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Teaching Professors to Teach,
Peter Seldin.
Blyth-Pennington, 1977. 103 pages. $4.40 pbk.

How to Succeed as a New Teacher,
Change Magazine Press, 1978. 64 pages. $3.95 pbk.

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Robert Frost once remarked in the course of poetry reading that he usually got more out of a book by putting it on his shelf and reading the title for a year or so than he did by actually reading it.

We have here two recent books with excellent titles—titles on which one might profitably meditate for at least a year. And in the case of the first of these books, *Teaching Professors To Teach*, such meditation of the title would prove more beneficial for most readers than what is inside. The second of these books, *How To Succeed as a New Teacher*, is excellent and useful in content as well as title.

Teaching Professors To Teach is subtitled, "Case Studies and Methods of Faculty Development in British Universities Today," and is simply an account of what Peter Seldin learned during his association in 1976 with the University of London's Institute of Higher Education. Seldin's book, however, is addressed to the American reader and so contains quite a few pages devoted to explaining the British system of higher education. He also devotes a chapter to the history of faculty development efforts in England. With this material as background, Seldin then reports on the present state of faculty development in general in England and provides detailed case studies of two well-developed programs of faculty development (at the University of Surrey and at the University of London). Brief accounts of the more modest programs at fifteen other British universities are also given. Finally, a few pages are devoted to considering the possible relevance of all this to American universities.

Seldin's book will be quite useful to American specialists in faculty development who wish a quick overview of what has been happening in this area in British universities. For the general academic reader, however, there is little here that will be of interest. Even if Seldin is correct in suggesting that "[b]ecause they began searching for solutions to teaching/learning problems earlier, the British experience with staff development is likely to be a harbinger of our own" (95), vir-

tually all of the British practices and experiments recounted here are already familiar in the United States in some form or another. For example, Seldin goes into great detail about some of the training courses in teaching which several British universities offer their faculty members. He concludes, however, that because of the great emphasis placed on published research in the British system of academic rewards, "training courses which may be favorably thought of in the abstract, achieve low priority in practice" (35). Surely such conclusions are already obvious, at least to those who take the trouble to read *Teaching Philosophy*. Seldin makes many similar observations in the course of this book. Most of them are probably true; few of them need further pointing out.

I mentioned above that *Teaching Professors To Teach* offers "detailed" case studies of two major programs of faculty development. One of my minor objections to this book is that Seldin (and his editor) frequently fails to discriminate between details which are interesting or important and those which are not. For example, Seldin uses many long quotations from committee reports, course descriptions, and the like. Entire documents are often reproduced verbatim, including such passages as the following: "How Do I Register? Contact Gwen Heath, University Teaching Methods Unit, 55 Gordon Square, London WCIH ONT. (Tel: 01-580-6451). The completed form, accompanied by the fee or a £3 deposit should be returned not later than 25 June 1976" (56).

In spite of my rather critical remarks about *Teaching Professors To Teach*, Peter Seldin does deserve our gratitude in one important respect. He has been willing to spend the time to gather material of a specialized sort which will be of use to a certain limited audience, namely, American professionals in the faculty development field. In this way his work will complement the excellent handbooks published by Change Magazine Press: *Faculty Development in a Time of Retrenchment* (1974) and *Professional Development: A Guide to Resources* (1978).

How To Succeed as a New Teacher is subtitled, "A Handbook for Teaching Assistants." After brief essays by *Change Magazine* editor George Bonham, "On Becoming a Teacher: Rights as Well as Rites," and the director of the Stanford Center for Teaching and Learning, David Halliburton, "A New Deal for New Teachers," chapters are provided on the following topics: Administrative Details; Teaching; Evaluation; Faculty, Students, Anxiety; TA Training Programs; and For Further Reading. Most of the material in these chapters is based on the *Handbook for Teaching Assistants at Stanford University* (1977). The Stanford *Handbook* differs from *How To Succeed as a New Teacher* primarily in that the *Handbook* contains a wealth of information about the policies and resources of Stanford University. Information of this type is typically contained in the "faculty handbooks" provided by many colleges and universities.

The longest section of *How To Succeed as a New Teacher* is the chapter on teaching. Here, in the space of sixteen pages, the beginning teacher is given some rather basic, though helpful, suggestions about such activities as lecturing and leading discussions. Some examples: "As you begin to write a lecture, try to write out in 30 words or less the topic and why students should learn about it. This focuses the topic more clearly and provides you with an overall structure" (16) and "Creating a good climate for a discussion group is essential. Probably most important is to know and use the students' names. In addition, make sure that the students know each others' names" (26). From my experience of working with teaching assistants in recent years, I know that such suggestions, simple though they sound, can make a difference.

The last several pages of the chapter on teaching are focused on meeting a class for the first time. Not only do they discuss some ways in which the first few meetings of a class can set the tone for an entire course, they also quote at length from reports of two TAs about their first ex-

periences as teachers. These reports are of great potential value in that they will help some beginning teachers realize that their feelings (or some of them at least) have been shared by others before them. Here is an example: "I felt a great deal of apprehension and a sense of inadequacy when I began to teach. I was a first-year graduate student from a liberal arts background. I found it quite disconcerting that 'they' (I wasn't sure who it was who had had enough confidence in me to appoint me in the first place) expected me to teach something to students who may have had nearly as much education as I" (30). Although this portion of the book may not be helpful to everyone, I know that it would have been very reassuring to *me* during my first days and weeks as a teaching assistant.

One of the merits of *How To Succeed as a New Teacher* is its brevity. Its 64 pages could be read in an evening. It also lends itself to re-reading. For the student or teacher who wishes to pursue some of the topics raised in the book in greater depth, the final chapter contains an annotated bibliography of several dozen suggestions for further reading. These range from Alfred North Whitehead's *Aims of Education* (1929), through Wilbert McKeachie's *Teaching Tips* (1951), to Kenneth Eble's excellent work *The Craft of Teaching* (1976).

In the Philosophy Department at the University of Georgia we have begun offering a copy of *How to Succeed as a New Teacher* to all of our new TAs. Although the faculty were not provided with copies of the book, I must confess that I learned several things myself through reading it and reflecting on some of the points made—even though I have been teaching for seventeen years. I recommend it highly, especially as the basis for a training program for teaching assistants. □

Forthcoming in *Teaching Philosophy*
Philosophy and the High School Curriculum
Grant Wiggins
Classifying Disputes
Royce Jones

Cultures in Conflict: An Essay in the Philosophy of the Humanities,
Otto A. Bird.
University of Notre Dame Press, 1976, 230 pages, $4.95 pbk.

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Cultures in Conflict is an historical and cartographic study, surveying the great cultural themes and ideals which have successively dominated educational policy and practice in Western civilization, discussing the merits and failings of these themes and ideals by examining classical conflicts among them, and urging a broadly humanitarian and open-minded attitude toward inquiry and the goals of education in contemporary society. Writing in the scholarly tradition of his teachers, Adler, Buchanan, McKeon, and Gilson, and summarizing his own reflections on a distinguished career in encyclopedic general studies, Bird builds a strong defense for the humanities against their academically licensed, though not truly learned, despisers, and issues an eloquent plea for ecumenism in an age of intellectual bigotry. He reminds us of the civilizing values of broadly based liberal education and warns of the disastrous effects of "intellectual imperialism," which occurs when a cultural or intellectual paradigm "lays claim to the exclusive title to all knowledge and thereby denies the value of any other form" (4).

The discussion opens with the claim that although "distinction, separation [and] conflict" have been "among the principal features of the history of learning in the West," there have been three great ideals of intellectual culture, each of which has tended to dominate the academic and scholarly life of its own epoch (1-2). In the classical world, Bird tells us, a "literary-humanistic" ideal prevailed, with Cicero and Quintilian its most prominent advocates. In the medieval period, a theological model