

pere's law. But the present author falls into this trap no oftener than other textbook writers.

Undoubtedly there exists a large body of college students whom this book could reach by virtue of its expert showmanship, not by its essential scientific soundness. It remains to be seen whether a book which reflects so strongly the personal style of its creator can be used to full advantage by a wide range of other physics teachers.

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Verbalized Values

A Grammar of Human Values. Otto von Mering. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, Pa., 1961. xx + 288 pp. \$4.50.

Probably as a reaction to the charge that the comparative data of their discipline have fostered cultural relativism and thus have contributed to unsettling the foundations of modern Western morality, anthropologists have lately been addressing themselves to a search for universal values or, at least, for universal value categories. In this book Otto von Mering, as part of a larger study sponsored by Harvard's Laboratory of Social Relations, reports on a comparative field study of the value systems of two small communities in New Mexico, one composed of Mormons and the other of homesteaders from Texas and Oklahoma who settled in their present location during the dust-bowl days of the 1930's. Von Mering tried to elicit statements which could be analyzed for elements containing value judgments by bringing together small groups of these people and inducing them to talk about their neighbors, the Navaho Indians. The discussions were recorded and carefully studied. These data were supplemented by questionnaire responses, obtained from members of the discussion groups, which probed the amount and nature of each one's contact with the Navaho.

On the basis of this material von Mering devised four major headings, divided into 34 categories, under which can be placed statements he considers to have significance for value theory.

This is his "grammar of human values." By the differential clustering of value statements in the categories, he attempts to show that the two communities do present contrasting value profiles.

One interesting facet of this study is that it is an attempt to extend the small group technique to a new field of research. Also, on the positive side, one must admire von Mering's boldness of plan. He believes his "grammar" may be a framework which has universal application and may be one in terms of which different organizations of values can be tested. Hence, he invites comparative work.

The limitations of the study are also fairly obvious. It is plain that the meaningful involvement of von Mering's respondents with the Navaho is slight. The Navaho could all sink at once into a deep hole and this would make very little difference, emotionally or practically, to the members of these groups. Even those who are inclined to be charitable in their estimates of the Navaho are abysmally uninformed about them. Can sound value theory or value categories of a group stem from what is unimportant and tangential to that group? Moreover, this is all discussion and assertion. These folk tell us what they think *ought* to be done about Navaho education, sanitation, ceremonies, and the like. There is nothing to suggest that they have taken steps to implement their opinions or that they have the remotest intention of doing so in the future. Verbalization is one kind of activity, but surely other types of performance must be considered in assessing the value system of a group.

Many will feel, too, that the canvas von Mering employs is too narrow for what he seeks to portray. His comparison of the value systems of the two groups in question is based exclusively on their reactions to the Navaho. No doubt they reveal a good deal about themselves in their comments about the Indians, but we need some assurance that the groups' thought and action patterns concerning work, religion, family, and government would yield parallel results. One can sum matters up by saying that this book is timely, novel, and ingenious but not entirely convincing.

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Political Power Study

Small Groups and Political Behavior. A study of leadership. Sidney Verba. Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1961. xii + 273 pp. \$6.

Community Political Systems. vol. 1, International Yearbook of Political Behavior Research. Morris Janowitz, Ed. Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1961. 259 pp. \$7.50.

Political behavior studies seek to unify theory and research in political science, to demand carefully designed empirical methods, and to utilize all the tools and findings of the other social sciences. Sidney Verba's book explores the relevance for political science of certain theories developed by sociologists and social psychologists who have been studying the behavior of small face-to-face groups. Morris Janowitz edited a group of symposium papers concerned with empirical studies of different aspects of urban politics, largely in the United States.

Verba claims that from the experimental studies of small group, face-to-face behavior some usable theories may be obtained for political science. He does not present a new theory of politics but brings together certain bits which, he hopes, may later be fitted into a larger picture. Although the book deals with many so-called experimental studies, it cannot present in the space available an evaluation of the methods used. The reader who has not gone through the extensive literature himself has to accept the author's claim that the studies reported used sound methods.

Verba does an excellent job in showing that, in the political process, important decisions are made by small face-to-face groups. Courts, cabinet meetings, administrative tribunals, and legislative committees are discussed as examples of important decision-making bodies. The author finds it more difficult to relate experimental studies to on-going social processes. Since most of the experimental small groups were made up of American students, campers, or club women, the findings apply largely to American conditions. It would be highly desirable to test them in other cultures. Verba attempts to apply the methods of measuring and identifying leadership in small group studies to the study of political leadership, and he analyzes the relation be-