

## Book Reviews

*Individual in Society*. By David Krech, Richard S. Crutchfield, and Egeron L. Ballachey, 1962. Available from McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York. 564 pp. \$7.95.

The authors indicate two objectives for writing this textbook in social psychology. Their basic objective was to present what they believe to be a useful systematization of research knowledge from behavioral sciences. Secondly, they sought to create an effective teaching instrument. They have attempted to organize what man has learned about man—from general psychology, personality psychology, social psychology, anthropology, and sociology—and to synthesize what appeared to be important in accumulated facts, observations, and speculations.

Such a book can serve as an excellent reference for Extension workers who wish to add depth to their understanding of human behavior and motivation. Even though the material included in this book is in the language of the social scientist, a glossary of terms at the end of each chapter makes its reading and comprehension relatively easy for the person not totally familiar with the more technical concepts. These explanations also can help the reader better understand not only this text, but other writings in the field of social psychology. The comprehensive discussion and integration of research in administrative theory, methods of supervision, and function of groups should be especially helpful to Extension workers.

The format is a departure from the usual textbook. For instance, examples of research upon which the general discussion is based are set apart from the text. These “boxed-in” descriptions can acquaint the reader with the nature of research in social psychology, its tactics, the specific findings, and limitations of such research.

Factors which influence behavior are discussed in Part One. Part Two treats the manner in which beliefs, feelings, and reaction tendencies become organized into attitudes. In this discussion the authors seek to clarify the nature of attitudes, the methods employed in their detection and measurement, the process of their formation, and the manner in which they can be changed.

The analysis moves from a study of the wants and thoughts of the individual as he interacts with others to the functioning of groups and organizations. Part Three, for instance, includes a description of the social and cultural habitat of man—including the nature and uses of

languages, the effects of social class, status-strivings, social mobility, cultural norms, values, and beliefs. In Part Four attention is focused on the group—how it is organized, the nature of group leadership, what makes a group effective and what limits its effectiveness, and its beneficial as well as baleful influence on the expression of men's individuality.

Even though segmented aspects of human behavior are examined separately, as is the case in most such textbooks, these authors attempt in final analysis to synthesize all facets, maintaining that human action is motivated, or goal directed, and that individual wants, emotions, and perceptions operate in an integrated manner to influence action.

*Cooperative Extension Service*  
*University of Arizona*

EMILY QUINN  
*Home Agent*

*Diffusion of Innovations.* By Everett M. Rogers, 1962. Available from the Free Press of Glencoe, New York, N.Y. 368 pp. \$6.50.

*Diffusion of Innovations* is a major contribution to an understanding of how new ideas are diffused and adopted. The size of the undertaking tends to make the book a bit segmented, but it does provide the neophyte a fine primary reader in diffusion literature. In addition to the social scientist, this book should have particular appeal for Extension workers interested in the role of the change agent. Rogers defines the change agent as "a professional person who attempts to influence adoption decisions in a way he feels is desirable." The change agent group includes county agents, technical assistance workers in under-developed countries, salesmen, and other professional persons who attempt to bring about the adoption of new ideas. The book should also have an appeal for persons interested in overseas work. An excellent account of studies in the Netherlands, Australia, India, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Germany, England, Canada, Colombia, and Sweden is included.

The first three chapters are devoted to examining the contributions of sociology, anthropology, economics, education, speech, industrial relations, and medicine to knowledge of the diffusion of ideas. The last eight chapters describe the stages of the adoption process, characteristics of innovations, adopter categories, social acceptance of innovators, influence of opinion leaders, role of change agents, prediction of innovativeness, and the theory of diffusion of innovations.

County Extension workers will find chapters four, six, seven, and ten particularly helpful. The process leading to the adoption of new practices or innovations is described in chapter four. Adopters of new practices are classified into groups according to the time that elapses before they adopt a new practice. The innovator group is the smallest but is described as an important influence in the diffusion process because innovators

be first in the community to try new ideas. Farm innovators have larger farms, higher income, and more education than their neighbors. They may also have contacts with sources of information (experiment station workers, Extension specialists, or other innovators) beyond the community or county lines.

Adoption of new farm practices has brought about major changes in the rural community. Since World War II, the rapid acceptance of new technology has transformed farming into more of a business than was previously the case. The change agent as a diffuser of innovation has played an important role in bringing this about. Rogers assesses the reasons for change agent success in securing the adoption of new practices. He maintains that change agents may bring about both favorable and unfavorable consequences by encouraging the adoption of new ideas and that the effect of innovation in agriculture can be readily observed.

Over 600 studies in the fields of sociology, anthropology, economics, education, speech, industrial engineering, and medicine are reviewed. Research workers in these diverse fields have conducted independent study of the acceptance of new ideas within their field of interest. Techniques and methods developed by each group have been similar even though inter-disciplinary communications have not existed. References are cited in each chapter to support the argument of a common element in all diffusion research. Rogers does not furnish details of particular research but points out the similarity of specific results obtained by a number of research workers. A complete list of studies cited is provided in the bibliography.

*Cooperative Extension Service*  
*University of Nebraska*

ARLEN LUTZ  
*Assistant State Leader,*  
*Program and Reports*

*Administration in Extension.* Edited by Robert C. Clark and Roland H. Abraham, 1960. Available from the National Agricultural Extension Center for Advanced Study, University of Wisconsin, Madison 6, Wisconsin. 205 pp. \$3.00.

The use of obsolete methods and techniques by administrators can be as detrimental to success in Extension as the use of obsolete information by specialists and county workers, according to ideas emphasized in this book. The 26 papers (developed from the Sixth National Extension Administrative Seminar) are classified into four parts: (1) responsibilities of Extension administrators; (2) administrative theory, organization, and decision making; (3) development of executive leadership; and (4) communication in administration.

Part I stresses the importance of Extension being an integral part of

the university, in practice as well as in principle, and of the staff being upgraded in salary and professional competence. It is pointed out that representing the total institution to the public, improving cooperation with other agencies, and doing a better job of public relations all present a challenge and an ever mounting task to the Extension administrator.

Part II is the most comprehensive, yet the most provocative. It points out that the specific function of administration is to develop and regulate the decision-making process in the most effective manner possible. The principles and application of traditional administrative theories, as well as some of the more recent theories based on interpersonal behavior, are discussed. The strengths and weaknesses of several types of administrative organization for Cooperative Extension Services are presented.

In spite of considerable expenditure on research in the past 25 years, there is still much to be learned about selecting and developing executive personnel, according to information presented in Part III. Much of the development is up to the individual. However, administration is to encourage and make this possible through performance evaluation, training, and promotion opportunities. Fitting the right man to the right job and providing opportunity for growth are two of the biggest jobs identified for the administrator.

The key role which communication plays in successful administration is brought out in Part IV. Clear, concise communication involves definitely established channels, clear understanding of message, appropriate means, and well established feedback, to mention a few of the areas covered. A number of communication problems and possible solutions are discussed. The paper on "Listening" contains a number of suggestions that are seldom considered vital parts of the communication process.

As the title implies, this book is probably most useful to those directly concerned with administrative matters at the state level. Parts II and IV are particularly pertinent also to supervisors and county chairmen. However, ideas covered should prove interesting and helpful to the rest of the staff in providing a better understanding of the role of the administrator and the tremendous task which he faces. This book can certainly contribute to a better understanding of problems in administration, staff development, and the very vital area of communication.

*Cooperative Extension Service  
University of Missouri*

WALTER T. WILKINSON  
*County Agent*

*Excellence*. By John W. Gardner, 1961. Available from Harper & Row, New York, N.Y. 171 pp. \$1.35 paperback.

"Can we be equal and excellent too?" is the question to which Gardner addresses himself. He expresses his concern in terms of the social context in which excellence may survive or be smothered, maintaining that the foundation for attaining excellence is a democratic society which allows for achievement according to individual capabilities. Such a society, he says, has a responsibility for motivating and challenging everyone toward the highest possible performance. According to Gardner, a degree of competition and even a sense of frustration are desirable motivating forces for the individual.

Among the ideas explored are problems of equality and competitive performance, the recognition of talent, individual development in relation to heredity and environment, the importance of continuous education, and the ideal of individual fulfillment. Gardner maintains that equal educational opportunities of various types and levels should be available for our heterogeneous population. He indicates that excellence implies a striving for the highest standards in every phase of life. "A society," he says, "that does not believe in anything will never achieve excellence." The importance of the individual and his fulfillment is recognized as an American belief. But that is not enough: Free men must set their goals at the level of society as well as at the level of the individual. "A free people, precisely because they prize individualism, must take special pains to insure that their shared purposes do not disintegrate."

The responsibility for learning and growth, as pointed out by Gardner, rests with the individual as a self-actualizing person. Although assistance can be provided by many channels, nothing will substitute for personal efforts through reading, keen observation, and purposeful and analytical thinking. This book can provide the inspiration necessary for organizing a self-study program and a challenge for maintaining excellence in professional responsibilities. *Excellence* not only provides ideas for self-improvement, it can provide guidance and direction for work with youth and adults in a voluntary educational program. Gardner states that "one of the great functions of leaders is to help a society to achieve the best that is in it."

How do we pursue excellence? Although the approach to the question is a bit circuitous, Gardner provides many ideas that are food for thoughtful speculation.

Cooperative Extension Service  
University of Wisconsin

JUDITH BERGET  
County Home Economics  
Extension Agent