observations of people at work. They have made good use of published sources as well. There is a ring of authenticity to their account.

Their special emphasis on the people in publishing leads them to give a rather detailed analysis of the role of networks and circles in transferring information and getting things done. Like insiders, they stress the effectiveness of connections, but they are more keenly aware of the limitations and breakdowns in some networks that are taken for granted. Ties among scholarly editors are close largely because they work with authors who are in the same circle. Trade book editors have looser ties with each other but strong ones with literary agents. One implication of the role of connections is stressed for aspiring authors: "If the reader who is unfamiliar with publishing takes but one message away from this book, it should be that formal channels of manuscript submission are the very last resort of would-be authors. To get a book published, recommendation through an informal circle or network is close to being an absolute necessity." (The book jacket for this study also confirms, if unintentionally, the role of connections. Of the three blurbs touting the book, one was written by the former president of the firm that published the book, one by an author whose work has also been published by the same firm, and the third by a distinguished scholar whose work is favorably cited. That all of the comments may be merited and objectively derived is beside the point.)

The epilogue, entitled "Publishers as gatekeepers of ideas," expands on a metaphor that appears in the introduction. It is the least persuasive part of the book.

The gatekeeper metaphor attracted attention some 30 years ago in a study of how a wire news editor on a small-town newspaper decides what stories to use and what ones to discard—and thereby determines what readers will find in their papers. In their introduction, the authors point out that they began their study believing that the metaphor was also applicable to book publishers. Their research led them to conclude that it didn't fully describe the role of publishers, since publishers are also shapers of ideas. Moreover, they came to recognize that book reviewers and even booksellers also function as gatekeepers. Nevertheless they continued to see some merit in the metaphor.

The epilogue, however, attempts to convert the metaphor into a major theme and ascribe to it far greater significance than it merits. An incongruity becomes quickly apparent when the metaphor is labored. The image of "channels and floodgates" and of publishers operating "sluice gates for ideas" suggests that publishers are engaged in deciding how much paper is to pass through, not what ideas are to be selected for dissemination.

But there are more substantive objections. The authors concede that "so much junk flows from the presses each year as to cast doubt on publishers' efficiency as gatekeepers." Still they cling to the metaphor, arguing that a selection process is inescapable since a publisher receives so many more manuscripts than he can publish. "However it occurs—by literary agent, or academic broker, or by an editorial assistant reading the slush pile—gatekeeping is an organizational necessity." Thus the control over the flow of work in a firm is mistaken for control over the flow of ideas in a society.

Also blurred is the distinction between two selection processes. A publisher determines what his firm will publish, not the fate of a manuscript. It is not at all clear that publishers collectively block ideas from being published. A manuscript rejected by one house is submitted to another. One survey of scholarly authors found that few book-length manuscripts fail to get published. Four or five submissions may be required, but the overwhelming majority of nonfiction manuscripts are accepted eventually. [cut off] this is true—and Coser *et al.* offer r[cut off] data of their own about the proportion [cut off] manuscripts that are accepted—th[cut off] widely held impression that the numb[cut off] of unpublished book-length manuscrip[cut off] greatly exceeds the published ones is [cut off] least partly illusory. The same man[cut off]script is counted several times.

There is an even more fundament[cut off] objection to the metaphor of the boo[cut off] publisher as a gatekeeper of ideas. A[cut off] many observers of scholarly commun[cut off]cation have pointed out, ideas do n[cut off] enter the intellectual world only throug[cut off] books. Especially in the sciences, b[cut off] increasingly in other fields as well, idea[cut off] are first disseminated by journal article[cut off] by preprints of journal articles, or b[cut off] photocopies of papers circulated to co[cut off]leagues for comment.

This is not to deny the importance [cut off] the role of the publisher or to denigra[cut off] the importance of books, which the a[cut off]thors rightly call "the most permanen[cut off] reasoned, and extensive repository [cut off] the thoughts of civilized man." Howe[cut off]er, gatekeeping is not a good descripti[cut off] of what publishers do, or an apt indicat[cut off] of what this book is all about. And th[cut off] fate of an idea is determined not by [cut off] gatekeeper but by its strength in an op[cut off] competition among ideas.

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Questions of Ability

The Rise and Fall of National Test Scores. GILBERT R. AUSTIN and HERBERT GARBER, Eds. Academic Press, New York, 1982. xviii, 270 pp. $23. Educational Psychology.

Scores on educational tests are not fixed, immutable numbers. Not only are the scores subject to errors of measurement, changes in them can be produced by the growth and decline of individual abilities and other personal characteristics assessed by tests. School officials, parents, and other interested parties usually keep an eye on yearly rises and drops in the test scores of schoolchildren, and decisions concerning both individual instruction and curricular modification are prompted by such changes. Periodic fluctuations in aptitude and achievement test scores are of less concern than consistent yearly declines, because the latter signal a progressive worsening situation.

It became increasingly obvious duri[cut off] the 1970's that scores on certain tests [cut off] cognitive ability, and on college entran[cut off] examinations in particular, were decli[cut off]ing annually in the United States. Stat[cut off]tical analyses of Scholastic Aptitu[cut off] Test (SAT) scores revealed that me[cut off] SAT score increased slightly from 19[cut off] to 1963. However, mean SAT-Verb[cut off] score decreased from 478 in 1963 to 4[cut off] in 1968 and to 424 in 1980. Mean SA[cut off] Mathematical score also declined, [cut off] though not quite as severely, from 502 [cut off] 1963 to 492 in 1968 and to 466 in 198[cut off] Score declines occurred for both sex[cut off] and across ethnic groups, but men co[cut off]tinued to score higher than women a[cut off] whites higher than blacks.

Yearly declines in test scores have n[cut off] been limited to the SAT, or to aptitude testing. Consistently lower annual mean scores have also been registered on the American College Tests (ACT), the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS), the Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED), and the Minnesota Scholastic Aptitude Test. Results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) testing program during the 1970's also pointed to declines in a variety of skills, for example mathematical reasoning and analysis of reading passages.

Indications that the annual decline in mean SAT scores has now ceased were found in the 1981 mean scores on the test, which were the same as those for 1980. This was the first time since 1967–68 that mean SAT scores remained constant in two successive years. A similar leveling off, and in some instances an actual increase, in mean scores from 1980 to 1981 was found on other tests. Of course, as seen in the 1967–68 precedent, there is no guarantee that SAT scores will not fall again this year.

Declines in test scores during the 1960's and 1970's have been attributed to a host of problems in home, school, and society. Some of these conditions, such as the increased ethnic and social class mix in public schools, are more logical explanations of test score declines during the 1960's. Other "pervasive forces," reflecting patterns of social change in the society at large, are viewed by Bruce Eckland in his contribution to the present book as responsible for the continuing drop in test scores during the 1970's. These conditions and forces are discussed in great detail in the book. The book was stimulated by a symposium held at the 1977 annual joint meeting of the American Educational Research Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education. The inevitable lag between conception and publication has resulted in several papers' being slightly dated, but many important findings and issues are presented in a thoughtful, readable manner. Consequently, the book can be profitably perused by a wide range of educational researchers, measurement specialists, and other individuals who are concerned about the education of our citizens.

The papers vary greatly in length and style, and several deal with matters that seem somewhat peripheral to the announced topic of the volume. The foreword, written by Robert Ebel, and the preface set the tone and describe the aims of the book, that is, to provide an in-depth examination of test score changes over time in a broad range of subject matter and across the various levels of schooling. The first and last chapters, written by the editors, are among the best. The reviewer also found chapter 2 by Eckland ("College entrance examination trends"), chapter 8 by Thomas Kellaghan and George Madaus ("Trends in educational standards in Great Britain and Ireland"), and chapter 10 by Richard Jaeger ("The final hurdle: minimum competency achievement testing") extremely informative and provocative. Several of the papers, chapters 4 through 7 in particular, are primarily descriptive or data-oriented and therefore perhaps more difficult to read. This is not meant as a criticism of these papers; it is important to know about changes in reading, writing, mathematics, and science achievement. It is interesting to discover from reading these chapters that scores on tests in all subject areas, at all grade levels, and in all countries have not declined during the past two decades. However, these four chapters, in addition to chapter 3, on Project TALENT results, will probably be of less general interest and less likely to be assigned as parallel readings in college courses in educational measurement and testing.

The biggest disappointment from this reviewer's point of view is chapter 9, "Race, social class, expectation, and achievement." The topic as a whole and the questions provoked by it are certainly important, but the discussion in this paper is argumentative rather than logico-empirical. Every measurement researcher would like to know why so many blacks drop out of school and college and how to improve the retention rate in an intellectually honest way. But the Naderian proposal of employing nontest predictors other than previous grades is simply ineffective by itself. The fact remains that tests of ability do a better job, for all ethnic and social groups, of predicting academic success than do extracurricular or out-of-school activities. Furthermore, the authors of this paper confuse correlation with causation. For example, how should one interpret the finding that black students who are self-confident are also more academically successful? It is just as likely that success breeds self-confidence as vice versa. The authors are also unclear in their criterion variables: What is "performance," and what are "coping abilities"? However they are defined, it is probable that they can be predicted more accurately by ability test scores than by reports of nonschool experiences.

This collection does not provide conclusive reasons for declines in mean scores on college admissions tests during the 1963–80 period. Many explanations have been proposed—television, drugs, lack of discipline, too much freedom, sex and ethnic-group differences, poor teachers, greater social-class heterogeneity, and the like. All of these are discussed in this volume, but one thesis that is not discussed is that declines in intellectual performance represent responses to declining economic incentives. Pointing to the condition of the labor market as an influence on test scores, S. P. Dresch and A. L. Waldenberg ("Labor market incentives, intellectual competence and college attendance," unpublished manuscript, Institute for Demographic and Economic Studies, New Haven, Conn., 15 March 1978) maintain that students during the 1970's perceived little relation between academic performance and job rewards. These authors argue that when students perceive that they can obtain better-paying jobs if they have a better education they will study harder and achieve higher test scores. This interpretation is especially interesting after reading Jaeger's paper (chapter 10) in the present volume. Jaeger cites Eckland's finding that rates of unemployment shortly after high school graduation had almost zero correlation with performance on reading and mathematics tests administered in the National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972. Because employment is determined less by grades than by whether or not a high school diploma has been earned, it can be argued that the use of minimum competency tests may do more social harm than good. The widespread use of such tests will undoubtedly result in denying high school diplomas to a substantially larger number of blacks than whites, thus increasing the unemployment problem and racial division.

In closing the volume, editors Austin and Garber conclude that: (i) test scores have both increased and decreased during the past decade and a half; (ii) the decreasing school dropout rate has led to lower average ability levels in grades 8 through 12; (iii) school curricula and tests have changed, sometimes incompatibly; (iv) it is extremely difficult to collect national test data in a dependable way. Thus, as is the case with much meta-analysis of educational research, differences in methodology—most of it inadequate for the task—and a sheer lack of relevant research make definitive conclusions concerning the causes of declining test scores impossible. It is likely that all the factors mentioned above have made some contribution to the decline, but it is not known for certain which are most significant. However, it is not fair to indict the public schools as the only culprit, or to conclude that improving schools will not alleviate the problem because the home is at fault. Many forces and influences are at work in the life of a child, including a possible 15,000 hours of television and 15,000 hours of schooling. Finally, it is not clear that declining test scores in children necessarily signal lower ability in all of life's tasks. Children will learn, if not in school then in the street, on the playground, and at social get-togethers. Consequently, there are undoubtedly many things that today's children and adolescents can do better than their, perhaps more studious, elders. It is presumptuous, therefore, to assume that declining test scores are incontrovertible evidence of wasted youth or a lost generation.

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Social Milieu and Language

The Language of Children Reared in Poverty. Implications for Evaluation and Intervention. Papers from a conference, Chapel Hill, N.C., May 1980. LYNNE FEAGANS and DALE CLARK FARRAN, Eds. Academic Press, New York, 1982. xvi, 288 pp. $24.50. Educational Psychology.

This is a 1982 book about a mid-1960's question: what part do language differences play in the high correlation between growing up in a poverty environment and failing in school, and what are the most effective interventions to give "poverty children" a better chance? The continuing social importance of these questions has led to considerable research and heated arguments. A British linguist, Michael Stubbs, ends his recent book *Language and Literacy* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980) with a thoughtful discussion of what he sees as four stages in the debate on explanations of reading failure. Stage 1 is the initial proposal of deprivation theory: some children's language is inferior in quality or quantity. In stage 2, that theory becomes taken for granted as fact. Stage 3 is the argument that deprivation is a myth, and "one group of social scientists see themselves as attempting to clear up the confusion caused by another group." In stage 4, the idea that deprivation is a myth itself becomes reified and taken for granted. Stubbs concludes that none of these four stages represents a coherent position and that the only certain recommendation is the importance of increasing teachers' understanding of linguistic and cultural diversity.

With this background, any reader seeing the Feagans and Farran volume will immediately ask, "What's new?" But first a glance at the book as a whole. It comes from a conference held at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at Chapel Hill in 1980. Both editors and two other contributors, Gordon and McGinness, are at the Center, and their longitudinal study of "high-risk black children" provides both the occasion for the conference and some of the empirical findings discussed. Some of the contributors will be familiar names to those who have followed this topic: Blank, Carew, Hart, Shuy (here joined by Staton), and Tough (from England). The rest are newer to these questions: Snow and her Netherlands collaborators de Blauw and Dubber, Hilliard, Massey, Moore, and Ogbu.

One contribution of the book is a reframing of the question. In her chapter in the concluding section Catherine Snow summarizes basic research on language development that has flourished during the past two decades: "Language acquisition is, in an evolutionary sense, a very robust system" (p. 257). She then goes on to ask a more pointed and useful version of the initial question: "Then why do we find large, significant, and consistent social-class differences in children's ability to perform language related tasks such as learning to read, learning to write, accuracy in referential communication, and oral exchange in the classroom?" (pp. 257–258).

The most striking new evidence of language differences comes from Elsie Moore's study (originally reported in a 1980 University of Chicago doctoral dissertation) of test-taking behaviors of an unusual sample of children: 46 black children placed for adoption in 23 black families and 23 white families. All the families were middle-class, and all the mothers were college-educated. (Presumably there was no difference between the groups in the children's age at adoption.) When the average age of the children in each group was 8.6 years, each child was given the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) by a black female tester. Moore's interest is less in the differences in the actual IQ scores than in differences in the children's use of language in the testing situation and the contributions those differences could make to the scores. To analyze the language use, the children's behavior during the test was scored according to the methodology used in a 1968 study by Hertzig *et al.* (*Monogr. Soc. Res. Child Dev.* **33**, no. 1). Briefly, the transracially adopted children made a higher proportion of "work" responses; accompanied their responses with significantly more spontaneous verbal and nonverbal extensions; and when they didn't answer a question were more apt to say "I haven't learned that yet," whereas the traditionally adopted children were more apt to change the topic or ask for help. Moore argues convincingly that a greater frequency of failures to answer will depress a child's IQ score even though such lack of response gives no certain information about what the child can or cannot do. Given the tendency of teacher-child interactions in school to have a testlike quality, Moore's findings can be generalized to differential participation in school lessons. As the chapter by Snow *et al.* argues, different subcultural groups have different ideologies of child-rearing and socialize their children to different patterns of language use.

John Ogbu, a Nigerian-born anthropologist who is one of the several black contributors, offers a more explanatory discussion. He reviews the "deficit" or "failure of socialization" hypothesis; appreciates the "difference" perspective for generating research on distinctive black English dialect and on classroom communicative exchange; and then discusses very persuasively a chain of educational implications of castelike stratification: "inferior education, disillusionment and lack of effort arising from low educational payoffs; incongruence between minority survival strategies and school requirements; and conflict and distrust between the minorities and the schools" (p. 129).

In other chapters useful to newcomers to these issues, Joan Tough reports her infant school research and curriculum development in England; Farran reviews research on mother-child interaction and Gael McGinness reviews intervention programs; Marion Blank describes characteristics of written language that pose particular problems for beginning readers; and Betty Hart has a thoughtful summary of the difficulties in establishing a demand for lexical elaboration in a behaviorist preschool and the difficulties, therefore, in decreasing social class differences in rates of vocabulary growth—"differences that seem to be captured in measures of IQ and reflected in reading comprehension scores" (p. 216).

Overall, the book is a useful progress