

PROFESSORS

He Wrote the Textbook

Some real-life professors fall into their jobs as neatly as Rex Harrison became Professor Iggins. For a political scientist there is no better post than running the new Kennedy institute at Harvard, where politicians and scholars will meet to discuss the theory and exercise of power. Last week it found its Iggins. Harvard's President Nathan Pusey gave the job to Columbia Professor Richard Neustadt, 45, who has thought a great deal about intellect and politics.

How to Be On Top. In his book *Presidential Power*, Neustadt explored "the classic problem of the man on top in any political system: how to be on top in fact as well as name." Ultimately, says Neustadt, "presidential power is the power to persuade." The purpose of intellect in a President is to make others "believe that what he wants of them is what their own appraisal of their responsibilities requires them to do."

The son of a New Deal Social Security official, Neustadt inherited an allegiance to the Democratic Party and a proneness to Washington service. He got into the Government in 1942 as an OPA official, came back to Washington in 1946, after a Navy stint, to become an assistant to the Director of the Budget. "I'm a second-generation bureaucrat," he says without apology. After the Eisenhower sweep, Neustadt went first to Cornell as an assistant professor of public administration, then in 1954 he joined the Columbia Department of Government. A lively lecturer and wit, he had more students than there were seats in his class, with late arrivals parked on the floor.



NEUSTADT

President + mistake = 200,000 copies.

Enhancing Politics. In the 1960 presidential primary fight, Neustadt backed Hubert Humphrey until Humphrey's defeat in West Virginia, then switched to another loser, Lyndon B. Johnson. It was only in September 1960 that he joined the Kennedy team, outlining in a memorandum the matters to which a President-elect should attend between November and inauguration. Fascinated with the mystique of power, Kennedy had read Neustadt's book and told newsmen how impressed he was. This was a mistake, says Neustadt. A President should never admit that others are telling him how to run the presidency—it damages his image. "However, it increased my royalties," Neustadt admits. The book sold 200,000 copies.

In his Columbia office in Manhattan last week, Neustadt defined the importance of the Kennedy institute. "It is an attempt to enhance the profession of politics," he said. "Universities educate agronomists and businessmen. Nothing comparable has been done for the elected official, the most important functionary in our society."

TEACHING

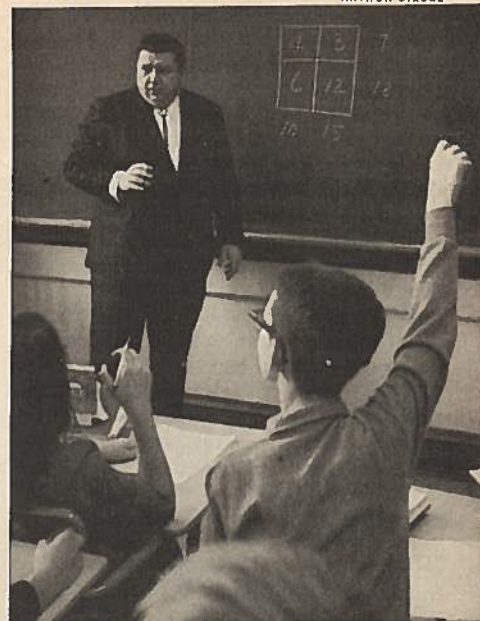
The Trials of New Math

On their first day in second grade, 200 Urbana, Ill. schoolchildren were told to add 19 and 3. None got it; a large and desperate proportion of them answered "112," apparently thinking "9 plus 3 is 12, carry 1 and bring down 1." The kids were then asked how many cookies they would own if, having 19, they were given 3 more. Nearly every child said "22."

Old math is rote learning of unexplained rules ("carrying," for instance); new math tries to cut away mystery by making computation seem real, open and understandable. New math is here to stay. But, as many a baffled parent suspects, the teaching of it is in deep confusion. Max Beberman, the Illinois professor who has been urging new math on the U.S. for a decade, is now "very much disturbed."

25,000 Popsicle Sticks. "We're in danger of raising a generation of kids who can't do computational arithmetic," says Beberman. He still favors new math, when properly taught, as strongly as ever; one of his ideas is that the first purchase of equipment for elementary-school math classes should be 25,000 Popsicle sticks, to let children deal with tangible things because "enumeration systems are ways of talking about physical objects."

But the current confusion and frustration in new-math teaching do not stem from any lack of Popsicle sticks. The heart of the matter, as James Gates, executive secretary of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, points out, is that most of the nation's 1,600,000 elementary-school teachers



BEBERMAN & SEVENTH-GRADERS

19 cookies + 3 cookies still = 22.

are insufficiently trained to teach math—either new or old. Many teachers who spend a fifth of their workday on math have not taken any math courses themselves since the ninth grade.

The hazard in teaching new math is that its basic concepts—sets, number systems not based on ten, lattices—require profound comprehension by teachers, which usually entails plenty of upgrading study. Professor Robert Wirtz, an associate of Beberman's at the University of Illinois, visited more than 100 elementary schools all over the U.S. and reported: "The teachers I found are frightened. They don't understand the new math or why they are supposed to teach it."

The Trick: Go Slow. Some school systems have caught on to the problem and worked out ways to overcome it. A Detroit official says the trick is to go slow: "We began five years ago with only twelve schools and a handful of teachers, and have no target date for all our 225 elementary schools." Now 78 of Detroit's schools teach new math in Grades 4, 5 and 6. Of the 3,500 teachers in the system, 700 have attended new-math seminars and courses on Saturdays, encouraged by \$15-a-day payments. Aggravating the shortage of new-math teachers is the fact that not enough new-math courses are offered at universities and teachers colleges.

Beberman says: "The old system was deadly—drill, drill, drill. What I'd like to do is take all these people who say, 'Let's have new math, let's get it into the schools,' and shake them up and say, 'First let's make sure the teachers who are going to teach it know what's going on.'" Badly taught, new math plants confused concepts and creates individuals who cannot even keep their check stubs figured, and Beberman never intended that. "The key thing is computation," he says.