

## Early Education

**As the Twig Is Bent . . .** Lasting Effects of Preschool Programs. CONSORTIUM FOR LONGITUDINAL STUDIES. Erlbaum, Hillsdale, N.J., 1983. xvi, 494 pp., illus. \$49.95.

This book is a coherent, integrated, and eminently readable account of a commendable attempt to trace the benefits of preschool attendance in the subsequent lives of poor children. The Consortium for Longitudinal Studies worked together for five years to design and execute an evaluation of the long-term effects of several models of preschool education. The benefits of the collaboration show in the consistency of the treatment of the varied approaches to preschool education, in the shared perspectives on the research reported, and in the success of the integration of the many findings in the penultimate chapter.

The only chapter of the book that stands outside the framework of the Consortium's collaborative research is the first, "History and background . . .," in which Sandra Condry skips through generations of psychology, education, and politics to arrive somehow on the threshold of the Consortium for Longitudinal Studies. At one point, the narrative moves in fewer than 800 words from Rosa Parks on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1955 to the creation of Head Start in 1964—and well it might if it is to touch on Pestalozzi, Montessori, Freud, Dewey, Martin Luther King, Jr., John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Richard Nixon in the space of 30 pages.

The story of the Consortium and the report of their work begin at chapter 2. Eleven early-education research groups came together in 1975 to form the Consortium for Longitudinal Studies. During the 1960's each group had independently engaged in investigations of early education. Through these investigations, a variety of programs were implemented across the country with children from poor families. Each group examined long-term as well as short-term effects. The formation of the Consortium allowed the researchers to colligate their findings and to develop a plan for the joint collection of additional data. Irving Lazar of Cornell University led a separate research team in conducting the pooled analyses of the original data. This team also subjected the common follow-up data to analysis. Despite their close

collaboration, each research group maintained its identity and continued to pursue its own investigations. Consortium members heading these groups included E. K. Beller, C. P. Deutsch, M. Deutsch, I. J. Gordon, S. W. Gray, R. E. Jester, M. B. Karnes, P. Levenstein, L. B. Miller, F. H. Palmer, D. Weikart, M. Woolman, and E. Zigler.

Detailed descriptions of the individual studies written by the original researchers make up chapters 2 through 12. Each chapter provides information on the history and background, methodology, findings, and implications of the projects. Such coherent organization affords the reader the choice of scanning for a broad overview of the studies or absorbing the particulars of each.

The individual projects covered a wide geographic area: Michigan to Florida, Illinois to Connecticut. Regardless of the setting (large college towns, inner cities such as Harlem, or affluent as well as poverty-ridden communities) subjects were primarily selected from poor families, most of whom were black. Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers participated in the early-education programs. In homes, education centers, or both, children were exposed to intervention techniques anywhere from two hours weekly for eight months (Palmer, chapter 7) to 14 hours weekly for seven months (Schweinhart and Weikart, chapter 3). Experimental and control groups were utilized in most of the studies, with random assignment of subjects often employed. The specific interventions covered the spectrum of philosophies espoused by early-education proponents. The works of Piaget, Montessori, Gesell, Bereiter, and Gordon all served as starting points for development of the curricula. Direct didactic instruction, concept training, discovery learning, and parent intervention models were all delivered in neat little packages. Although the comprehensive coverage is praiseworthy, the volume does not present many novel approaches (perhaps because the thinking on which these 1960's model programs is based is now nearly three decades old). Woolman in chapter 9 describes an interesting model, the microsocial learning environment. Unfortunately, pretentious, technology-laden terms muddy the chapter's readability.

Ordinary measures of intelligence and

achievement, self-concept, and school attitudes and teacher ratings were utilized in each of the programs. However, a number of the researchers valiantly attempted to include fresher, more information-rich measures. Despite acknowledged measurement difficulties, problem-solving style (Seitz *et al.*, chapter 10) and ego development and moral judgment (Beller, chapter 11) were examined. Documentation of delinquent behavior, information about employment, and data from interviews were also included.

Chapters 2 through 12 present each project in considerable detail, allowing for critical independent examination. What follows in the pooled analyses adds greatly to the overall perspective on preschool evaluations without usurping the integrity of the individual studies.

It is chapter 13, "Pooled analyses: findings across studies" by Royce, Darlington, and Murray, that is unique and sets *As the Twig Is Bent . . .* apart from other such efforts. In this chapter, the long-term effects of preschool education at ages up to 20 years from the previous chapters are integrated through inventive statistical analyses that compel attention and belief. Four waves of data are integrated, the first two being the independent short-term and intermediate-term evaluations of the individual projects, the others being collaborative efforts of the Consortium at roughly 10 and 15 years after children left the programs. Our only quibble with the authors' methods of integrating the diverse findings is that they lean too heavily on the notion of statistical significance; useful information about averages and variability has been filtered out of the book when conventional significance levels were not reached, even though the conditions of either chance assignment or chance selection that are requisite to giving these significance levels any meaning were not met in the first place. It is a needless loss.

The pattern of long-term effects is first discerned in the systematic integration of findings in chapter 13. Preschool participation in comparison to nonparticipation produces (i) an immediate 7-point IQ score benefit that diminishes to 4 points two years later (by first grade) and disappears by grade 6; (ii) superior math and reading achievement by grade 3 that disappears by grade 6; (iii) superior "achievement orientation" (the rather grand name given to the children's tendency to mention a school accomplishment when asked to name something that makes them proud) at age 15; (iv) superior aspirations for the children at

age 15 by their parents; (v) no benefits at age 15 or 20 in "educational aspirations," "occupational aspirations," "employment," or "use of leisure." One long-term finding stands apart from these small and temporary traces. By far the most remarkable effect of preschool attendance concerns placement in special education: by the time experimental and control group pupils finished grade 12, 13 percent of the former and 31 percent of the latter had at some time been placed in special-education classes. Such is the way the tree has been inclined.

The pattern of these findings allows at least two interpretations, one of which is complimentary to the spirit pervading this volume and which is favored by the many authors, and the other of which is ironic (given the child-development focus of these endeavors).

To the psychologists, a hopeful beginning has been made. As Lazar and Datta maintain in their concluding chapters, children's lives were changed for the better; and if the changes were not permanent (not even tonsillectomies are forever, one must remember) they were at least profound in the short run and discernible in the deflection of the course of lives many years later. The efforts evaluated here are now 20 years old; today's psychologists are more intelligent and eager to build the next generation of preschool programs that will outperform these—or so it is argued.

A more critical analysis of the findings viewed by considering the public schools as sifters and winnowers of endowed talent for later grades and higher education could result in an even more plausible interpretation. Through practice, habituation, or coaching, preschool programs improved poor children's intelligence test scores. Though their experiences in preschool were scarcely discernible in their school-related skills and knowledge at even the earliest grades, their elevated IQ scores and school officials' knowledge that they had participated in a preschool program were enough to keep them from being labeled "special education" upon entry into the public school system. Once claimed by the special education imperialists, children seldom work their way back to the mainstream. Their parents and teachers expect less of them; they eventually come to expect less of themselves. Although a child may be no less talented (in abilities and skills) than his or her *Doppelgänger* who escaped special education placement by a few evanescent IQ points, labeling and sorting by adults who manage the institution bend the

trajectory of the child's subsequent life a few degrees toward the shabby end of the scale, at least for as long as he or she remains in their stewardship. Once the child is out of the institution, the distinctions and differences disappear. The irony in this interpretation of the facts is that those whose ideas are represented in *As the Twig Is Bent* . . . see themselves as developmental psychologists molding the inner, lasting core of the individual—one can almost visualize the cortical wiring they imagine being rearranged by ever-earlier intervention. And yet the true lasting effects of a child's preschool experiences may be etched only in the attitudes of the professionals and in the records of the institutions that will husband his or her life after preschool.

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## Personal Interactions

**Close Relationships.** HAROLD H. KELLEY, ELEN BERSCHIED, ANDREW CHRISTENSEN, JOHN H. HARVEY, TED L. HUSTON, GEORGE LEVINGER, EVIE MCCLINTOCK, LITITIA ANNE PEPLAU, and DONALD R. PETERSON. Freeman, New York, 1983. xviii, 572 pp., illus. Cloth, \$28.95; paper, \$17.50.

The past decade has witnessed an explosion of research on close relationships. By my count, the present volume is the 15th major social science treatise on the subject in the last ten years. There have also been innumerable journal articles and scholarly books on specific aspects of close relationships (for example, communication, power, loneliness, jealousy, sexuality, friendship, marriage, divorce, gender roles, interpersonal attraction, family processes, the single life, social support, widowhood).

This enormous quantity of information is becoming problematic, for there is an undersupply of conceptual principles by which to order it. *Close Relationships*, the joint effort of nine leading researchers, was designed to alleviate this problem in two ways. First, most of the book's 12 chapters are devoted to reviews of the literature. Second, the book is organized around an innovative comprehensive framework for examining close relationships.

Such an insistence on organization and integration has meant some restrictions on what is discussed. For instance, although the general framework and many of the principles articulated by the authors may be applicable to a wide variety

of relationships, adult heterosexual relationships receive by far the most attention, with parent-child interactions a distant second. There are very few references made to relationships between same-sex friends or lovers. Finally, although the introductory and concluding chapters point to the importance of the larger social context (for example, the effects of culture and class), few of the authors—with the notable exception of Peplau in her chapter "Roles and gender"—give it much attention. On the whole, the book reflects the expertise of its authors in social, clinical, and developmental psychology, with an emphasis on the personal and social psychological aspects of dyadic interactions.

The book begins with an introductory chapter (by Berscheid and Peplau) outlining some of the major changes in the study of close relationships that have occurred since the 1950's and describing the general history of the study of close relationships by various disciplines in the social sciences. The second chapter (by all nine contributors) sets out in some detail the framework that is central to the book. In this framework a dyadic interaction is conceptualized as consisting of the *interchain* connections between the two individuals' separate *intrachain* sequences of behaviors (including emotional and cognitive responses as well as overt behaviors). From this perspective, an interaction takes place when one person's behaviors affect those of another person. Dyadic interactions are said to be "interdependent" when there is mutual impact, and a "close" relationship is defined by a high degree of interdependency—frequent, strong, and diverse interchain connections that endure over a relatively long period of time. Specific interactions are then set in the context of more general "causal conditions," including personal characteristics of the participants (for example, anxiety), external features of the dyad's social and physical environments (for example, economic conditions), and relational factors (for example, propinquity). Causal conditions are viewed as having an influence on and as being influenced by specific interactions—as, for example, when propinquity makes a rewarding interaction between two individuals possible and the rewarding interaction leads to efforts to increase propinquity.

The framework allows for two particularly important distinctions. First, there is the contrast between behaviors by one partner that augment the other's ability to meet his or her goals ("facilitating interchain connections") and behaviors