget's, Freud's, S-R theories, Weiner's, and Parsons and Bales'. The concluding chapter compares and contrasts these six theories, attempting to isolate psychological mechanisms and hypotheses common to several different theories. Professor Baldwin proposes no new theory but rather suggests that it is possible to use the six theories as a source for the development of a meta-theory.

The first theory reviewed is the naive psychology of Fritz Heider. This perspective provides the focus for the logical structure of the book: it is Professor Baldwin's proposition that scientific theories of child development grew out of naive common-sense psychology. The problems inherent in naive psychology form the basis for an analysis of various problems of theory construction. These problems include the subjectivity of evidence, the reconciliation of teleological and causal principles, the problem of free will, and a general faulty tendency to fasten upon single-factor explanations. The author describes the positions taken by different psychologists as a response to the problems raised by naive psychology. These positions represent the behaviorists, who prefer to construct theory on the basis of an external view of behavior; the cognitive behaviorists, who attempt theory construction through compromise between the wisdom of naive psychology and the rigor of behaviorism; and the nonbehaviorists, who consider the principles of science as unsuited to an understanding of human behavior. The first two strategies dictate the inclusion of the six theories which follow.

According to the author, Kurt Lewin attempted to build a scientific theory upon the concepts and hypotheses of naive psychology by using the language of mathematical topology. Initially, this resulted in making naive psychology more explicit and rigorous; later, it led Lewin to make major modifications and revisions. Lewin was included because of his interest in child and developmental psychology and because of his ability to take common-sense notions and handle them with some degree of success and rigor. In all, the analysis of Lewinian psychology represents one of the clearer explications of Lewinian theory. This penetrating analysis may prompt more research into child behavior by investigators who might normally hesitate before the often bewildering and perplexing nature of field theory.

The review of the work of Jean Piaget is unusually exhaustive. The author asserts that Piaget is undoubtedly the century's most prolific writer and theorist on child development.

Professor Baldwin devotes five chapters to a review of Piaget. Unlike the critique of Lewin, that of Piaget is minimal. The author expends considerable effort to indicate the lack of rigor in Lewinian theory: the lack of systematic construction, the lack of dispositional variables, the use of concrete models, the metaphysical status of concepts. Some of the same arguments could be used with Piaget, especially with reference to concepts borrowed from psychoanalytic theory. Piaget's lack of precision in his analysis of child behavior is said to be "little removed from ordinary literary speculation "by one writer."[1] Professor Baldwin's criticisms deal with the lack of control in experimental design and with Piaget's tendency to go beyond the empirical evidence into the realm of pure mathematics, whose constructs Piaget feels are closely related to the cognitive processes of children. The author makes little attempt to evaluate the concepts employed in the theory.

In discussing Piaget's theory, Professory Baldwin presents an impressive review of the basic concepts, especially Piaget's concept of groups. This is followed by a review of the development of the child from infancy to adolescence, liberally illustrated by excerpts from Piaget's studies. The concluding chapter, which is probably the most interesting from a theoretical point of view, is a discussion of Piaget's concept of development.

The review of Piaget is impressive, a serious and scholarly attempt to present in a comprehensible form the ideas of a brilliant theorist who many times is difficult to understand. The scope of the work places it mediate between the very readable but abstract treatment by Maier in *Three Theories of Child Development* and the intense detail of Flavell in *The Developmental Psychology of Jean Piaget.*

By now, the Freudian theory of development is familiar enough to be commonplace. Whereas the previous three theories stemmed from aca-

---

[1]K. C. Pratt, "The Neonate," *A Handbook of Child Psychology* (Clark University Press, 1953).

demic psychology, psychoanalytic theory stems from the medical clinic. Consequently, the basic data are derived, not from "normal" subjects in a university laboratory, but from unhappy, anxiety-ridden patients verbally expressing their ideas and feelings about themselves. As the author takes care to point out, this difference in origin has far-reaching consequences for the theory.

Professor Baldwin devotes three chapters to the theory and concludes the section with an evaluation of psychoanalyis. The first chapter is an introduction to the fundamental strategy and concepts of the Freudian theory; the second, a review of the theory of psychodynamics. The final chapter deals with the development of personality. These three chapters are a standard presentation of Freudian psychology. The difference here is an author trying to give an objective description of a theory, not a psychoanalyst attempting to propagate psychoanalytic metaphysics.

The major criticisms advanced by the author deal with the unscientific nature of the development of the theory and the unscientific attitude common among psychoanalysts in defending the theory. One could have wished, however, that the author had taken advantage of some of the recent critical studies on psychoanalysis, as, for example, David Bakan's *Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition.*

Professor Baldwin maintains that the theories discussed to this point have accepted some major features of naive theory. All accept some aspect of mentalistic functioning: Lewin's life space is based on the notion of a phenomenal world, Piaget is concerned with the mental events in problem solving, and Freud accepts thoughts and feelings as primary data.

The section which follows is concerned with stimulus-response theories. The basic notion of S-R theory is association and the primary role of learning, stemming from the English empiricists, such as Locke, Hume, and Mill. This philosophic tradition stressed the association of ideas and thoughts. In the psychological tradition, Watson stressed the association between observable stimuli and observable responses as the only valid behavioral concepts for psychology. He discarded consciousness, perception, intention, etc. as nonbehavioristic.

This extreme Watsonian environmentalism no longer holds as great a currency in contemporary behaviorism. Some behaviorists, at least, accept the idea of intervening variables, although the emphasis is still on caution, experimentalism, and observation as opposed to the inference in naive psychology.

In this section Professor Baldwin gives an excellent review of the strategy and concepts of modern behavior theory. While the section is no substitute for, say, Hilgard and Bower's *Theories of Learning* or Kimble's *Hilgard and Marquis' Conditioning and Learning,* it is a precise introduction to the principles of S-R theory. The author makes no attempt to distinguish the varieties of behaviorism; his concern in the chapter is with the basic principles. Consequently, the orientation is

towards Hullian theory. This is understandable since Hull was, after all, the master theorist of behaviorism.

The second chapter in this section is devoted to the application of behavioristic principles to child development. This area has earned the rubric of social-learning theory and has been the concern of a group composed of O. H. Mowrer, R. S. Sears, Neal Miller, and John Dollard, among others. This group has attempted to wed S-R theory with psychoanalytic theory, a marriage which is still shaky. In fact, recent social-learning theorists like Bandura and Walters are of the opinion that the psychoanalytic inspiration has produced misconceptions. Consequently, there is divergence among social-learning theorists. Sears, however, stated the intent of social learning theorists clearly:

> The research that followed [the formulation of social learning theory] must not be viewed as an attempted verification of psychoanalytic concepts . . . but as a testing of a behavioral theory that was suggested by psychoanalytic observations and was then constructed within the framework of an entirely different theoretical structure.[2]

Another root of social-learning theory is anthropology. Whiting and Child, especially, have devoted much effort to cross-cultural studies of child rearing. Little more than passing reference has been made to this important aspect, however.

In the critique, the author makes little effort to evaluate the attempts of social-learning theorists to operationalize concepts like conscience, identification, dependency, etc., and expends most of his effort on discussing the values and limitations of the distinctive features of the S-R point of view. While such problems are integral to the development of social-learning theory, one could have wished that the author had given his analysis of the degree to which the social-learning theorists have handled successfully the concepts involved in the process of socialization.

It is refreshing to come across a review of Heinz Werner's theory, since little attention is usually given to this point of view. Like Lewin, Werner brought to psychology a perspective more characteristic of Europe than America. In addition Werner's entire theoretical position revolves around the concept of development.

Werner's theory is an organismic theory, for it makes the assumption that all changes in human behavior involve the total organism because the organism is an integrated whole. Consequently, Werner emphasizes the inter-relationship of the context and human functioning and the interdependence of the aspects of human functioning. This theory has also been called nativistic since some modes of functioning are assumed to be inherent rather than learned.

Werner's theory is still in the primary stages of development, and herein lie its values. Some of Werner's concepts have been defined by

---

[2]Robert R. Sears, Lucy Rav, and Richard Alpert, *Identification and Child Rearing* (*Stanford,* Calif.: California University Press, 1965).