

Abraham H. Maslow

The Psychology of Science--A Reconnaissance

New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966

pp. xx + 168. \$5.75

In The Psychology of Science Maslow is, as usual, on the leading edge of contemporary psychological and philosophical thinking. He calls the book "a reconnaissance" with good reason: what he gives us here is speculation on the nature of knowledge and knowing. The title might make one wonder whether this is a book about the behavioral characteristics of scientists: it is not just this. Maslow makes a plea for acceptance of "rehumanized" science which will not remain bound by classical methodologies, and which will be able to develop understanding of "whole and individual persons and cultures." (p. xiii). He sees a place in this kind of science for both mechanistic and humanistic approaches and emphasizes that he is not so much denigrating the former as pleading for a greater interaction between scientist and subject.

Of particular interest to counselors will be the chapters on "Acquiring Knowledge of a Person as a Task for Scientists," (pp. 7-19) and "The Cognitive Needs Under Conditions of Fear and of Courage," (pp. 20-32). In the latter Maslow proposes several sorts of "cognitive pathologies" -- defensive knowledge-seeking behaviors such as a compulsive need for certainty, intolerance of ambiguity, overrespect and underrespect for authority, compulsive dichotomizing, etc. His enumeration of these is an instructive guide among many pitfalls to constructive truth-seeking.

One hesitates to suggest to busy counselors that any book is a "must," but this one seems very close to it. It has the virtues of being both brief and entertaining as well as, to this reader, thoroughly thought-provoking.

Justine Harris