

Drew University Division of Religious Education

A STUDY
OF
PROTESTANT CHURCH SCHOOL LITERATURE
USED IN
1946

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOLUME I

General Considerations and Conclusions
Procedures, Attitudes Study
Vacation Church School Materials
Leadership Training Materials

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INTRODUCTION

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In 1934-35-36 a study was made of officially approved protestant church school materials entitled Jew-Christian Relationships as Found in Official Church School Materials. Certain outcomes of that study suggest the need for the examination of the present situation in regard to current types of church school materials to note any significant changes in the attitudes of editors, authors, or publishers.

The purpose, therefore, of the present study is to bring to light the current offerings of the denominational publishing houses for use by pupils in protestant church schools as these are concerned with inter-faith and inter-race relations. Because of present world conditions and their focus upon the racial and religious contacts especially in the U.S., the study has been limited to the Jew-Christian and Negro-White relations actually dealt with, or neglected, in the face of opportunity to deal therewith in protestant church school materials issued to the churches during the year 1946.

The study was set to embrace the materials issued for use by pupils and by teacher leaders in Sunday church schools, vacation church schools, leadership training schools, and for use by parents and by those unable to attend the church schools. It is clear that the best of materials in the hands of teacher-leaders or pupils of contrary mind have little likelihood of producing desirable outcomes. The decision to include an attempt to discover the attitudes of both young persons and adults in the area of inter-faith and inter-race was a natural sequitur of this fact.

The present study includes, too, a search of the more significant officially approved leadership training texts. The findings in this area are quite significant since these texts have interdenominational approval.

These two areas of the research project will provide food for the most serious thought and remedial planning by all who are responsible for, 1) curriculum production; 2) for training and supervision of teacher-leaders; 3) for the selection and training of ministers, missionaries, administrators; 4) for the study and organization of inter-group relations in the community; 5) for those who are charged with the selection of teachers and textual materials to be used in the home, in the public school, and in the church school.

The group engaged in the research as well as the individuals involved have had complete freedom in the selection,

use, and evaluation of the specific illustrations employed in the presentation of the observations made in each unit of the study.

The study herewith presented seemed inevitable. The European holocaust has focused world attention upon Jew-Christian and Negro-White relations both in state and church as well as in personal and group behavior.

Europe and America are presently faced with the necessity of realistic study of those factors in our social, political, economic, and religious activities which condition and represent the mind-set of individuals and groups.

Except in the public schools, it is safe to say that more persons are exposed to the teachings and teacher attitudes (such as they are) in the protestant churches of the United States than in any other formal groups. Within the church itself the church school as conducted on Sundays, weekdays during the school year, and the vacation church school probably reach more persons than any other agency.

These are the persons whom this study has in view and from whose angle all evaluations have been attempted. The constant query has been, What outcomes are likely to follow the use of this particular unit with the persons for whom it was prepared?

Almost immediately, as suggested above, it became evident that no such study could hope to offer any valid help to editors or lesson writers unless some data could be secured concerning teacher, pupil, pastor, parent, and laymen attitudes. Financial limitations made a social survey impossible. So it was determined to attempt to secure data which in the end proved to be equally valid and quite in line with the purposes of the study. This will be found in Volume I of the report.

The elementary field has been handled with comprehensive and meticulous care and merits thorough editorial study.

The youth field shows very rapidly increasing use of elective units and widespread development of youth discussion groups accompanied by less notable concomitant social action.

The adult field continues as the center of the social lag. Here are found the extremes of teacher attitudes. Current studies of young adults and the church evidence certain parallelisms between ministerial and lay adult leader inter-faith, inter-race attitudes.

Unless and until some procedures and curricular offerings in the leadership training field are modified in the over-under consideration, we cannot expect current teacher helps to prove too effective.

The materials provided by eight of the larger (numerically) denominations; materials approved by the International Council of Religious Education for use in leadership education and daily vacation church schools; also an independent inquiry as to current attitudes of clerical, lay, teacher, author, pupil, constitute the range of this study. Details will be found in connection with each unit of the report.

Editors, authors, publishers will be able to recognize, each his own materials by use of the key, known only to him and to the research staff. Thus all may see the whole picture, but only those materials issued by the editor's own office can be identified. Consequently, futile defense and invidious comparisons are avoided.

It is expected that editors and authors will take serious personal cognizance of all references to their own productions as well as to the general outcomes.

Copies of the report are provided for each participating editorial office.

Hearty appreciation is due to each of the editors who provided the staff with copies of their publications or arranged for subscriptions at the most advantageous rate. Some materials, of course, had to be purchased on the open market. The dependable results of the former studies readily secured cooperative relations with editors of the most significant denominational publications.

PROCEDURES

1. A working staff of fifteen --later seventeen --persons began with a series of discussions into which were brought members of other racial and faith groups for the purpose of clarifying conceptions, providing factual information, and destroying unwarranted impressions.
2. Notable Jewish rabbis, laymen and women, of both the Orthodox and the Liberal wings, and English speaking members of other racial and cultural groups were very effective in orientation.
3. Meantime numerous books, pamphlets, and periodicals were read by members of the working staff for information, insight and appreciation.
4. Having analyzed the project the staff set its limitations, approved its definitions, organized instruments for recording the references to be found in the study. It determined the categories which appear in connection with the study, and arranged for attendance upon a number of conferences held in this geographical area, which would further add to their personal equipment.
5. Editors and publishers were advised of the fact and general purpose of this study. Practically every publishing house approved by the committee evidenced its sympathetic cooperation by providing necessary issues of their various publications, several without subscription charges.
6. The working staff was divided into smaller units, each of which was made responsible for the materials falling within a certain age group. From time to time the entire staff was assembled for the solution of common difficulties and the elimination of overlapping or duplication. The report of the study is presented according to the various divisions. A list of the specific periodicals studied falling within each of these divisions will be mentioned at the beginning of the report covering such division. The names of publishing houses and a chart of the materials examined follows:

MATERIALS EXAMINED

Publishing Houses

- 1 Abingdon-Cokesbury
- 2 Beacon Press
- 3 Bethany Press
- 4 Cokesbury Press
- 5 Eden Publishing House
- 6 John Knox Press
- 7 Judson Press
- 8 Methodist Book Concern
- 9 Pilgrim Press
- 10 Southern Baptist Publication Society
- 11 Westminster Press

Curriculum Series	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Uniform	X		X				X		X	X	X
Group Graded	X		X				X		X		X
Closely Graded	X	X	X				X		X		
Elective Courses	X						X		X		
Childrens' Story Papers	X						X			X	X
Youth Story Papers	X						X		X	X	
Young Peoples' Magazines	X						X		X	X	X
Teachers' Mag.	X		X				X		X	X	X
Parents' Mag.	X		X				X		X		X
Vacation School Series	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X

Note--Details of materials examined in each series will be given in connection with age group reports in volumes II and III.

7. The presentation of the report in age group units was determined upon so that editors desiring to do so may refer the various sections to the corresponding members of their own staff. The report on the study of attitudes is presented in Volume I as a background for the age group reports.
8. A card record was made of each reference so that both those used for illustrative purposes in this report and the others from which the selection was made might be retained for any future use. These cards are available for use by any interested church editor or publisher, but obviously cannot be loaned out. Duplicate copies of the entire report are available at cost. It is to be understood, however, that although the references and quotations used illustrate rather fully the kinds of material found, the lists by no means include everything found and recorded. Nor is the number of references found under one head as compared with another to be taken as an index of relative quantity. Summaries and frequency tables are used for this purpose and will be found in the text.

The report is arranged in the following order:

Volume I

General Considerations and Conclusions
Procedures, Attitudes Study
Vacation Church School Materials
Leadership Training Materials

Volume II

Elementary Division Materials

Volume III

Young Peoples Division and Adult Division Materials

9. Emerging from this study are a number of specific observations and suggestions. Reference to these will be found included in each section of the report.
10. The Elementary Field, including Week-Day and Vacation Church School Materials, was under the skilled direction of Professor Eakin. The other areas were supervised by the chairman.
11. The organization and management of the attitudes survey and the multitudinous details of compilation and stenciling were under the direction of the secretary, Mary Young Ruffin. Robert and Doris Mitzel tabulated the returns.
12. The Drew University Mimeographing Office, directed by

Elizabeth Richard, handled the mimeographing. Mrs. O. G. Lawson of Rose Memorial Library, Drew University, bound the copies of the report.

13. The study group included the following persons:

Mildred Moody Eakin, Assistant Professor of Religious Education, Drew University

Malcolm V. Mussina, Director Wesley Foundation, Pennsylvania State College, Pennsylvania

Anna Boyce, Dean of Women, Tougaloo College, Mississippi

Robert R. Powell, Professor, Mount Union College, Ohio, and Mrs. Powell

Harold Utts, Supervisor National Council for Clinical Training, Greystone State Hospital, New Jersey

Robert A. Pollard, Pastor, Summit, New York

Wayne Hull, Pastor, Half Moon Circuit, Pennsylvania, and Mrs. Hull

Clarence Winans, Student Clinical Training, New Jersey State Hospital

Robert Eason, Pastor, Hillbrook, New Jersey, and Mrs. Eason

Robert Mitzel, Pastor, Port Morris, New Jersey, and Mrs. Mitzel

Miss Elaine Anderson, Drew University, Stenographer

Mrs. Irene N. Byers, Drew University, Stenographer

Mary Young Ruffin, Drew University and Port of N. Y. Authority, Secretary

James V. Thompson, Professor of Religious Education, Drew University, Chairman

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Especial thanks are due to the administration of Drew University for making possible the use of time by two members of the faculty and the necessary office space and equipment for the pursuit of the study.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Growing out of this study significant observations can be presented in the following generalizations.

In any comparison with the findings of former (1934-37) studies, certain factors become increasingly apparent.

1. The editors and lesson writers of today have in large measure eliminated undesirable direct references to minority groups.
2. Where direct treatment of inter-faith-inter-race relationship occurs for the most part these treatments are frank, fair, and wholesome. The major editorial problem this study has uncovered is that of silence.
3. Underneath practically all periodicals studied appears a basic assumption that the "white" people are somewhat superior to all their fellows. What these American protestant whites think, feel, and do, by subtle implication is offered as the criterion for individual and social action.
4. By the same token there is a notable consistent effort to offer American protestant white culture and the protestant white group that have developed it as the world's saviour.
5. There is in certain of the lesson series culpable ignorance of the rites, customs, ideals, and purposes, of other racial and cultural groups in our own midst. More intimate detail of the life of Chinese, Japanese, African, Mohammedan, and other races and faiths is known to both narrative and news writers than that of the American Jew, American Negro, American Indian, American Eskimo, Latin, or South American peoples, all of whom have a wealth of rich art, culture, and tradition to contribute to the life and culture of America. This, however, and happily is less evident than in the previous studies.
6. On the other hand it ought immediately to be said that there is an equally notable increase in the awareness shown by both editors and writers of this entire area of inter-faith, inter-culture, inter-race relations. Many exceedingly happy and constructive references will be found in the following pages. On the whole there is every reason for the apostle of understanding and active good will to feel gratified for the steady and rapid progress evidenced in the materials which this study has embraced.
7. It is confidently expected that the observed absence of

specific reference to Jews, Catholics, and Negroes, particularly, and on a less wide scale to the American Indian, Latin American and South American peoples, will be relieved by the increasing awareness of editors and writers of the fact that these peoples are actually in our midst, and are to themselves and to us, as well as we to them, genuine problems in understanding and behaviour.

8. There is a notable absence of reference particularly to the Jew as a modern person actually living among us and a part of our modern American life and times. To most writers the Jew seems to be a personage of Old Testament times.

9. Perhaps again the most striking observation in the field of printed materials is the failure to deal directly, frankly and fearlessly with specific human relations in American every-day living. Once and again authors and editors by-pass or slur over real opportunities for the application of the Christian principle. There is splendid exception to this in the more recent elective courses for young people.

10. It is the judgment of the working staff that there needs to be developed a group of narrative writers for children and young people, as well as for adults, who will set about deliberately to inform themselves of and present to their readers the rich cultural heritage possessed by the other-people-other-faith-groups within our midst.

11. Deliberate and constant effort should be made to do away with the pre-supposition that American Protestant whites are or ever should be the dominant people of the earth and that the heroes and heroines of stories for children and adolescents be pitched on a higher and more wholesome level in this respect.

12. Editors and publishers should plan to include many narrative and biographical sketches of the great figures among other faiths and races; and new treatments on a very much wider scale with particular reference to Jews, Catholics, Negroes, American Indians, Latin Americans, South American peoples whose place and participation in the life of our day were largely unnoticed in the materials which this study embraces. There were to be sure several notable exceptions to this fact.

13. The study group makes bold to suggest to the editors and publishers group, especially those with membership in the International Council, that at this period in our world history there is a particularly significant and demanding opportunity for the deliberate engendering in American Protestant children's, young peoples' and adult minds of new attitudes of expectation, of respect, of confidence, and appreciation for peoples of other faiths, colors, conditions, races, and cultures; and the

establishment of favorable prejudices toward all peoples as persons. All of which would be in harmony with the life and the teachings of Jesus. Certain editorial and lesson writer productions are already notably effective in this respect.

14. In the field of leadership training a whole new revision of basic philosophy is over due. This is particularly true in relation to the development of teacher attitudes.

USES TO WHICH THIS STUDY MIGHT BE PUT

1. It may be used by editors and publishers as an index of the impressions created by protestant church school printed materials upon sympathetic but skillful observing minds, and may thus serve as a basis for any desired change in emphases or other modifications.

2. It may be used as a basis for the instruction and information of prospective lesson writers.

3. It may be used as the point of departure for the formulation of official or unofficial editorial policies with reference to the matters under discussion.

4. It may prove a stimulus to other racial or cultural groups to make similar studies of the subject matter provided by their own publishers for class room use and pleasure reading of children, young people, and adults.

5. The attitudes section may be used as a hint in the direction of the actual outcomes accompanying the use of present curriculum production.

Being anonymous it is likely to prove more realistic than invective comparisons, and editors may use it in any desirable ways without fear of undesirable publicity.