Book Reviews

The Psychology of Personal Constructs, by GEORGE A. KELLY. W. W. Norton & Company, 1963 and 1955. 183. pp. $3.95.

Reviewed by Ben Broome, Campus Minister, University of Kansas, Lawrence.

Whether or not we are aware of it, and whether or not we can explicitly describe it, all of us hold a particular view of the nature of man. We hold certain ideas about what man is like, what he will ultimately become and what "causes" him to behave as he does. The view of man that we hold certainly influences the way we respond to their communications and the manner in which we attempt to "teach" them and work with their problems. Much of the psychological theory to which we have been exposed views man essentially in a "passive" sense; that is, it basically views man as a "responder" or a "reactor" to the enviromental forces around him. The person is seen as a kind of inert element that must be "pushed" into action by "stimuli" or "pulled" into action by "needs." From this perspective, a person often is seen as "victim" of his/her upbringing who is "driven" by certain animalistic instincts. Since this "static" view of the nature of man is so influential in much psychological research and theory, it is no wonder that many campus ministers find it difficult to integrate many psychological findings with their Christian theology.

George Kelly takes a quite different approach to the nature of persons, and his philosophy is beginning to influence the thinking of many who study human behavior. Kelly emphasizes the *creative* capacity of persons to *represent* (or construe) the environment, not merely to respond to it. He sees life as a relationship between parts of our universe wherein one part, the person, is able to represent (and thus interpret) another part, his/her environment. Man looks at his world through transparent patterns or templets which he creates and then attempts to fit over the realities of which the world is composed. These templets which Kelly calls "constructs," do not always fit very well, but without such patterns the world makes no sense at all—it appears to be an undifferentiated homogeneity. Thus, a person does not merely react to situations in a way determined by the forces at work in the surrounding events, but he/she interprets situations in the light of the constructs he/she has chosen for viewing them —the individual, and not the environments, becomes the focus of action.

Kelly's discussion of personal constructs has four important implications for viewing the nature of persons. First, viewing a person as an active construer of events emphasizes *choice* and *alternatives*. Kelly assumes that an absolute construction of the universe is not possible, and that all of our present interpretations of the universe are subject to revision or replacement. In other words, there are always some alternative constructions available to choose among in dealing with the world. No one person has the only "correct" way of viewing things, although some constructs are definitely "poor implements." Second, constructive alternativism focuses on *learning* and *growth*. Constructs are continually tested for their usefulness, and each day's experience calls for the consolidation of some aspects of our outlook, the revision of some and the outright abandonment of others. Third, choosing to view persons in terms of their capacity to represent the universe implies *freedom* and *independence*. No one needs to paint himself/herself into a corner, or become completely hemmed in by circumstances, or be the victim of his/her biography. To the extent that a person is able to construe his/her circumstances, he/she can find for himself/herself freedom from their domination. The person who orders his/her life in terms of many special and inflexible convictions about temporary matters makes himself/herself the victim of circumstances. The person whose prior convictions encompasses a broad perspective, and are cast in terms of principles rather than dogmatic rules, has a much better chance of discovering those alternatives which

will lead eventually to his her emancipation. Fourth, personal construct theory implies *individual responsibility*. Since the way we view the world is not determined by environmental forces or childhood traumas, it is the person who is held responsible for the constructs he/she employs. While a person difinitely learns from others and is influenced by others, it is ultimately the individual who makes the choice of which construct to place on an event.

From this viewpoint, campus ministry becomes more than "leading the students down the right path." It becomes a task of working with *individuals*, helping them to realize the *alternatives* that are available to them as they make their *choices* for living. It becomes a concern with providing opportunities for *learning* and *growth*, helping students to understand the *freedom* that is theirs in construing their circumstances. Finally, emphasis is placed on helping the person understand that it does him/her no good to blame others for things that happen to him/her, because the *responsibility* for learning, growth and change belongs to the individual. From my own work with students, both in campus ministry and in the classroom, this perspective has provided a most useful framework within which to relate to others. The usefulness of Kelly's work lies not only in providing me with a useful framework, but further helps me to see that all of us operate out of some kind of framework. If this be the case, it becomes important that we realize the nature of our viewpoint and the kinds of implications it has for the choices we make in both interpretation and action.

I've Got To Play In Their Court, by NELSON L. PRICE. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press 1975. 140 pp. $4.95.

Reviewed by Jesse Parrott, Campus Minister, University of Missouri at Rolla.

Are you reaching all the students you want through your BSU? While all of us answer in the negative, we seek ways to do a more effective job. While there is no magic formula to fulfill the needs of every BSU, Nelson L. Price gives some proven methods of reaching people through ministry. This book tells how a church adapted its programs to the needs of a community and met with success. I feel the same principles presented in the bok can be adapted in part to the BSU with similar results.

The primary message of the book is that we must carry out our BSU ministry where the students are. Students cannot be expected to beat a path to the doors of our centers just because they are there. The book title states that like an athletic team, we must engage in a home and away schedule. That is, we must be interested in and participate in the activities of the school and community in order to contact students.

The author uses many meaningful illustrations in the book to support his claims for an active and unusual ministry of reaching people for Christ.

The chapter titles are catchy, athletically slanted and very applicable to a BSU.

1. Devise the Game Plan — Determine before hand what you hope to accomplish and then decide how to accomplish it.

2. Motivate the Team—We will not achieve the goals by ourselves; we need the team. The team must be motivated to do its best.

3. Play the Entire Bench—To use a select few. kills the interest of others. Remember, everyone has something to offer the team.

4. Love Your Team Mates—There must be a genuine Christian love for every member of the team.

5. Play the Broken Pattern — Things will not always go according to plan. We must learn to make the best of and get the most from the unexpected.

6. Use the Home Court — When prospects come to our "home court" we must use it to our advantage in every way.

7. Capitalize on the Big Play — Don't let the opportunity of enlisting and involving people slip by.

8. Vary the Game Plan—Let variety be a part of the team plan.

9. Know the School Colors — Remember the school activities and support them; remember our own responsibilities and support them.

10. Watch the Clock — We don't have forever. We must get in the game early and put forth our best.

11. Win a Few, Lose a Few—It is a fact we won't reach everyone, but don't lose them all either. Play your best.

12. Play it to the Coach—In the final analysis we are playing for the coach, Jesus.

This is an easily read book telling how a church met the challenges around it. It can offer help for us and our challenges as well.

Assimilating New Members, by LYLE E. SCHALLER. Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1978.

Survival Tactics in the Parist, by LYLE E. SCHALLER. Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1977.

Reviewed by Sam Sanford, Campus Minister, Northeast Louisiana University, Monroe.

Those of us who read pride ourselves (a favorite pastime of ministers is "one-uppance" on "have you read——?") on keeping up, but we miss some literature. Until recently this was my case concerning this author's work as a leader in the yokefellow movement and retreats for ministers all over the nation. His material is fresh, his terminology for leadership is different and his approach is positive. Though Schaller writes with the local church and leadership in mind, the campus minister can easily transfer the author's thoughts to his vocation and constituents.

In Assimilating New Members Schaller sounds as if he is in campus ministry. He writes about inviting and then not accepting people, about barriers in every group, "The Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion," about ways (twelve of them) to keep people from joining the church (BSU), and about how to kill Sunday School classes for young adults.

The central emphasis of this book is on diagnosis though many prescriptions are suggested throughout the book. Also, Schaller does a good job in showing the lack of clarity as to what we mean by institutional growth. One would wish he would have pursued an attempt at some solutions to this problem. Southern Baptists, especially during our first statistical decline in decades, probably need some assurances that institutional growth can be attained in areas other than numbers.

Survival Tactics in the Parish is directed at the leader of the church (BSU). As the introduction states, "This volume follows the mythical Don Johnson as he completes a nine-year pastorate at St. John's Church." (p. 12).

The questions Schaller raises are ones which we all have faced, but we probably have not stated them so concretely. For instance, in considering a position, one invisible person is very important—your predecessor. How old was he? Was he task-oriented or person-oriented? Was he shepherd or rancher? Where is the grief process in reference to those left behind?

The author's chapter entitled "Silver Beavers or Dead Rats" gives us delightful insights into how we reward people. At the same time a serious question arises whether or not rewards can be justified from a Christian perspective. (He says, "Yes!" because everyone is after "strokes" and they wil get them some way.)

One other section caught my short-spanned attention. "What do the Signs Say?" I could not help but relate this chapter to Baptist Student Centers and the signs students give out for better or worse as each one enters the building. Signs such as "Don't bother us upper-classmen"; "For Freshmen Only"; "The God Squad"; "Open for Everyone"; "Happy People of Faith"; "For Whole People not Soul People."

Schaller gives the balance of "Survival . . ." to the question, "What Do We Look like to You?" Don't read this unless you are willing to think and act toward what may be a painful undertaking. At the same time, the question may be the key to building the Kingdom in academia. Or the question may be the key which causes campus ministers to survive.

Jesus—An Historian's Review of the Gospels, by MICHAEL GRANT New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1977. 204 pp. $12.50.

Reviewed by Ruford B. Hodges, Jr., Campus Minister, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.

A business man in the Sunday School class I lead brought me Michael Grant's *Jesus*. "I'd like for you to read this book; it's one of the most provocative I've ever read on the life of Jesus," were his comments. Upon completing the book, one of my immediate thoughts was that the material would have strong appeal to campus ministers who have the reputation for being able to handle and appreciate nonconventional thought. I found Grant's treatment to be a mind-stretcher gap-filler, background-enricher and faith-affirmer.

My fellow Sunday School class member relates the following about Michael Grant's work:

> I found it as exciting and thought provoking as any of Arthur Conan Doyle, Dorothy L. Sayers, or Agatha Christie's detective stories. After the last reading (the third), I found myself wondering what Sherlock Holmes, Lord Peter Wimsey or Hercule Poirot would have deduced from the plot as laid out by Michael Grant. Grant is obviously well versed in the historical period and writes in a manner which excites the reader. At the same time he compels the reader to think hard about what he is saying. And he has something important to say.

Coming from a historian, the account by Grant gets started with an arresting statement. "The most potent figure, not only in the history of religion, but in world history as a whole, is Jesus Christ." His effort to apply rigidly the techniques of a historian in examining the facts concerning Jesus Christ and the Gospels produces a thoughtful and helpful study. Better than in any other account of Jesus' life I have read, with the exception of the New Testament, Jesus surfaces as a real flesh and blood person.

To the author so human is Jesus Christ that the former does not believe "the most potent figure" in history always himself fulfills his own lofty teachings, which for most Christians likely poses a problem, but not for Grant. Jesus' temple explosion against his opponents is cited as an example.

Light is shed on the miracles, which are viewed by the author as a vital, undeniable aspect of Jesus' ministry, but which must be interpreted for their deeper meaning "in the light of the attitudes of the time . . ."

The birth of Jesus, the centrality of repentance in his teaching, his economic status, and the religious climate of his day are given nonconventional treatment.

Concerning the person of Jesus, Grant does not believe the facts at all reveal a "gentle Jesus meek and mild," rather he is "a stormy personage with a 'mighty vein of granite in his character'." The titles "Messiah," "Son of Man," "Son of God," as well as Jesus' relationship to the Old Testament, take on fresh, plausible meanings in Grant's writing.

From time to time the author candidly concludes, "This is unlikely to be an accurate account of the words of Jesus . . ." I never get the impression, however, that Michael Grant is trying to destroy the conventional picture of Jesus. Rather he is trying to construct what he, a historian, apparently sees is a magnificent person, doing and saying magnificent things.

Jesus' final days, death and resurrection are treated with surprising candor, and the author ends his research with a strong declaration of the authenticity and power of the person, stories and influence of Jesus.

The feeling I have about Michael Grant's exposition is that Jesus and the Gospels have been placed under honest, intense scrutiny by an extraordinary scholar and have emerged as essentially real.

rather than growing into a sense of personal responsibility. "The Bible and the Bullhorn" is a discussion of evangelism and social justice. "Building Bridges for Traffic" is a discussion of the person-to-person element in communicating the good news, in which Ford concludes, "There is no set pattern for personal communication. Instead, we have to grow in the art of communication, in understanding our faith, and in knowing and explorig other people."

Chapter one is the *what* of evangelism. Chapters two through eight are the *problems* or the *why nots* of evangelism. Chapter nine is a transition chapter dealing with techniques used in witnessing, such as "The Roman Road," "Steps to Peace With God," and the personal testimony.

Finally, in chapter ten, Ford gets down to the *how* of witnessing. This chapter deals with repentance, belief and following. It also includes a very helpful discussion on what to do if a person wants to receive Christ.

Maybe the most needed chapter in the book is chapter eleven which is a challenge to "take the trouble to learn the vocabulary and thought forms of our non-Christian neighbors around the corner" and "translate" the Bible where they understand it.

Chapter twelve seems to be a collection of thoughts the author had left over. The book would be just as helpful without them. The Postscript is a unique and vital part of the book. It deals with getting started. The Appendix, dealing with twelve questions likely to be asked by non-Christians. should not be read until after the first attempts at witnessing are made. Otherwise it could be added to the chapters on problems that keep people from witnessing, perhaps under the title "Loading Up for Bear Before You Know What You're Shooting At."

The author uses many illustrations out of his own years of experience as an evangelist. He quotes a rather impressive array of authorities in supporting his own points—C. S. Lewis, Roland Allen, Theodore Rosyak, Neil Simon, G. K. Chesterton, John Scott, David Angsburger, Michael Green, John White, Francis Schaeffer, George Mueller, Brother

Good News Is For Sharing, by LEIGHTON FORD. Elgin, Illinois: David C. Cook Publishing Company, 1977. 203 pp. $6.95.

Reviewed by Dan R. Crawford, Campus Minister, University of Texas, Austin.

According to Leighton Ford, it took "forty-five years" to write this book. The long time associate evangelist with the Billy Graham Team feels that this book on witnessing has "grown out of a lifetime of passing on the good news."

Borrowing an idea from C. S. Lewis, the first chapter asks the question, "Have You Ever Tried to Ride A Lion?" Choosing to begin the book not with a definition, but with an image, Ford likens evangelism to riding a lion—the lion being Jesus Christ. According to the author, "Christ is saying, 'Get on my back—let's go for a ride—let's make some new . . . people. Just hang on and let's get going!' "

In the next few chapters the book deals with old questions to which Ford gives new wording. "I Found It—But Who Needs It?" deals with the subject of fear and how it is to be overcome with love. "Lost?" takes on the question of apathy, which Ford says "is the big brother to the problem of motivation." He deals with the question of how apathy causes us to disbelieve certain people are lost, particularly the "self-sufficient man who has everything." In "Does the Gospel Really Work?," a chapter that reads like a sermon, Ford takes the gospel out of the realm of theory and, using Paul as an example (Romans 1:16), argues that the gospel "was a power . . . was true . . . worked . . . (and) was for everyone." Using the analogy of tennis ("Oh Where, Oh Where is Stan Smith?") in the same way that others have used golf, baseball, and other such arts, Ford discusses the problem of personal inadequacy in witnessing by trying to imitate someone else. A strong case is made for sensing our own worth and witnessing through our own unique qualities.

In succeeding chapters, the author deals with such topics as "Let My People Grow"—a discussion on leaving evangelism to the professional

Lawrence, the Gallup Poll, the Lausanne Covenant and the Bible.

The real test of any book is its usefulness and effectiveness in the lives of its readers. This book, along with the thirteen week study course Guide Pak, has attracted over fifty students on this campus to a weekly study and a more effective lifestyle of witnessing. Hopefully, the next book on witnessing by Leighton Ford will not be forty-five more years in the making. We need it soon.

Small is Beautiful; Economics As If People Mattered, by E. F. SCHUMACHER. New York: Harper and Row, 1973. 290 pp. $9.95.

Reviewed by Barry Vincent, Baptist Campus Minister to Internationls, Nashville, Tennessee.

If you share the feeling that economics is something you usually cannot comprehend and something you really cannot do anything about, even when you understand it, this is an important book for your consideration for two reasons.

First, while economics is not an area commonly thought to be integral to our work in campus ministry, ethics is. More and more the crises we face, personal and global, are at the point where economics and ethics intersect.

Second, campus ministers have a responsibility to challenge students to think about the lifestyle they will choose (or accept for themselves without realizing a choice has been made).

Perhaps it should be stated, early on, something this book is not. It is not, as may come to mind on first seeing the title, a handbook for city folks who want to move to the country, buy a few chickens and plant a garden. This is not an option for any significant number of us.

Schumacher's assertions rest on the premise that we are, on a global scale, using up the irreplaceable capital nature has given us. He deliniates three categories of such "natural capital": fossil fuels, the tolerance margins of nature and the human substance.

With the consumption of irreplaceable (that's the key word) fossil fuels having trebled from World War II to 1972 and expected to treble again by the year 2000, within the foreseeable future major lifestyle changes will be brought about by the depletion of fossil fuel supplies. Will the students whose thinking and valuing we now have the opportunity to influence be prepared for these changes or will they consume as if there is no tomorrow.

Some of the very successes of our industrial processes are producing huge quantities of substances that nature cannot break down. Some of these are thought to be harmless, others unpredictable and some, like atomic wastes, are known to be extremely dangerous. At what point do these overwhelm the tolerance levels of nature?

Finally, Schumacher argues that while we are continuing to increase production and those of us in the rich countries are better fed, clothed and housed than ever before, nevertheless, there are indices of industrial man that are also rising, "crime, drug addiction, vandalism, mental breakdown, rebellion and so forth."

Schumacher's point in this book is that our most important task is getting off this collision course by developing what he calls "a lifestyle designed for permanence." The largest portion of the book is devoted to suggesting ways we can get on with the task.

One of Schumacher's most interesting chapters is titled "The Greatest Resource—Education." The weakness of our educational process, he feels, is that philosophical presuppositions, which few people are prepared to recognize or judge, are put forth as scientific certainties. This confusion of presuppositions for findings has so polluted education that much of what is studied in our educational institutions must be seriously called into question. "The task of our generation, I have no doubt, is one of metaphysical reconstruction."

Schumacher's prescription for the future is built around what he calls "intermediate technology." This is a technology that creates jobs at a cost that is attainable within an undeveloped economy. Jobs that cost thousands of dollars each to establish are a losing proposition in develop-

ing countries where the poplation is always growing faster than jobs can be generated. Not to be confused with a return to primitive technology, intermediate technology takes full advantage of scientific developments that will provide a simpler, more fulfilling job for the individual. Schumacher's analysis of why the foreign aid efforts of the United States have been largely unsuccessful is an added benefit of this book in that it lends a valuable perspective to our ministry to internationals. It will help us understand why people from other countries are so little impressed with our assumptions that "biggest" and "best" are synonyms and that U.S. dollars are the sure cure for all that ails us and the rest of the world.

Economics is as much psychology as it is mathematics; as much values as it is charts and graphs. For a model of the attitudes that will put Schumacher refers us to the beatitudes. Before you debunk this as stretching a bit too far, look at his interpretations of what the beatitudes have to say to technology.

Schumacher has formed these ideas from a lifetime of work as an economist of the three-piece-suit set. A Rhodes scholar in economics, he began his career as an economic advisor to the British Control Commission in Germany following World War II. Then for twenty years he was the chief economist for the British Coal Board.

Beginnings in Relational Communication, by KENNETH L. VILLARD and LELAND J. WHIPPLE. John Wiley & Sons, 1976. 269 pp. $8.95.

Reviewed by Ben Broome, Campus Minister, University of Kansas, Lawrence.

One of the primary concerns of campus ministers is *relationships.* Helping students develop sharing relationships among themselves as a group, between themselves and other students on campus, and with families in local churches, as well as helping students deal with the changing of relationships with parents and significant others "back home," present daily challenges to the campus minister. With experience, this is something we become "good at." We make a lot of mistakes, and the learning process is sometimes painful, but out of necessity, if nothing else, we gain expertise in helping people develop and deal with changes in relationships with other human beings. There are very few of us, however, who have had specific training in the dynamics of relational communication. How do we achieve relatedness to other people? How can we make our lives and relationships more understandable, controllable, and fulfilling? These and other questions are addressed by Villard and Whipple in their book, *Beginnings in Relational Communication.*

The authors base their discussions on the "self-concept" of individuals involved in a relationship. They present identity as both a "monadic" or individual concept, and as a "dyadic" or relational concept. In a monadic sense, the self-concept represents the internalization of unique interpretations of cultural or group values. That is, the way we learn to view ourselves is a product of how important it is for us in our unique situations to subscribe to or hold our family's and other's particular interpretations of social reality. In a relational sense individual identity is a function of the extent that others verify and support one's self-perceptions *through their communication* with him/her. In effect, we are all highly dependent on others for our self-definitions and maintenance and change of those definitions. It is from a relational point of view that communication with others becomes important.

While the book is theoretical in its approach, it is appropriately illustrated with relevant examples, and it is written in easy-to-understand language. The theory it presents is easily applied to understanding relational communication. An example of this is the three dimensions used by Villard and Whipple to analyze messages. According to them, any communication from another contains the following three types of messages: (1) content message — simply the topic or subject of communication, easily identified by all of us; (2) relationship message—the

aspect of the communication that is concerned with the state of the relationship between the two people involved in the interaction; and (3) identity message—indicates how we perceive ourselves in relation to people in general. Any of us could benefit by listening more closely for what the other is saying about the topic, about the two of us, and about him/herself.

In addition to the above topics, the book contains chapters on relationship definitions, the communication of affection and control, relational development, relational conflict and relational maintenance (or growth). Overall, it provides a highly useful perspective for understanding a very important process with which we are highly concerned.