

Apprentices out of their time

Ethel Venables

London Faber. £9.50

Some time ago Lady Venables obviously realised that her many years of pioneering in the field of further education research had placed her in a situation where, with some additional care and effort, she would be able to combine cross-sectional and longitudinal research in the expectation of producing evidence to support some of her strong feelings about the current state of further education.

This present volume therefore cannot be easily classified. The researches started in 1950 since when we have had GCE, CSE the Robbins Report, the Industrial Training Act and many more changes in education. This might suggest that any report on young men who completed the main part of their education ten to twenty years ago should be classified under "History of Education". On the other hand, this is a research report with full details of population, sampling procedures, questionnaires, response bias and a massive series of tables comparing the present and past status and attitudes of four cohorts of ONC and City and Guilds students. So perhaps the book should be classified as "Research in Education". But as we read through the book we notice that, like a good advocate or parliamentarian, Lady Venables is assembling the evidence and preparing the way for conclusions which are in another area altogether. In the final two chapters we are treated to a devastating attack on the present further education system, drawing in support from, among others, Alvin Toffler, to argue that colleges "face backwards towards a dying system, rather than forwards to the emerging new society." We have therefore a treatise on the "Politics of Further Education."

The casual reader might think that it is dangerous for Lady Venables to presume so

much on the basis of researches which are geographically limited, but many of the responses she quotes and the ability and personality profiles of her students are so similar to the results in the work of other researchers throughout the United Kingdom that I have no difficulty in accepting that the evidence presented is typical of apprentices serving their time between 1950 and 1966. Moreover my own researches since 1966 leave me in no doubt that even today the patterns of ability, performance and attitudes are almost unchanged.

Lady Venables performs at least three most useful functions in this slim volume. She gives us one of our most detailed then and now records of the attitudes of young workers to their apprenticeship. She throws out a stream of findings which will keep other, lesser, researchers working for years — why are apprentices more extroverted than other types of student? Why do some children adopt their parents' aspirations? But most important of all, Lady Venables here integrates all the valuable work she has been doing for the last twenty-five years.

This book is a damning indictment of the failure of successive governments to recognise what Lady Venables cogently presents as the true purpose of further education, namely to guarantee to those millions of young people not continuing in full-time education "an enrichment of their lives which helps them face the future hopefully and constructively".

A.D. Weir

Design Education: Problem Solving and Visual Experience

Peter Green

London: Batsford £2.90

In more recent years writers have expressed their views about Design Education as a necessary part of the school curriculum: this

topic is controversial and the various modes of approach serve to illustrate the wide parameters of the subject area. Peter Green's ideas are well known, and his work as Head of the Hornsey College of Art Teacher Training Department is acknowledged for its contribution to the more enlightened thinking about Art and Design Education.

Design Education: Problem Solving and Visual Experience reflects the work and ideas of the Hornsey team. Some will argue that the book is Art teacher biased and neglectful of the disciplined requirements of the more permanent materials experienced in the craft studios. "Soft" materials such as paper, card, wire, string etc. are used to solve the exciting but simple design problems; the book also contains abundant examples of experiences where paper shapes and graphical statements are used to communicate ideas and solutions to problems.*

The general theme of the book reveals the author's awareness of a need for greater understanding of human conflict with our changing society and the necessity for effective teaching in all that affects our environment and our lives. To these ends Green makes his case. The reading is not easy, however, in fact in some areas of the book the text is rather inconclusive and repetitive. Reviews of books of this nature can barely do justice to the efforts and intentions of the author: a number of opinions have already been expressed by readers of this work, however, and there can be no doubt that the book will be well received by those of us who are already convinced of the needs that it expresses. It has also to assist the teacher who is seeking ways of creating a renewal in method and approach and requires background reading, it is hoped that this book will provide a useful aid in this direction.

F. Zanker

* In its general presentation the book is good but many of the pictures, some of which are referred to as colour in the text, are lost in black and white.

Woodstock Craftman's Manual No 1 and No 2

Edited by Jean Young

London: Studio Vista. £2.25

These books are representatives of a tradition that differs considerably from that which obtains in institutions educational since these works ultimately stem from the sub-culture that produced such books as *The Last Whole Earth Catalogue* (1971), *Survival Scrapbook 1/Shelter* (1972), *Ben Hunt's Big Indiancraft Book* (post-1967), L.D. Olsen's *Outdoor Survival Skills* (1967), A.B. Laurel's *Living on the Earth* (1971) or B. Kaysing, *The Robin Hood Handbook* (1974). Emphasis in such books is on independent activity which is often a protest of sorts. So the 'square' regards such books as being a by-product of 'hippy communes' but others regard each of these publications as containing a genuine core of knowledge about materials, tools and techniques that every 'educated' human being should have.

It is important not to be irritated by surface mannerisms or alien approaches in books of this kind. These manuals, to give an example, are not edited but 'provoked' by Jean Young; there are, in another instance, drawings of a cat wandering about the section on quilting; and several of the techniques are presented as money-making propositions. However such matters, including some 'twee' autobiography by the authors, should not deter us from utilising the useful parts.

It is impossible to review all the sections in this space, so the most useful procedure to help the reader of this review is to list the topics in each volume and to add an asterisk where some practitioner has found the text useful or viable, especially for a newcomer.

The first volume, (1972) includes articles on candlemaking, crocheting*, leather working, embroidery, pottery, tape-recording*,

beads, weaving, tie-dyeing and batik, silk-screen*, printing*, macrame. The weaving section is skimpy but the techniques might be transferable to children. I found the long section on candlemaking a bit much because of the terminology and the omissions. One would like to learn about tallow candle making as well as producing the more mannered coloured wax candles. The phraseology is unusual: 'A gas stove has better karma' or 'The stuff (wax) is so wonderful just the way it is, I could never bear to frig with it'.

The second (1973) volume has sections on patchwork, applique and quilting, sandal-making*, woodblock printing*, bronzeworking (with rods, not by casting), tape-making, videotaping (as a project for youngsters)*, needlepoint*, songwriting (!), stained glass (cut sheets with copperfoil joints)*, preparing artwork for offset-litho publications*.

A reviewer ought to try and indicate what people or group might find these publications useful. Some schools yes, but perhaps the books are better for a club leader looking for something with which to involve a loner. The book should do equally as a present for a younger teenager who has for some months kept going convincingly an urge to make things, and, equally, for a retired person who really needs to find recreations that do not require attendance at courses.

Francis Celoria

Art and the Handicapped Child

Zaidee Lindsay

London: Studio Vista. £2.50

This book is clearly intended for practitioners in special education. The first five chapters are devoted to descriptions of sensory and mental handicaps, including those physical disabilities which are the result of brain damage, e.g. athetosis, spasti-

city. The information offered is probably quite adequate to give teachers an understanding of the problems involved in dealing generally with these various handicaps.

The latter two-thirds of the book describes the various creative activities that are possible, even with the handicapped child. The variety of materials that could be, and has been, used is evidently infinite and perhaps this fact bears testimony to the propagative role of creative activity. These chapters are most generously illustrated, thereby giving impressive evidence of the capabilities of even the most severely handicapped child.

As a psychologist, when I first read this book, I protested inwardly at many of the assumptions and assertions made by the author. The arguments too seemed extraordinarily facile at times — e.g. "it may be that some (deaf children) will acquire a certain rhythm sense by observing the diversity of movements in their environment" (p 21). How exactly will perception of diversity enable the development of rhythm, which is regularity? It is possible to similarly question a number of statements, but it would be futile to do so. Much of education is based upon value-judgments, and it would be mischievous to take issue with these as if they were the result of empirical findings, and particularly so with a book such as this, which demonstrates vividly that the art specialist fulfils a crucial role in enriching the life of a disabled child.

Corinne Hutt

Graphic Design in Educational Television

Beverley Clarke

London: Lund Humphries. £2.50

It is understandable that there should have been relatively few books on graphic design

in educational television.

The practitioners have of necessity a preference for a quite different medium and the theorists have thankfully kept a commendable distance from this area of vital interest.

Graphic Design in Educational Television is intended primarily for other ETV workers, design students, and interested laymen, tries to provide a preliminary sketch of the philosophy and methods currently available to artists working in educational television." (p.9)

The book starts with a justification for educational television which relies rather too heavily on the arguments of the futurologists to convince those not already committed. Chapter two *ETV in Action* describes, or sets to describe, current practice in educational television, but the description seems reminiscent of the writings of a decade ago. For example, the list of functions of ETV includes the largely moribund "overspill lecturing" and makes no mention of micro-teaching. The major divide in installation potential is drawn at the "studio/no studio" level rather than the "videotape edit" level.

Chapter three, rather strangely titled *The Design Process*, is a competent if Quixotic list of the parameters of the medium and the machinery associated with a broadcast studio. The treatment is clear and effective, the author is now on home ground and the effect is pleasing.

Chapter four, *Design Preparation*, deals with the selection of typefaces (pp. 5), the preparation of diagrams (pp.6), animated captions (pp.2) and film animation (pp.10). Again the practising competence of the author shines through and whilst, in my opinion, the chapter is a little unbalanced, the authority of the author is unquestionable.

Chapter five, *Design in Action*, deals with the organizational problems that are met with in any production team. Readers work-

ing in small ETV units may read with a wry smile the assumptions regarding separate set design departments and separate lighting engineers. It provides a clear picture of the workings of broadcast studios.

The book finishes with some examples of educational television graphics drawn from a number of studios and a useful Glossary of terms used in the book.

This work should not be thought of as a practitioner's handbook, but rather as an introductory tour of the design process in broadcast ETV. Viewed in this light it will find a useful place in school library and departmental library bookshelves.

F.M. Twyman

3.9.74

Dress and Fashion

Olive Ordish

London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. £1.60

The latest addition to Routledge's Local Search Series is a quality production, clearly planned and attractively presented. Written in an easy style it is truly interdisciplinary and reveals almost incidentally a good deal of the social evolution underlying changes in fashion.

There are intriguing snippets on some of the vagaries of the past, the shrinking waistcoat of the eighteenth century, the origin of the handbag in the early nineteenth century and the eruption of the 'cloche' hat in the inter-war period. There are also glimpses of great designers from Worth to Mary Quant.

"Fashions never stop changing" is almost a refrain, and in certain respects a book which is so topical in its references will date quickly. It is, however, much more than a record of fashion. The introduction on materials and processes and the chapters on "Clothes for Yourself" and on career opportunities make compelling reading.

Here is a book which, despite the publisher's blurb, will appeal more to girls than to boys. Its practical guidelines will encourage discrimination in personal choice. At C.S.E. level there are useful suggestions for individual investigation. It is a pity that in these hard times most schools will be restricted to a single library copy.

Marjorie A. Cruickshank

Lettering and Lettering Display

William Mann

London: Van Nostrand Reinhold. £2.95

I cannot help but be critical of this book for, in my opinion, it is poor and I would not advise art and design teachers to spend their limited funds on it. The text is repetitive and boring and the illustrations lack variety. Indeed, it is very surprising to me that the author has not used his imagination more when selecting examples from the wealth which are available in our environment.

He seems to have missed the real excitement of what is a most interesting aspect of the visual arts. His teaching examples are limited in scope and obviously result from what I would term 'Closed exercises' which allow for very little originality on the part of students. The author has a limited outlook and an apparent pre-determined formula.

Perhaps I can be excused for my harshness. I originally trained as a letterer, calligrapher and illuminator myself and I have been conscious of the originality and freshness of approach which teachers, students and pupils in colleges and schools can bring to this subject when it is allowed to be a stimulus for real creativity with materials or as a means to direct attention to one of our keenest forms of visual communication.

John Lancaster

Lively Technology Cards

P.H.M. Williams

London: Mills & Boon. 95p.

In recent years Technology has become an educational band-wagon and the in-word for curriculum developers, but few have attempted to define or even clarify what the word means. What is clear, from the publications of Schools Council Project Technology (now the National Centre for School Technology in Nottingham) and, more recently, from the statement of the Association for Science Education, is that Technology is not to be interpreted as a school subject in the traditional sense but as a way of teaching any subject so that pupils are made aware, through experience, of efficiency in the use of resources.

Teachers in the Arts have been doing that for years, good literature (and good teaching) conveys meaningful ideas by efficient use of comprehensible words, an efficient sketch or drawing conveys a picture by optimum placing of a few strokes. Teachers in the Sciences now use laboratory experiments to teach concepts of optimisation, whilst in the Crafts pupils are encouraged to compose objectively the possible solutions to a design problem.

But what of the non-specialist teacher or the beginning, unskilled pupil? Peter Williams' "Lively Technology Cards" are good Technology in themselves — models of clarity and efficient use of words and sketches — and an optimum introduction to the basic woodwork skills. The set of 10 work-cards introduces the basic tools gradually — tenon saw and surform in Card 1, coping saw in Card 2, up to chisels by Card 8. Beginning with simple sculptures giving a feel for the material, The Cards progress through laminated rings and racks to plywood jewellery, veneers, furniture, and wheeled models. The design briefs are un-

dimensioned and allow infinite scope for interpretation and proof that a given problem has no single right answer.

So much for the Craft-based Technology, but the cards don't stop there. Each card also suggests scientific investigations — on the relative strength of glues, expansion and contraction of timber, bending wood specimens, or on the construction of laminated and cutting tools.

The cards are simple enough to be understood by first year secondary school children working individually under an expert craft teacher, or by a non-specialist primary teacher with a small group of children. The latter use seems particularly promising and should encourage many primary class-teachers actually to use the tools so beautifully displayed in junior classrooms, and to introduce junior children to the basics of technological society — the efficient use of resources, whether tools, materials, teachers, or work-cards. All teachers with a concern for encouraging fundamental skills should look seriously at this publication.

Michael Sayer

Let's Build

Rita Davies

Let's Decorate Fabric

Elizabeth Holder

London: Evans Brothers. 40p each.

The *Starting Points* series which is edited by Henry Pluckrose comprises a carefully-considered selection of simply conceived books concerned with the fundamental practice of art and craft. It is an attractive series and each small publication sets out its informative text, which is nicely complemented by an abundance of illustrative material in black and white colour, so that

even very young children have no difficulty in understanding it. Indeed, these books were originally intended for children's use at home where it was hoped they could use simple art materials and ideas without the help of an adult. However, it is quite obvious that their scope is far greater for teacher education students and teachers of young children find them extremely useful as resource material and the simply-explained techniques and processes are easy for them to follow.

Let's Decorate Fabrics by Elizabeth Holder, is no exception. The author starts off by stating some general rules and methods to be followed, and then goes on to cover the dyeing of fabrics, Tie and Dye, Marbling, Batik, Printing with blocks and screens, and ends up by explaining the use of templates and crayons. It is inevitably a very simple, easy approach to surface enrichment but this in itself is invaluable in giving confidence and stimulating further developments in an exciting aspect of the visual arts.

Rita Davies has produced another colourful and useful book for *Let's Build* has some extremely colourful illustrations of the work of children and should stimulate interesting three-dimensional sculpture in schools. She starts off by exploring the use of the more usual materials such as plasticine and straw, takes us through simple model making — always of interest in junior classrooms — and then goes on to consider paper, wood, polyfilla, wire, string and plaster as materials which lend themselves well to the making of structures. She rounds the book off nicely by considering large, painted shapes in card and actually returns to one of the more traditional materials, papier mache.

My overall impression is that both these books are worth-while. They are rich with suggestions for creative work which will keep 'the children' out of mother's hair on rainy Sunday afternoons, while, on the other hand, they are valuable for young people who are about to enter the teaching profes-

sion and who need to have some cheap but useful resource material to hand.

John Lancaster

Factories, Forges and Foundries

Roy Christian

London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. £1.60

A beautifully produced book in a dust-jacket with colour photographs back and front — but who is it for? £1.60 is a bit much for 68 pages, even in hard covers. Clearly written in child-like language, it is too superficial for the student of industrial archeology and too expensive for a classroom text; the school library seems its likely destination. Here the young researcher will find an excellent selection of photographs showing examples of the things to look out for, and explaining industrial structures so frequently seen but rarely observed critically.

So this book is really an invitation to the pupil who has volunteered (or been volunteered) for an industrial archeology project to go out and investigate, and there must be a few who will not find here something familiar that could be the key to an absorbing research on how people design things — the essence of Technology in its social context. A street name, a village name, old maps (and even the Seventh-series Ordnance Survey maps are already historical documents, for the new 1:50000 edition omits many references to antiquities, including recently dismantled railways) or any derelict structure, are shown to be potential starting points for a small-scale investigation of early history. The pupil is given sound advice about the need for accurate measurements and reliable presentation of technical records, for his record may be the first and last before an important artefact is swept under the carpet of commercial re-development.

Hints are given also about the largely unexplored area where art and science interact to become what we now call Technology. The reader is encouraged to find paintings and engravings of early industrial activity and to look at the evolution of buildings and machinery as industrialised construction evolved alongside the classical revival in architecture and the fact that industry can only exist in a social context is emphasised in chapters on working conditions.

Industrial archeology is an important field in education for Technology appreciation, it can be investigated by the non-technical pupil as usefully as by the science specialist, it integrates curriculum areas such as technical studies, geography and social history, it offers vast scope for original research and responsible reporting of designs and methods disappearing daily without trace, and it puts pupils directly in contact with the rational science, the intuitive artistry and the social accountability, that mingle to form the discipline of Technology as we now understand it.

Every teacher who thinks Technology appreciation important should find this book a good investment for the classroom library.

Michael Sayer

Introducing Handbuilt Pottery

Tony Jolly

Clay in the Primary School

Warren Farnworth

London: Batsford £1.90 each.

These two additions to the very diverse Batsford Art and Craft Books series overlap to a large extent but can both be recommended.

Tony Jolly, who teaches in a secondary school, writes with admirable clarity and economy, his step by step instructions on all the techniques of shaping Clay without a wheel could scarcely be bettered. No previous experience is assumed but neither is the reader treated with that toxic condescension which so often mars books for the beginner. Only the page on 'Design' is too brief to be very useful and the section called 'Techniques' contains scraps of advice which would have been better integrated into earlier sections. His 150 photographs are clear, helpfully placed in relation to the text and provided with fully informative captions. Many of the objects he illustrates will encourage emulation or experiment just as his text will give assurance that the necessary skills are readily acquired and no more esoteric than those of the competent cook. The book contains a useful glossary and has been put together with craftsman-like care.

Warren Farnworth is a senior lecturer in a College of Education who covers substantially similar ground rather more wordily. His text is not altogether free from patronising clichés and colloquialisms or from misprints (e.g. aluminium for aluminum — a very different matter). However, the book has many compensating virtues. The illustrations (over 200 of them) are excellent and include examples of children's work and of 'primitive' ceramic objects from museum collections both of which will be helpfully suggestive to the primary school teacher. The section on incised and impressed decoration is particularly good and he has many hints on improvising equipment — including a bonfire kiln — which need cost nothing. A list of suppliers as well as a bibliography is a useful addition.

Michael Paffard

Ideas in Practice

Edited by P.G. Pike

More Ideas in Practice

Edited by P.C. Pike

London: Evans Brothers. 40p each

Ideas in Practice and *More ideas in Practice* are two books by P.G. Pike (ed.) that slot very nicely into the new, cheap paperback series 'Education in Action' now being published by Evans Bros. of London. This is a most useful series for teachers and students who are undergoing courses of initial teacher education, for the cost of 40p per book is well within the reach of the most modest pockets. The publishers are to be congratulated for putting it on the market. It is pragmatically simple, and as the various books are added to the collection this should prove to be an expanding source of relevant information relating directly to curricular studies in the primary school.

P.G. Pike is an experienced teacher and head-master who obviously knows what teachers want or need to know in the everyday learning milieu. Consequently, he has given us two books dealing, in the first, with *art, craft and basic areas of study* and, in the second one, with *a range of general ideas*. He embraces number work (Mathematics); imaginative English and vocabulary; various aspects of the visual arts such as picture making, finger-painting and drawing; drama; model making; classroom display; natural science; topic work; the planning of school journeys; meetings with parents and even games for rainy days when children can't go out of their classrooms at playtime.

Yes, it does seem a 'hodge podge' of ideas. Yet in many respects it reflects the seemingly unstructural situation in the primary school which, as true educators we know is carefully considered in a developmental fashion to cater for the needs of

young children who can say what is 'right' or 'wrong'? Too much structure tends to stifle creativity while too little leads to chaos. Teachers must use these books with care. They are not to be thought of solely as providing tips but as a supporting compendium of ideas.

John Lancaster

writers children the greatest success was the cookery book — not only did they produce edible and enviable results but they also followed the instructions on washing-up.

T. F. King

Let's Weave

Dora Wigg

Let's Use String

Mary Seyd

Let's Cook

Sue Berwick

Let's Carve

Philip Freeman Sayer

London: Evans Brothers. 50p each.

Four further titles in the Evans 'Starting Points' series are now available. They give every indication of being as successful as the hugely popular earlier titles. Within the compass of 32 beautifully printed and illustrated pages a young reader can find all he needs to know to start on a craft activity that will lead him on to creative work in a range of media. In each volume he will find an account of the simple and available tools and materials needed and some realistic suggestions for using them. But the final result will be his own for the books are cleverly suggestive rather than prescriptive.

The four new books explore carving using driftwood, plaster, bone shell, slate and much else; weaving pictures, purses and scarves using a range of simple looms and a remarkable range of decorative work with string of every conceivable kind. But for the