

BOOK REVIEWS

UNDERSTANDING ADOLESCENCE — CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGY.

By James F. Adams. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1968. Pp. 405. \$6.45.

Reviewed by Myrne B. Nevison,
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Adams has chosen for his book of readings selections that are of special interest to a counselor trying to understand the adolescent of the 1960's. He attempts to bring into focus issues that are of concern to the adolescent himself. His point of view is illustrated by his statements that "the adolescent changes with his times . . . as the adults are phased out (p. vii)," and that "the adult world derives its confusion (about adolescents) from a fear that the chaotic world of today will be more chaotic in the future as a function of the next generation falling apart (p. 2)."

The chapters that make this book particularly valuable are those by Elkind on cognitive development, Piers on creativity, Eisenman on values and attitudes, and Block, Haan, and Smith on activism and apathy. Elkind treats cognitive development from two approaches: the quantitative or mental test approach, which is traditionally of great interest to teachers and counselors, and the qualitative or developmental approach, which gives valuable insight into the differences between the child and the adolescent in their cognitive patterns.

Piers discusses creativity as conceptualized by such current writers in this field as Torrance, Anderson, Barron, Lowenfeld, Parnes, and Taylor but adds the interacting personality theories of Rogers, Maslow, Bruner, Roe, Holland, and Murphy. This approach makes an especially interesting one for counselors.

Eisenman's chapter on values and attitudes includes perceptive sections on the causes of both adolescent idealism, and cynicism and rebellion. He hypothesizes that some students drop out of college when they react against the socializing process in which their peers try to change them from liberalization (freedom to be themselves) to homogeneity (conforming patterns)—a conforming pattern expressed by college youth as a common belief in tolerance of adversity. On such shifting sands are built inadequate beliefs.

The paper on activism and apathy by Block, Haan, and Smith carries a ring of authenticity; the authors are staff members at Berkeley and have been conducting research on that explosive campus. They claim that 18 percent of their students (and students nationally) have participated in picket lines, 16 percent of their people have been in peace marches—yet 11 percent tutor children in economically deprived areas. Of the college student they say, "if he is to persuade himself to enter his society as a full-time participant, he

must examine his past, his forebears, his society and its institutions to determine the quality of their intentions toward him and his generation. . . . If all goes well, he has made differentiated, informed commitments to some aspects of his society and selected those causes which he will continue to support. . . . Some societies and some parents cannot afford, and will not allow, the scrutiny involved in establishing fidelity. Some adolescents cannot pose the questions, protecting themselves with the shared code of peer group uniformism (p. 206)." Especially valuable is the large section on current research on activism and apathy.

Other welcome additions to a text on adolescents are Staton's chapter on sex education, Bell's on marital expectations, Kohrs' on the disadvantaged and lower class youth, and Johnstone's and Rosenberg's on privileged youth. All these aspects are often neglected in traditional texts on adolescence. More typical but nevertheless valuable, are the chapter by Borow on the world of work and Hackman on vocational counseling.

The knowledgeable counselor will find the sections on physiological change (by Garrison), on theories of adolescence (by Beller), and on the interaction of nature and nurturance (by Nichols) more routine and less up-to-date.

All in all, this is a good book for counselors.

DECISION MAKING

By C. Safran, H. W. Zingle, and A. E. Hohol. Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1968. Pp. viii + 224. \$4.20.

A father (counseling psychologist) and son (high-school student) review.

Reviewed by J. M. Cram,
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Essentially, what this new Alberta junior-high-school text says is that life is an endless pattern of decision making and that certain facts, plans, and strategies can be used to make decisions that are useful and realistic. The idea is excellent. The plan is well laid and it almost works.

Aimed specifically at the grade-9 student, the material in the book shows him, in a series of chapters and lessons, why decisions are necessary and how to interpret his own marks, aptitudes, study habits, abilities, interests, and values before deciding what course of studies or action to follow. A particularly clear interpretation of expectancy tables and their use by students is included. Sections follow on the use of leisure, occupational information and on the world of work—all good stuff!

But good stuff for all students? The authors have adapted for human use the decision making model of the cautious scientist, complete with "minimum risk," "sound procedures," and "reduced error margins," leading to "sound dependable decisions." What about the decisions of those who would rather be involved in action than trained or entertained? Where is the section