did not read beyond the sixth-grade level. The authors felt that literature for parents of the lower socioeconomic level should not be higher than the sixth-grade level.

When the authors analyzed some of the health information literature used currently in the clinic, some of the instructions were written at an eleventh to twelfth grade level. A paragraph in Dr. Spock's best-selling book tested out at the ninth to tenth grade level. This means it is not comprehensible to half of their patients. The authors wonder if his reassuring tone may not come through even if the details are not well understood.

The nutrition educator should be sure that the materials being used are written at a level which is understandable to the audience for which it is intended.


The thesis of this article by Dr. Mann is that there are more persons in the U.S. malnourished because of nutritional ignorance and misinformation than because of inadequate incomes.

He asserts that nutrition problems cannot be solved by doles or food stamps, and he suggests, in order to clarify the real cause of malnutrition, surveyors should enumerate the incidence of signs of deficiencies in persons who can afford to have automobiles, television sets, and beer in the refrigerator but are too badly informed to select an adequate diet.

This editorial contains both Dr. Mann's analysis of how the dilemma of malnutrition amidst plenty has developed and his suggestions for its eventual eradication. He explains that one major cause is the disruption during the last 25 years of the traditional home situation whereby nutrition information is conveyed from mother to daughter. Convenience foods now enable a child to feed himself without parental guidance and, because of their expense, such items also dilute the effectiveness of marginal food budgets.

Furthermore, Dr. Mann states that the professional groups who have the responsibility for informing the public have failed to teach proper nutrition habits.

Home economists have been inef-fectual because their programs neither emphasize the type of information which is needed to improve nutritional status nor do they reach the majority of students or the general public.

The medical profession has not helped to alleviate the situation because often their training is inadequate or unrelated to the actual problems which need to be corrected in the population.

Dr. Mann proposes that the techniques which have proven so successful for the advertising industry in promoting sales should be re-oriented and adapted as agents for improving nutrition education. He points out that nutritionists should utilize television as a vehicle for teaching not only adult viewers but also the preschool child who does not have access to information now presented almost exclusively via newspapers or magazines. The author feels that these methods have contributed to the success of several recent major efforts to alter food habits in the U.S. which, in his opinion, have been misdirected.

In conclusion, the author offers three specific goals:

1) Nutrition science must be introduced and enlarged in elementary and secondary school curricula.
2) He advocates closer control of food advertising claims to conform with scientific fact.
3) He emphasizes the need to train doctors, nurses, dietitians, and teachers to be competent educators in this area of health protection.

Dr. Mann realizes that these measures offer little immediate effect, but he feels that they will alleviate the most basic cause of malnutrition, far more effectively than can the measures in current practice. He concedes that doles and food stamps, welfare and bad health, must suffice for the present poorly educated generation but he challenges his readers to address themselves to the more difficult, and more rewarding, task—a renaissance in nutrition education.

Kristen W. McNutt

Coming Events


For further information, write C. L. Willey, Institute of Food Technologists, Suite 2120, 221 N. LaSalle St., Chicago, Ill. 60601.


One-month fellowship for dietitians with approved internships and nutritionists with M.S. degrees in nutrition available.

For further information, contact Mary Ann Harvey, Ph.D., Chief of Nutrition, Child Development Center, 22 North Pauline, Memphis, Tenn. 38105.


For further information, write Food and Agricultural Organization, Via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy.

June 16-July 2, 1970—“Nutrition As A Behavioral Science,” University of Hawaii.

The three-credit course will focus on human behavior and its implications for the communication of nutrition information.

For further information, write Mrs. Audrey Maretzki, Department of Food and Nutritional Sciences, University of Hawaii, 2515 Campus Rd., Miller 110, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.


For further information, write American Home Economics Association, 1600 Twentieth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.


Undergraduates receive six hours of credit and graduates two to six hours of credit.

For information, contact Mrs. Bernice W. King, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, Pa. 15701.

Aug. 9-14, 1970—Third International Congress of Food Science and Technology, Washington, D.C.

The theme of the Congress is “Science of Survival.” The Congress—the first to be held in the United States—will seek to speed efforts to solve world food requirements. It is sponsored by USDA and the International Committee of Food Science and Technology. More than 3,000 food scientists and technologists from over 50 nations will attend the Congress. The program will include two plenary sessions, 12 symposiums, workshops, and special formal and informal discussion groups.

For further information, contact: Dr. W. A. Gortner, Secretariat, SOS/70—Third International Congress of Food Science and Technology, USDA, Beltsville, Md. 20705.