

government, the authors note. In the contemporary period, as Special Education students are being integrated into classrooms out of a combination, it would seem, of progressive liberal initiative and cost-cutting efficiency, the rapid growth of private schools harkens a new avenue for class discrimination. The book concludes with a chapter articulating a programme for change which is broad, well-reasoned, and largely based on existing initiatives such as criterion-referenced, community-controlled assessment processes and family groupings of grades.

I argued at the outset that *Stacking the Deck's* case study of only one province does not present a crippling limitation. If relevance to our own experience is a criterion, this Canadian study is more worthwhile than most existing alternatives. Three other limitations of the text are at least equally unsettling. First, many of the Canadian studies the authors cite for corroboration or reference are dated. Second, primary research conducted for the book relied upon interviews alone—no participant observation was conducted to enrich our understanding of the ways in which “subtle streaming” (pp. 70-77) actually takes place in contemporary classrooms. Both of these limitations highlight the need for more ethnographic research on class reproduction in Canadian schooling. Third, probably because the book was not published primarily for an academic audience, there is no clear description of the group from which the interviews were taken. This has implications for our judgements concerning

representativeness, for example. These problems notwithstanding, the body of knowledge presented here establishes without question that the preservation of class inequality is a systemic feature of Ontario and, perhaps, all Canadian schooling. Ethical grounds aside, can we afford this waste of human potential?

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Robert H. MacDonald. *Sons of the Empire: The Frontier and the Boy Scout Movement, 1890-1918.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993. Pp. 258. \$35.00 Cdn cloth.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, many middle-class Britons were concerned about the apparent degeneracy of the nation's citizens. The working class, many believed, was ungodly, foreign, and increasingly uncontrollable; Britain's youth, and particularly its boys, were becoming “soft, and perhaps even effeminate” (p. 21). In an attempt “to save a generation of boys from godlessness and degeneracy” (p. 12) and to reinvigorate the nation, a number of organizations were established to promote “virility, discipline, love of nature, Christianity, patriotism [and] imperialism” (p. 12) among young British boys. *Sons of the Empire* is, in part, the story of the Boy Scout movement, the organization that by skilfully using the marketplace and the press became the most successful

and influential boys' club in Great Britain.

The *Sons of the Empire* is not a social history of the Boy Scouts or a biography of Robert Baden-Powell, however. Rather, it is a study of how many middle-class Britons used myths of an heroic past to respond to anxieties about their nation's present and its future. Relying extensively on a wide range of contemporary sources, including newspapers, personal and military memoirs, and the Boy Scouts' own texts, MacDonald explores both the intellectual foundations of the scouting movement and how the complex and often contradictory messages put forth by Baden-Powell—of the need to develop self-sufficient, strong, adventurous, individualistic young men who at the same time conformed to certain middle-class standards of behaviour and morals and unquestioningly obeyed their superiors—were brought together within the scouting ethos.

"A myth," Robert MacDonald asserts, "has its own life. It is born; it becomes weak; [then] phoenix like, it regenerates" (p. 203). Part I of *Sons of the Empire* explores the intellectual basis of Baden-Powell's scouting movement—the late-nineteenth-century myths of the imperial frontier and of those men who lived there. Despite the harsh realities of life on the frontier, it was the romantic image of the explorer, the cowboy, the miner, and the frontier policeman, as presented first in Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking* saga and later in Rudyard Kipling's *Lost Legion*, that had captured the imagination of late nineteenth-century Britons. MacDonald persuasively ar-

gues that the self-reliant, tough, and adventurous frontiersman "was an obvious model" (pp. 60-61) for Britons, concerned about the state of the nation's youth, to try to emulate. Removed from mothers, sisters, home, and the complexities of commerce and sex, it was in the wilds of Africa or like Buffalo Bill Cody of the North American west that boys became "real" men.

MacDonald then illustrates how the heroic myths of the frontiersman-adventurer became personified for the British public in the image of Boer War hero, Robert Baden-Powell. The exploits of the man who came to be known as "The Wolf Who Never Slept" captured the attention of a British public that was desperately seeking some semblance of victory in the morass of the South African war. MacDonald persuasively traces the "making" of the adventurer-hero by a press that elaborated the story of the seven-month siege of Mafeking and in the end invented Baden-Powell as a mythical gentleman-scout. By the time the hero of Mafeking began to write *Scouting for Boys* in 1908, MacDonald concludes, Baden Powell "believed in his own legend" (p. 114).

Part II of *Sons of the Empire* illustrates how Baden-Powell was able to wed British boys' desires for adventure and his beliefs that young men should be hardy, self-sufficient, disciplined, and obedient. Ironically, those boys Baden-Powell had considered most at risk in Edwardian England usually shunned the scouting movement. Working-class families not only could not afford the accoutrements of scouting but many distrusted Baden-Powell's overtly middle-class values and

his imperialist, militaristic message. Despite this, by 1914 hundreds of thousands of boys had responded to the adventure promised by scouting stories and rituals and had accepted the essentially conservative message of self-discipline, the work ethic, and the need for order. Indeed, MacDonald argues that by the beginning of the war, scouting had become a patriotic institution which was linked in the public mind to images of the nation, the King, and the flag, and "to hope, faith and charity" (p. 195).

Sons of the Empire is a skilful and persuasive textual and historical analysis of the interplay of mythmaking, individual, and collective beliefs and how these became popularized through newspapers and literature. It is unfortunate that the demands of modern publishing do not permit any extensive discussion of differing interpretations and interesting asides in what are at times very sparse and, to this reader, often unsatisfying end-notes. Moreover, though MacDonald does contrast the myth of Baden-Powell, the master scout of Mafeking, with the "reality" of the siege, he does not engage in a similar discussion with respect to other "heroes" of the time, notably Fred Burnham, the other "most famous scout of the Empire" (p. 64).

More dissatisfying to this reader is that the second part of the study, the making of the boy scouts, does not consistently illustrate all the intellectual themes so carefully developed in Part One. MacDonald states that *Sons of the Empire* is "a study of masculine ideology" (p. 6). In part, the story of the boy scouts is the story of creating,

or perhaps re-creating, appropriate models of "masculinity." The frontier was, after all, a man's world. To Baden Powell, recreating the frontier, through the scouts, was a way to meet "the crisis in masculinity" (p. 17) which was striking British society. Unfortunately, MacDonald does not explicitly pursue how Baden-Powell's and the public's notion of masculinity were translated in the Boy Scout movement itself. For example, what were boys' relationships to their mothers, their sisters, and other girls/women supposed to be? How did scouting cope with sexuality? How did the mythology of the boy scouts with respect to manliness compare to the mythology of womanliness (if one existed) that was being promoted in the new girl guide movement?

Such reservations aside, *Sons of the Empire* is a fascinating study of ideas in action and a welcome addition to our understanding of the creation and use of myths in responding to apparent social ills and anxieties.

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Michael C. Coleman. *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993. Pp. 230. \$37.50 cloth.

This book intrigues at first sight, with its cover a field of faces from the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. Little girls to grown men at first seem similar but become so real it is