in certain courses within schools and decisions are flexible and easily reversible, teachers are perfectly capable of comparing and rank ordering their own students and making decisions — or giving guidance — on the basis of tests tailored to measure achievement in their particular courses. ' . . . the best single predictor of a future academic record is usually the past academic record . . .' (Clearly *et al.* 1975, p. 34). It is in such informal settings that exclusive reliance on standardized tests may have undesirable backwash effects on the content of courses and other methods may have greater advantages. However, it is generally agreed that school achievement, whether measured by standardized or course-based tests, depends more heavily on school or home background than does a more broadly based intelligence test. In the end it is the flexibility of the system that provides the best safeguard against a mistaken decision, rather than one or other method of selection.

The justification of any selective instrument must be that it predicts academic performance. If middle class children tend to do better on such a test than working class children, then this does not render the instrument worthless, since they will also perform better on the criterion which the test predicts. But we have to be sure that the criterion is socially relevant and useful. And the predictive efficiency of a test must not rest solely on its ability to predict future from past success, but must include the ability to forecast when a child might overcome environmental handicap, presently noticeable in his achievements (cf. the case Northumberland, cited above).

The alternatives to tests that Fine recommends are, I am afraid, not necessarily better in a selection situation. We have already discussed teacher-made examinations, which he favors. He also seems to be much taken by 'divergent-thinking' or creativity tests. However, as much research including my own, has shown there is considerable overlap between these abilities and conventional, 'convergent' abilities, represented by the traditional IQ tests; furthermore, correlations between socio-economic status and divergent tests are often found to be of roughly the same magnitude as between socio-economic status and convergent tests. Creativity tests simply introduce a slightly different kind of bias, as would possible tests of motivation, or interviews which are particularly susceptible to class or racial biases. While for certain purposes each of these methods might prove useful, especially in combination with standardized tests, each of them carries its own danger. We have to recognize that to select some always means to reject others. With each alternative method we simply discriminate against a different set of persons. We can all agree, however, with Fine's plea for better-trained teachers and inspirational teaching, while having our reservations whether this will solve the perennial problem of matching differential human abilities to different kinds of education.

The book is well-meant and makes a sincere humanistic plea. It is full of interesting information which, however, cannot always be trusted — e.g. I understand that there are no published data available for the test of Negro slang, which Fine praises, let alone data showing that it predicts academic aptitude. It is doubtful also whether any self-respecting school system would base a serious decision on a child, as he claims, on a single IQ figure obtained years earlier. Having a propagandistic aim the book often oversimplifies the issues. It also overstates its case, is repetitious and in the final analysis, therefore, cannot be taken seriously.

Hugh Lytton,
The University of Calgary.

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William Kessen (editor). *Childhood in China.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975. Pp. xvi, 241. $3.95 (paper).

Education's crucial role in Mainland China is evident in the hard-fought battle over its direction. In the 1950s theoretical education to produce specialists threatened to dominate Mao Tse-tung reversed the trend with a half-work, half-study emphasis intended to promote socialist ideals. When a similar "elitist" education effort gained ground in the early 1960s, Mao countered with the Cultural Revolution. So far, Mao has succeeded in having schools produce youths who are enthusiastic Communists, in linking schools with factories and farms, in having universities run factories and send their students to work in other factories. It is yet to be seen whether or not China's ideological remolding will survive Mao's personal direction.

How China raises its young was the question pursued by 13 American child psychologists, including Urie Bronfenbrenner. In late 1973 they visited schools in Canton, Peking, Sian, and Shanghai. While in their experience the expectation is that school will produce change and some dissent in youths, they found that the Chinese have uniform expectations of proper behavior which their children achieve with little conflict. The child experts entered Mainland China full of questions. They left without full answers but convinced that they "had seen a radically different way of raising new generations."

The investigators were impressed by the children's "high level of concentration, orderliness, and competence." Good behavior did not suggest docility or surrender or apathy. Some children were lively and even naughty, but not for long. The visitors asked the Chinese and themselves what accounted for the "conspicuously pro-social behavior" and the remarkable stability of the children. Was it a result of China's centuries of cultural continuity? Or because most Chinese live in continuous and enduring neighborhoods? Even students' annual work periods away from home did not seem to violate family cohesiveness. Or was it because of China's commitment to national development? Or the unity and direction permeating Mao Tse-tung's thought? The observers could only speculate.

As in the USSR, and unlike Canada and the USA, Chinese out-of-school activities seemed to reinforce school values. Workers, peasants, and revolutionary leaders, used as resource persons in the schools to describe the "bad old days," fired children's patriotism to "serve the people." From the beginning, the observers noted, Chinese preschoolers were quieter, gentler, less intense, less whining, less aggressive than North American children. Kindergarten teachers emphasized group effort over individual activities and taught songs and dancing better than cognitive skills like reading and language exercises.

Kindergarten charm gave way to primary school uniformity for ages 7 to 12. Peer influence was more systematic. Little Red Soldiers, Red Guards, and Communist Youth Leaguers were prominent models. Ideology prepared the young to follow adult direction. A practical curriculum minimized theory and speculation.

Primary teachers were brisk, competent, and interested in their tasks. The children were "remarkably self-controlled, . . . committed to their tasks, and without the disorders of behavior . . . in American schools."

Junior middle-schoolers, ages 12-14, and senior middle-schoolers, ages 14-16, were conforming, dutiful, and well organized. Students had no curriculum choice, did not search for diverse information, were not library browsers. Still, the collective effort apparently produced students with high-level skills. Very talented students, often in work production situations, were creative and inventive. Revolutionary ideological messages pervaded literature and music. When middle school graduates departed for commune and factory (they have some choice about assignments,) they were given fanfare and parades reminiscent of patriotic North Americans seeing off local National Guard units.

Foreign language teaching — English and Russian are popular — seemed to employ a good deal of drill and memorization. Simple conversation using up to 2,000 words was expected after the four-year middle school.

Health care was deemed outstanding for a developing country (this was stressed by one American, a physician), even though the Chinese were self-deprecating about this and other advances. (The Chinese never boasted, always said they were trying to do better.)

The book's striking photos nicely illustrate the charm of China's children. Editor William Kessen of Yale University was appropriately cautious in blending the 13 experts' reports.

An awakened China has chosen to re-enter the world's mainstream and may well, as Napoleon once predicted, shake the earth. North Americans need to understand this old yet new giant. A good way to begin is to read this fine book about China's children and schools.

Franklin Parker,
West Viriginia University.

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W. James Popham, *Educational Evaluation.* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1975). Pp. vii, 328. $10.95.

M. Popham est bien connu dans le monde de l'évaluation scolaire. Il a publié seul et en collaboration avec d'autres auteurs une série de livres portant sur le sujet. Quelle est, alors, la contribution du nouveau titre? Selon l'auteur, deux raisons l'ont amené à écrire, (1) la demande accrue de spécialistes d'évaluation, (2) le besoin d'un livre de base qui couvrirait à la fois la théorie et la pratique.

En effet, M. Popham nous mène de la perspective en évaluation scolaire à la conception actuelle du domaine et de là, à la fixation des objectifs éducatifs et leur évaluation. Il passe ensuite en revue les alternatives existantes dans la mesure et l'évaluation, la mesure critériée (criterion-reference measurement), le design en évaluation, l'échantillonnage et l'analyse des données. Tout en apportant des exemples pratiques, il met en relief un grand nombre de considérations à retenir.

Un chapitre est consacré à l'évaluation des maîtres. Soulignons que ce chapitre se rapporte également à la performance scolaire. L'auteur indique qu'il ne l'a pas rédigé avec joie, mais ne pas inclure un chapitre sur l'évaluation des maîtres serait dénaturer les faits.