

There is no question that Green has made an important contribution to scholarship in emphasizing the dynamic relationship of state/civil society/education. States played an integrative, formative role in the direction of educational systems. But that role is much clearer in the ultimate organization of schooling than it is for its foundation. That is my fundamental disagreement with the thesis of this book. The State's role has been integrative rather than formative, as I argue (with Raymond Grew) for France in *School, State and Society: The Growth of Elementary Schooling in the Nineteenth-Century France—A Quantitative Study* (1991). Green refers to enrolment figures and to legislation without ever deciding which is crucial. He concedes that demand came from below in the United States. But it did in France as well. Compulsory schooling legislation in both France and Canada, as well as in most states in the U.S.A., crowned long-standing trends toward full enrolment and merely brought truants into the system. To use an example that Green cites—3,000 (actually a bit less) of France's 37,000 communes lacked a school in the 1840s. That is true enough. But the obverse is that 92% of French communes had a school. Only the tiniest ones lacked a school with the result that less than one-half of one per cent of French children lacked a nearby school then. More than 80% of these hamlets had a school before any national legislation required one. Moreover, the private sector of secondary schooling actually increased, not decreased, between 1850 and 1870.

National legislation promoted schooling, regulated it, supervised it, created uniformity, even defined it, but it did not provide the initial impetus which derived from social forces and private initiative.

A book of this scope is bound to provoke disagreement over one or another interpretation and specialists will be able to point to scholarship that Green has missed, but that should not detract from his book's importance. It is learned, thought-provoking, and well-written.

Patrick J. Harrigan  
University of Waterloo

**M. Apple and L. Christian-Smith, eds.** *The Politics of the Textbook*. New York: Routledge, 1991. Pp. 290. \$45.00 U.S. cloth, \$14.95 paper.

Textbooks have been a fact of school life for ages. Yet despite their widespread use in schools the study of textbooks and other curriculum materials is a fairly recent phenomenon. One of the key researchers in this area is Michael Apple, whose insightful analyses have made the study of the textbook a scholarly enterprise. In this collection, he and Linda Christian-Smith offer the reader a variety of essays relevant to the study of curriculum materials. Each is premised on the obvious fact that "[texts] signify—through their content and form—particular constructions of

reality, particular ways of selecting and organizing that vast universe of possible knowledge" (p. 3).

The first chapter is a recapitulation of much of what Apple has argued in previous publications. He and Christian-Smith provide the reader with a broad overview of some of the educational history and issues related to the politics of the textbook. They claim that the major issue is not *what* knowledge to teach, but *whose* knowledge to teach. The authors are correct in stating that the important questions are who chooses what knowledge to teach—a question of power—and what impact the chosen knowledge has on learners.

Having set the stage, the authors devote the rest of the book to more detailed analyses. The first, by Apple, is a thorough account of the textbook publishing industry. Using a conceptual framework which he admits is difficult to unpack, he raises extremely important questions and calls for more empirical research on how a textbook actually gets written, produced, marketed, selected, and finally used in a classroom. Some of this research and some of the questions raised by Apple are the focus of Christian-Smith's chapter on computers, gender, and publishing. Reviewing the impact of technology on publishing, the author raises concerns about the "de-skilling" of workers, especially women workers.

The problems raised in the introductory chapter concerning state textbook adoption procedures and the impact these have on the form and content of the textbook are the subject of Marshall's chapter. He traces the

labyrinth of political procedures in Texas and presents his findings on the number and types of influences which impinge on the selection of textbooks. This is a disquieting chapter as it demonstrates how far educators lag behind the publishers and the "textbook protesters" in understanding and using state adoption procedures to obtain learning materials which are truly educative.

Of recent concern in curriculum materials evaluation is the question of how race, class, and gender are portrayed. Sleeter and Grant present an analysis of forty-seven textbooks widely used in grades 1-8 in five subject areas. Their analysis is as disquieting as that in the previous chapter. While the use of sexist language has been reduced, negative portrayals of ethnic minorities, women, the poor, and the physically handicapped still remain.

When I first perused this book, it was with the intention of selecting a text for a graduate course in Curriculum Development. Despite the U.S. context, the first six chapters are indeed grist for this mill. Other chapters are too highly specialized and esoteric for my purposes, but they would appeal to readers with other interests. Taxel's review of the work of Mildred Taylor is such a chapter. Taylor wrote fiction from an African-American point of view, covering such topics as unions, resistance, slavery, and even breeding slaves for sale. Taxel's emphasis is on "oppositional texts." And it is to an oppositional curriculum that Teitelbaum turns his attention in his chapter on American Socialist Sunday Schools in the early

1900s. This is an extremely dense account, as is Luke's chapter on the Catholic reconstruction of Dick and Jane. Luke provides a short history of the relationship between religion and textbooks, carries out a linguistic and sociological analysis of Dick and Jane, and shows how the American dream portrayed in these basal readers was adapted for Catholic audiences. From the sublime, we move to Christian-Smith's chapter on adolescent romance fiction and how particular notions of femininity are portrayed.

These specifically focussed chapters are followed by Aronwitz and Giroux's chapter on "Textual Authority, Culture and the Politics of Literacy." This is a devastating and well-reasoned attack on the conservatism of Bloom and Hirsch. It deserves to be read by more than those who choose to read about the politics of the textbook.

The last two chapters have a more international focus. The one by Altbach outlines how multi-national publishing houses have influenced textbook production in third-world countries, in most cases negatively, and the role of such organizations as UNESCO and the IEA. The last chapter, by Jules, is a history of textbook development in Grenada from 1979 to 1983. This is a fascinating account of how the newly established government tried to revolutionize people through the development of curriculum materials.

This book is worth reading by anyone who is interested in the past or present state of curriculum materials. It is obviously true that the knowledge presented in these is selected and

moulded by those in power and it is to the editors' credit that they have compiled this collection. However, the perennial question in education remains—whose knowledge should we teach? The contributors to this book clearly identify the problems and issues; the task now is to identify solutions which are educationally defensible.

Ian Wright

The University of British Columbia

**Margaret Whitehead, ed. *They Call Me Father: Memoirs of Father Nicolas Coccola*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1988. Pp. ix, 203, illus. \$29.95 cloth, \$15.95 paper.**

With its introduction in 1975 of editor Dorothy Blakey Smith's *The Recollections of Doctor John Sebastian Helmken*, the University of British Columbia Press launched a stimulating new series, recently retitled *The Pioneers of British Columbia*, and numbering nine volumes to date. Provincial history buffs will welcome this attractive collection. Those who teach may also learn from it about the institutions and circumstances of a developing province that in the broadest sense educated its population. Skilfully edited by Margaret Whitehead, *They Call Me Father* is volume seven in the series.