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[Review of the book Curriculum organisation and design, edited by Jack Walton (London: Ward Lock, 1971)]

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age (not dissimilar to those of 12th century Europe) excess is often waste. Successfully to enter a Western-type economy is to adopt a revolutionary change of attitude. Not only must the community accept some sort of money system, but one must produce for money, which can then be used to satisfy other needs in other markets. And once one has accepted the system, one accepts what appears to be a never-ending vista of new needs. Work then becomes an end in itself as well as a means: one moves from economic production as a part-time activity to a new situation in which it absorbs much of one's energies. Many Africans, still looking at the proposition ingenuously, wonder whether they or the system get the best of the deal. It is not only a matter of whether Africans will accept the value systems of Western economic thinking, but whether their educators can overcome the deep resistance that exists to this alien system. For all the similarity between modern Japan and the United States as far as economic productivity is concerned, American businessmen found that certain American concepts of good management ran so counter to deeply entrenched value systems in Japanese life, that no amount of persuasion or pressure could effectively change them.

book review



BRIAN ROSE

CURRICULUM ORGANISATION AND DESIGN

Ed. Jack Walton. Ward Lock Educational.

Quite a number of books have appeared on curriculum design, and — especially in the United Kingdom — concern with curriculum seems to be one of the dominant trends of the moment. The present book is based on a curriculum conference held at Exeter University Institute of Education and considers strategies of change, management and innovation in education and contains quite a good deal on the use of small groups as the working units of organisation in the new curriculum approach.

The idea of this conference was to get away from the chalk and talk, from the authoritarian teacher, and to try to create in the classroom groups of highly motivated pupils actively taking part in learning. There had been several pilot schemes in which a group of schools attempted innovatory practices, and Dr. Shipman describes the gradual breakdown of one that he was interested in. Examining causes of failure, he attributes the main cause to ultraconservative professionalism. Then, when students doing practice teaching went into the schools and attempted to put into practice their new ideas, they came up against high school pupil resentment. Says Shipman: "The naïveté of the author was most evident in failure to obtain active support from the local authorities. In the schools individual teachers were constrained by the opinions of their colleagues. Schools were unable to cooperate with one another." Change, he reflects, is the same in schools as in any other large scale organisations — hospitals or factories — and needs to be managed in detail if it is to succeed.

Despite one or two rather ingenuous assertions, the contribution by psychiatrist David Sime, entitled "Factors in group dynamics with applications that may be relevant to the teaching of children in small groups," is one of the best introductions to small group thinking to appear recently, and I would certainly commend it to anyone who is beginning to wonder what this "small group talk is all about". Dr. Sime links the satisfaction a pupil experiences in small groups with self-esteem — which acts as a very considerable reinforcer of learning, and hence as a secondary motivator. But of course, there may be an even more important link of self-esteem with what Maslow called "self actualisation" — which suggests the idea of realising one's potential, of growing and developing; and if the small group can contribute to this goal, it is of major significance. Dr. Sime points out that to handle groups properly requires not only a certain teacher talent, but that training is essential. He feels that many teachers take easily to group techniques of handling classes too large to allow interpresonal interaction. Given a reasonable **caritas** of personality, the teacher will be able to support those pupils who find themselves anxious in the less structured organisation of a grouped class. He compares the teacher who is managing a number of groups to a master chess player who moves from one game to another. But his comment that it might be necessary to discourage leadership in pupil groups shows a surprising lack of insight about the emergent leader — and about the essential nature of the teacher's "management" techniques.

All these writers seem to operate at the level of theory **assertion:** what teachers need as the logical next step are working patterns of handling and day-by-day management. For all that, in small compass, a stimulating book.