

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.

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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.

Whitehead confronts a considerable editorial challenge. On the one hand, there is high romance. Corsican missionary Nicolas Coccola, O.M.I., spent over sixty adventuresome years among Interior Salish, Kutenai, and Athapascan peoples. Not surprisingly, his account emphasizes missionary progress. On the other hand, Whitehead is aware of mounting disenchantment within as well as outside aboriginal communities over past missionary endeavours tarnished by intrusions ranging from lifestyle demands antithetical to native custom, to inexcusable forms of personal abuse. Faced with readers both receptive and sceptical in missionary matters, she must strive for balance.

Vital to Whitehead's presentation of the Coccola memoirs is a substantial annotated introduction signalling her close attention to historical/anthropological context. Following brief biographical details, she looks at European missionaries in general: their inter and intradenominational rivalry, failure to comprehend native Indian subsistence economy, and strategies based on presumed superiority of white culture and Christian religion. In a section on Indian response, she shows that different groups reacted differently but that in each case, eventual proselytization appeared possible to some degree. She also examines that embodiment of educational absolutism, the residential school, where Indian children "were taught to reject their own culture or, at least, to see it as inferior" (pp. 61-62).

Besides writing a trenchant introductory essay, Whitehead strengthens her editorial authenticity in several ad-

ditional ways. Her short preface acknowledges a preference for Coccola's original pencil manuscript, points to its mechanical and linguistic peculiarities, and refers to editorial procedures aimed at enhancing reader convenience without sacrificing initial tone. She furnishes excellent photographs allowing glimpses of provincial life long past and creating a mood both hopeful and somber. She supports Coccola's text with discursive notes explaining its more obscure passages, identifying anonymous persons, explaining ecclesiastical terms and technicalities, expanding on sketchy portions, and supplying local colour. As well, she includes an updated bibliography and a workable index.

The memoirs themselves make fascinating reading. Jagged though his style at first appears, Coccola commands a confident narrative line, a first-person delivery uncluttered by false humility, and the will to resist descriptive affectations. Beginning in 1854 at his Corsican birthplace, he reviews his preparation at the Grand Seminary of Ajaccio, ordination in France, arrival at Victoria in 1888, and subsequent residence in or journeys through Nicola, Kootenay, Columbia, Selkirk, Rocky Mountain, Cariboo, Nechako, Bulkley, and Skeena country. As he grapples with the language problems, physical afflictions, and spiritual perplexities of hinterland missionary existence, he depicts a province experiencing relentless economic and social change associated with settlement and land speculation, resource exploitation, and lengthening rail, road, water, and

telegraph communication lines that redefine human encounters. His story closes in 1934 when, at age 80, he becomes chaplain of the Sacred Heart Hospital, Smithers.

As one peruses the Coccola memoirs, their author's missionary priorities, educational in the widest meaning of that word, are readily identifiable. First, throughout his story Coccola stresses his commitment to spreading Roman Catholic Christianity among his native Indian charges. Central to this undertaking are churches—indispensable meeting places and compelling religious symbols. He writes approvingly about their construction, repair, adornment, and occupation. He points to the sacraments bestowed within their precincts, the liturgy that lends them their aura, the social energy that fills and envelops them. Second, Coccola alludes to schools as urgent to his missionary scheme. Not that he expects to "exact much application in the classroom, for confinement is hard on...children" (p. 125). Nor does he escape administrative setbacks. Federal government replies to his requests for funds prove infrequent, irregular, and slow. A day school closes "for want of a teacher" (p. 166). Another manages "only a small attendance" (p. 170). A hoped-for industrial school faces endless delays on account of Ottawa's "preoccupation with the war" (p. 173). But Coccola perseveres. A residential school at last gets under way despite parents "doing nothing towards...education unless coaxed and threatened" (p. 175). Other schools, too, emerge from the text as well-attended components of

the mission. Third, Coccola's recital is steeped in the supposition that spiritual regeneration among native Indians is best achieved through their adopting unaccustomed occupations and alternative values. They must cultivate the land, raise stock, even prospect for minerals. They must also espouse thrift, dependability, and other abstracts dear to prospering whites, particularly the notion of future security through present exertion. Such themes occasionally betray Coccola's frustrations. At these junctures, remonstrance can be harshly self-centred. "When I was under the burning sun making hay," he declares to unconcerned villagers, "you were flying around looking for fun, now you walk, I ride" (p. 118).

Readers will doubtless appreciate Whitehead's historical even-handedness. Her posture toward Coccola is neither patronizing nor hagiolatrous. She sees him as an ordinary man doing things ordinary for his time and persuasion. So, too, with native Indian culture. Her understanding of its depth and of the shocks it unquestionably sustained at its intersection with white settlement rests upon impressive scholarship. Yet her portrayal of native Indians remains uncomplicated, revealing an indigenous people capable of selecting from among aspects of post-contact existence those attributes that best suit their interests. In either case—missionary and Indian—documentation encompasses references both sympathetic and adversarial. She does not moralize over critical issues such as the advent of railroads, alcohol, and disease, changing concepts of work, or forced school

attendance. Nor does she minimize their impact. Rather, her attempt is to say what happened and explain why. Her focus is on missionary experience. But her categories are not so rigid as to exclude complementary roles for missionary and Indian in a white society undergoing radical transformation—missionary, that is, as farmer, prospector, labour negotiator, medico, social worker, and political lobbyist; Indian as guide, interpreter, teacher of survival skills, trader, packer, and provisioner. In short, by controlling her level of abstraction, Whitehead allows a well-rounded account of believable people facing believable predicaments with which one can readily empathize.

Even-handedness, of course, has its limitations. For instance, as its title implies, *They Call Me Father* strongly reflects the paternalistic attitudes of missionaries toward their pupils, attitudes Whitehead at length seems obliged to appraise and chooses to defend. She rehearses principal objections of more recent times. Paternalism can be blamed "for destroying Indian culture and encouraging Indian dependency" (p. 72); and because of it, there remain among native people "bitter memories of some missionaries and some aspects of...schooling" (p. 73). To these arguments, Whitehead offers three replies—that in the past, paternalism was taken for granted by missionary and native Indian alike; that then, as now, father/child relationships in a religious setting are not necessarily demeaning; and that in any event, native people also recall certain sides of missionary upbringing with affection and gratitude.

Though Whitehead's first two responses are well taken, it is likely that readers will be less comfortable with her third. For one thing, her evidence regarding native Indian impressions favourable to missionaries and missionary schools finally (pp. 73, 86, note 299) stands on personal contacts with four native respondents, conversations with others at a particular native settlement, and Imbert Orchard's interview with Chief Clarence Joe, apposite documentation, to be sure, but scarcely conclusive. For another thing, Whitehead's sanguine assessment of native encounters with former missionary teachers seems starkly disjunctive with more recent estimations. For instance, at the Vancouver Conference on Indian Residential Schools, June 19-22, 1991, attempts to heal old wounds by the same token confirmed that old wounds cut very deeply indeed. Further, some readers may contend that among native peoples experiencing renewed pride in their traditional ways, these old wounds linger, still prompting, even inspiring, comprehensive efforts in aid of land claim settlement, cultural self-reliance, judicial independence, political autonomy, and constitutional representativeness.

Just the same, to say certain readers may accept Whitehead's editorial conclusions with some hesitation is not to suggest that *They Call Me Father* is either wrongheaded or irrelevant to present debate. It is mainly to observe that it is not a political work but an historical document brought alive by an imaginative editor with the good sense neither to upstage her central subject nor to trivialize the

lives of those with whom he intermingles. In fact, Whitehead has produced a complete book whose historical description and analysis of important cultural and educational issues

will attract both lay and academic readers, whatever their political stripe.

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