origins of the philosophical rupture of the 1930s.

In his concluding chapter Mellouki suggests that future research projects should examine the repercussions of the Parent Commission's recommendations concerning teacher training in the period after 1966. He also points out the interest of analysing the evolution of the various new professional groups, such as guidance counsellors, which emerged during the period. Other avenues, beyond the scope of the present study, also beg to be explored. Like most of the research in Quebec educational history, Mellouki's work examines only the Catholic sector. To what extent, if any, was there interaction among the English-Catholic, English-Protestant and French-Catholic educational sectors within Quebec and in North America? Moreover, what and how did teachers actually teach? Indeed, in what ways did the new concern for child and adolescent psychology influence the classroom experience?

Despite its limitations, Mellouki's book offers material and insights for a reinterpretation of Quebec's educational development prior to the Quiet Revolution. The issues raised by this valuable study merit further attention from analysts sensitive to the links between educational reforms and other dimensions of social change.

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Daniel Tanner and Laurel Tanner. *History of the School Curriculum.* New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1990. Pp. xvi, 399. $34.95 cloth.

What is so troubling about contemporary curriculum historians, Daniel and Laurel Tanner seem to be telling us in their most recent volume, is the single-mindedness with which they embrace a 1960s-style revisionist interpretive framework. They go on to claim that the accounts which these scholars offer depict the American public school in decidedly negative terms as an agency of social control and characterize the curriculum as an instrument for producing and reproducing an inegalitarian and oppressive society. The Tanners believe that this interpretation, which has dominated the work of curriculum historians for almost three decades now, offers an inaccurate and distorted history of the development of the course of study. Their purpose in writing their *History of the School Curriculum* is to correct the record by examining, in their words, "the great struggle for a more complete realization of the democratic potential of American society through the transformation of the school and the reformation of the curriculum" (p. xiv).

The Tanners are, however, bothered by more than the mistakes which they attribute to the revisionists. They also claim that their accounts are dishonest:

> By the late 1970s, critics of radical revisionist historiography

> found depressing evidence of systematic omissions and citations of nonexistent source material in revisionist books on the progressive past. Moreover, sentences were often torn from their settings to convey an entirely different meaning than the original writer had intended (p. 8).

The authors end their first chapter by offering two examples of the kind of distortions that concern them. In one case, they fault a fellow colleague for what they claim was his failure to recognize the two dimensions of the social-efficiency movement of the 1920s. He was quick, they claim, to make mention of the anti-democratic tendencies in this movement but ignored those efficiency-minded educators who were committed to using the schools to enhance children's economic mobility and social equality. In the second case, the Tanners identify what they claim was another historian's mistaken use of the term "life adjustment education" to refer to the entire era of progressive educational reform and not just to its post-World War II phase. Those who encounter this misuse of terms are likely, according to Daniel and Laurel Tanner, to confuse the total effort at progressive educational reform, which brought much good to the nation's public schools, with what was really a short-lived and discredited phase of that movement.

In the last chapter of their book, the Tanners consider at some length how revisionist curriculum historians have distorted the idea of social control in their interpretation of efficiency-oriented curriculum reform. These scholars, according to the Tanners, use the term social control to talk about the oppressive and anti-democratic features of the social-efficiency movement. For Daniel and Laurel Tanner, this is a one-sided view of the concept of social control which represents a distortion of what Edward A. Ross meant when he first coined the term and which totally ignores the democratic and egalitarian sense of the concept of social control embraced by Lester Frank Ward and John Dewey.

Once having critiqued the work of their revisionist-minded colleagues, the Tanners offer their own interpretation of the development of the school curriculum. Claiming to take their guidance from the American historian Charles A. Beard, they see the history of the school curriculum as being what they call "developmental" (p. 5). According to this interpretation, the transformation of the school curriculum over time has represented an essentially upward and progressive movement. Although the Tanners are willing to admit to the existence of periodic reversals and temporary delays, the overall direction is one that enhances democracy and egalitarianism.

The cast of characters which the Tanners feature in their history include, among others, such familiar figures as Francis Parker, Frank McMurry, William Heard Kilpatrick, Franklin Bobbitt, and, most importantly, John Dewey. As the Tanners see it, these curriculum workers and others, each in his or her own way, contributed to an incremental and ultimately progressive transformation of the

school curriculum from one that was unduly academic and remote from the lives of most children to one that was directly functional and related to the concerns of youth. As the Tanners suggest in a timeline that nicely summarizes their argument (p. 134), the evolution of the modern American school curriculum began out of the early nineteenth-century realization that the nation's schools needed a more practical course of study. Their timeline then goes on to depict a succession of "battles" for more accessible elementary, secondary, and higher education out of which that more practical curriculum emerged. The story which Daniel and Laurel Tanner tell is one of the triumph of the forces of enlightenment, humanitarianism, and progress over those of ignorance, selfishness, and the status quo.

The brand of curriculum history which these authors envision is, however, of more than antiquarian interest. The study of curriculum history, the Tanners believe, can help contemporary educators resolve curriculum problems or, as they put it, "teach lessons" (p. 10). If, for example, curriculum workers study the events surrounding past instances of the implementation of a particular curriculum reform, they will be alerted as to what will no doubt happen if they introduce a similar reform in the future. Such a study can, in other words, tell the contemporary curriculum worker which policies and programmes to avoid and which to embrace. In this vein, the Tanners liken the work of the curriculum historian to that of the "detective" (p. 10).

The major contribution of the *History of the School Curriculum* is that the Tanners address issues that are either absent or downplayed in other recently published studies. While most current monographs have little to say about events prior to 1900, this volume begins with the colonial period. This starting point enables the authors to link the development of the contemporary curriculum with such major pre-twentieth century events as the common school movement and the introduction of monitorial instruction. Similarly, the Tanners treat several twentieth-century events including the Winnetka and Denver curriculum revision efforts of the 1920s and the Eight Year Study during the following decade in far more depth than do other contemporary curriculum historians.

Unfortunately, the strength of this volume is offset by several significant weaknesses. The most important of these is the authors' blithe acceptance that the study of curriculum history reveals a forward and progressive movement. The Tanners seem to rely primarily on Beard for this view of history. Yet they use the concept of progress without Beard's subtlety and tentativeness. What was evidently for Beard a first and not completely satisfactory effort at historiography becomes for the Tanners virtually a law of history. Their restatement of Beard on this score leads them to a less than compelling historicism.

A second weakness of the book lies in the way the authors fulfil their goal of considering the development of the curriculum "in the light of emerging social, economic, and political forces" (p. xiv). At the conclusion

of five of the book's seven chapters, the authors present a section entitled "Education and Society: A Retrospective of Events." Each section includes a short summary narrative of the period under question accompanied by a timetable that lists supposedly important events by year in two parallel columns, one for education and the other for society. The education entry for 1902, for example, indicates that the General Education Board was established and that John Dewey published *The Child and the Curriculum.* The society entry for the same year notes, among other things, that Enrico Caruso made his first recording and that there was a coal strike in the United States from May through October (p. 136). Similarly, the education entry for 1959 tells us that James B. Conant published *The American High School Today*, and the entry in the society column for that year indicates, among other things, that Alaska and Hawaii were granted statehood. The inclusion of these sections throughout the book does provide the reader with a plethora of facts. The problem is that simply listing parallel columns of educational and societal events and identifying when they occurred does not explain anything. Reading these timetables and the narratives which accompany them does virtually nothing to explain what, if any, relationship exists between the evolution of the curriculum and the nation's political, economic, and social life.

Finally, the authors make the case for their brand of curriculum history in a mean-spirited way that often detracts from the merits of their argument. The Tanners are probably on solid ground when they criticize the one-sidedness of the writings of some of their colleagues. The zeal of revisionist historians to correct what they believe to be the politically conservative and uncritical accounts of more mainline historians has led them, no doubt, to find abundant instances of conflict and oppression and ignore cases, perhaps equally numerous, of consensus and opportunity. Daniel and Laurel Tanner, however, go further to suggest that these revisionists are not just wrong, they are dishonest and untrustworthy. The examples which the Tanners offer to prove their charges, unfortunately, do not pass muster. At best they show that certain revisionist curriculum historians have a different interpretation than the one which they embrace. Their argument would have been more compelling and their book ultimately more appealing if they had simply said that.

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