

alternative ways of seeing and acting, should be a central element of this model, for it is only from this liberation from the dead hand of the past, as Marx reminded us long ago, that agency and independent action arise. At the end of reading *Present to Past*, one is left wanting more—separate essays, for example, on language issues, on special education, and on middle schools, topics that are raised, but not elaborated. But this is a sign that Allison has indeed hit upon a mode of discourse that makes sense as a way to illuminate the present by clear-eyed examination of the past.

At the end of his introductory essay Allison makes one of his only editorial injunctions, encouraging teachers to consider the rewards and dangers of finding “your own way of becoming a teacher who challenges the traditional purposes of the public schools” (p. 21). Readers of Allison’s *Present and Past* will find much to aid them in that consideration.

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Eric W. Ricker and B. Anne Wood, eds., *Historical Perspectives on Educational Policy in Canada: Issues, Debates and Case Studies*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press, 1995. Pp. 298. Can\$24.95 paper.

This volume is a tribute to the tenacity of the editors, the authors of the sixteen essays and commentaries, and the Canadian History of Education Association/ Association canadienne d’histoire de l’éducation (CHEA/ACHE). The papers are drawn from the program of the Fourth Biennial CHEA/ACHE Conference held in Halifax, Nova Scotia 17–19 October 1986. That almost ten years has passed between presentation of the papers and their publication is attributable, the editors explain, to “funding and technical problems” (p. xv).

The delay forced editors and authors to make difficult choices and to deal with two major challenges. The first was to re-think the purpose of the book. The initial idea was to publish the complete proceedings of the conference. That goal, unfortunately, proved unattainable. Instead, the editors present readers with sixteen essays and commentaries, organized around seven themes. A second challenge had to do with revisions. Over the intervening decade, in the course of their teaching and research, many of the authors have significantly extended the themes outlined in their papers. The editors chose to publish “the exact same papers that were delivered at the conference” as a “record of the conference rather than to risk a further publication delay by asking the contributors to revise or update their work” (p. xiii). The editors state that it is their belief “that the long delay has not diminished the value of [the contributors’]

work and that historians especially will recognize that the chapters in this collection more usefully fill many gaps in the literature of Canadian educational history" (p. xv). The editors are correct in their assessment.

The first two essays in the collection challenge historians to reconceptualize their approach (or lack thereof) to the relationship between educational policy and history. In "Historians and the Study of Educational Policy: An Overview," the volume's co-editor sets a context for the essays. Ricker asks, "What does it mean to study educational policy from a historical perspective?" answering the question through a review of the "three major reappraisals of educational historiography in the past three decades." He critically observes that for some historians, policy is still equated with "a great man's personality . . . something to be described and glorified, rather than analyzed" (pp. 3-4). Identifying the inherent challenges and reasons which mitigate against its implementation, Ricker argues for "injecting history into the policy-making process" (p. 12) in order to assist in "exposing weak historical arguments for what they so often are—the 'mental baggage' of personal experience untested against a proper consideration of facts and circumstances" (p. 14).

Ricker categorizes the essays in the volume by their authors' analyses of policy and policy making. He divides them among three groupings: "admirable eclecticism" (Curtis and Gidney/Millar); theory or hypothesis testing (Love and Sheehan); and "mildly Baillynesque . . . practitioners of the traditional narrative style . . . they describe and to some extent **analyze** policy on a broad canvas but they do not concern themselves with conceptual frameworks or theoretical perspectives" (the rest) (p. 8). This framework serves as a provocative and useful tool for analysis.

The second paper, Harold Silver's keynote address, "Policy Problems in Time," calls historians to an active role in the interdisciplinary field of policy analysis, using "policy as focus" (p. 37). Silver uses the persistent issue of educational reform as an example of how historical analysis of educational policy can inform current practice. His 1986 arguments ring true today. His call for an analysis of educational conservatism is only beginning to elicit a response.

The three papers in the section "Policy Advocacy versus Policy History: The Higher Education Debate" (J. L. Granatstein, "The Great Brain Robbery: Two Years Later"; Paul Axelrod, "Romancing the Past: Nostalgic Conservatism, The Great Brain Robbery and The History of Education"; Michael Cross's commentary on the two papers), remain timely. Although Granatstein responds to challenges, Cross observes that "what it is he wants" (p. 80) remains unclear. Axelrod finds the work goes "well beyond the bounds of reasoned criticism and into the world of reactionary idealism" (p. 70) and reminds educational historians and policy makers to "treat the work with the

seriousness it deserves" (p. 70), as it has both historical antecedents and heirs. Cross presents a fine analysis of both papers, which though cast with humour, contains significant criticisms of each and raises thought-provoking questions. This is perhaps the one section of the volume where I especially wanted the authors to reflect upon their work in light of current crises in universities across Canada.

The section entitled "Assessing Significant Policy Ideas and Goals: Discipline and Merit" contains the work of Bruce Curtis, Robert Gidney and Wyn Millar, and a commentary by William Hare. The essays by Curtis and by Gidney and Millar show how far these authors have come since 1986. Curtis explores physical punishment and pedagogical theory in England from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Gidney and Millar link schooling and "merit." In his commentary, William Hare challenges the conclusions reached by the authors of both papers. I wonder what his reaction would be to their subsequent works.

The two papers and commentary in "Church and State: Changing Policy and Roles" contribute to our understanding of Anglican education in Lower Canada (Réal Boulianne) and Presbyterian mission work among the Cape Breton miners in the early years of the twentieth century (Michael Owen). Tom Sinclair-Faulkner's thoughtful and challenging commentary asks what historians of religion can contribute to our analysis of the history of education, and presents the challenges of interdisciplinary study.

The essays in the final three sections of the volume are presented without commentaries. William Hamilton's "Playing at Universities," which examines political and educational reform in Nova Scotia 1828-38, is paired with James Love's analysis of arguments for free schools in nineteenth-century Canada. Love applies Leo Johnson's change theory model to the free school reform movement of the Maritimes and Eastern Canada. Love concludes that the model has "potency," and suggests that it offers a perspective different from that of Alison Prentice, Susan Houston, and Bruce Curtis. Love argues that "nationalist concerns were as important as social concerns in shaping reformers' goals" (p. 224). In the next section, John Lyons examines educational developments in Saskatchewan from 1885 to 1964, especially curriculum and, more centrally, teacher education. In light of current discussions on the professional status of teachers and the development of the Ontario College of Teachers, Lyon's paper once again serves to remind us of the strong links between historical policy and contemporary practice. Nancy Sheehan uses the hypothesis of Arthur Marwick that "war has brought about changes beneficial to the societies involved" (p. 253) to analyze the impact of World War I on educational policy in English Canada, with specific reference to curriculum and teacher certification. She concludes that "the real legacy of the war was

not change but a pervasive sense of complacency that helped forestall significant reform" (p. 271). The volume's final paper, "The Visions of Ordinary Participants," by J. D. Wilson, presents an analysis of rural teaching conditions in British Columbia after World War I as a means to explore the relationship between policy intention and outcomes. He argues that the perspective of teachers and parents presents insight not only into the lives of teachers and the condition of program delivery, but also into larger issues in rural society.

Educational Policy in Canada is a useful addition to any history of education book collection. Although it presents a cross-Canada scan of policies and their resulting practices, the omission of papers dealing with French-Canadian education is regrettable. The record of this 1986 conference is a valuable benchmark from which future generations of historians can identify emerging trends. In addition, the editors have presented readers and conference organizers with an interesting model. The inclusion of commentaries provides readers with another perspective from which to examine the essays. Yet the editors' experience with a lengthy publication process also points to a challenge: how can we as a profession quickly produce conference proceedings to ensure the literature remains current? With recent funding cuts, this problem is going to become more serious.

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Jean Barman, Neil Sutherland, and J. Donald Wilson, eds., *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia*. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1995. Pp. xiii, 425. Can\$28.95 paper.

Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia exemplifies the high level of scholarship and research in education foundations programs in Canada today. The editors of this anthology—Jean Barman, Neil Sutherland, and Don Wilson—are well known to readers of this journal. In their many publications, and through their contributions at national and international scholarly meetings, they have been major influences in the field of education history. Their influence can be seen in the work of their students, some of whom have written or co-written essays in this book.

This is an attractive book. The front cover features a painting by the noted Canadian artist E. J. Hughes. The painting, in bright, bold colours, depicts Maple Bay, on Vancouver Island, the site of one of British Columbia's first public schools (North Cowichan, 1870). But if readers think schooling and childhood a century ago was as bright and as sunny as the Hughes picture, they