

Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain

Peters, R. S. (ed.). *Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain*. Vol. X. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1976. Pp. 170.

This collection of ten articles provides a useful addition to the increasing volume of analytic studies in education. I immediately thought of its potential use in a senior graduate seminar in the philosophy of education.

All of the articles are in one way or another concerned with values. The first two establish the theme "Value Education in a Pluralist Society." The remaining articles attack more specific value problems within the general theme. The only unfortunate organizational feature relates to the inclusion of the last two articles which are responses to papers not included in this volume. Unless one has ready to hand the papers to which these articles are responses, their usefulness is doubtful.

In "Value Education in a Pluralist Society" Hare puts forth a general defence of the Humanities Curriculum Project. After arguing that any form of uniform indoctrination of values is impractical as well as immoral in a pluralist society, Hare contends that the Humanities Project is on the right track in attempting to get children to devise or arrive at their own rationally held values through carefully controlled value investigation and discussion. The control comes in the form of methodological rules. Hare, in his usual crisp fashion, makes three main arguments all of which Walsh subsequently queries in one way or another in the following article. These arguments are (1) methodological values can be distinguished from substantive questions thereby allowing a teacher to be neutral on substantive questions though he must necessarily enforce procedures which embody values such as impartiality; (2) as value questions can be distinguished from factual question — neither is a species of the other — the teacher is not necessarily being doctrinaire in speaking about the value questions; and (3) though the method of the Humanities Curriculum Project will not yield "unique and determinate answers" to value problems it will yield "a way to dealing with value problems".

Although his addiction to Latin tags and his rather bombastic and frenetic tone are a bit off-putting, Hugh Sockett's "Teacher Accountability" offers a model of teacher accountability based on professional ethics and standards as an intriguing alternative to competency based instruction. In the process Sockett sets forth an interesting and useful critique of competency based instruction.

Hugo A. Meynell takes up the well-worked topic of "On the Aims of Education." In this article, Meynell challenges the R. S. Peters type contention that education is necessarily worthwhile, except in a very limited sense, and argues for a very general statement of aims of education such as is embodied in B. J. F. Lonergan's "four transcendental precepts: be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable and be responsible."

D. I. Lloyd and Howard Mounce offer a pair of mutually supportive articles titled "Theory and Practice." Lloyd notes that teachers are by and large dissatisfied with what is offered as educational theory and suggests that the teaching of case studies replace the teaching of educational theory *per se* in the training of teachers. Mounce is basically supportive of Lloyd but goes further in suggesting that the very concept of educational theory is a logical muddle and that it is merely idle to search for a systematic theory of education.

Michael Fielding takes up the cudgel "Against Competition." In the process Fielding argues that the employment or promotion of competition is necessarily immoral since it necessarily entails "working against others in a spirit of selfishness." Whether or not one agrees with Fielding's main contention, his article provides an interesting and useful analysis of the concept "competition."

As indicated earlier, the final two articles by P. S. Wilson and Martin Hollis are responses to articles not included in the volume. The value of the volume is consequently reduced. Nevertheless, I would be quick to use this collection in a senior or graduate seminar on ethics in education.

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