

Pam Hirsch and Mark McBeth. *Teacher Training at Cambridge: The Initiatives of Oscar Browning and Elizabeth Hughes.* London, UK: Woburn, 2004. Pp. 254.

Peter Cunningham and Philip Gardner. *Becoming Teachers: Texts and Testimonies, 1907-1950.* London, UK: Woburn 2004. Pp. 250.

Teacher Training at Cambridge: The Initiatives of Oscar Browning and Elizabeth Hughes, and *Becoming Teachers: Texts and Testimonies, 1907-1950*, are significant contributions to the understudied field of the history of teacher education. In their methodologies and findings, these two volumes are fine studies that beg for further comparative analysis of the history of teacher education in both national and international settings. Further, both point out the extent to which teacher education remains contested ground among the profession, the university, and government agencies.

Teacher Training at Cambridge is an innovative and imaginative work. It is co-authored by a scholar of English (Rhetoric and Composition) who teaches in the United States, and a Cambridge University Lecturer in Education who is a literary scholar and a researcher in the history of the British women's movement. The authors use the tools of their respective disciplines to construct a revisionist account of the lived experience of the founding father and mother of education at Cambridge, Oscar Browning (1837-1923) and Elizabeth Hughes (1852-1925). Hirsch and McBeth's stated goals are to resurrect these "half forgotten educationalists" (p. xii) and to restore them to what they argue is their rightful positions "as remarkable innovators who raised the professionalism and the status of teachers" (p. xiii). Hirsch and McBeth are fighting an uphill battle as their subjects have not been treated as kindly in the history of education and in the literary history of England. Browning may be best remembered as the misogynist of Virginia Wolfe's *A Room of One's Own*. As for his scholarship, the authors argue that "a homophobia has blurred and distorted any serious account of his achievements" (p. xii). While Hughes may be remembered for giving Cambridge University's Hughes Hall its name, her life as a practical visionary seems to be all but forgotten.

Teacher Training at Cambridge is structured around a co-authored introduction and conclusion, with McBeth's account of Oscar Browning and Hirsch's account of Elizabeth Hughes presented as the middle chapters. The introduction sets the stage by presenting the

rationales for the book and their chosen methodology – to present a portrait of teacher education from those who worked in the classrooms. The authors argue that their book documents one critical phase in the professionalization of teaching – the development of educational studies at Cambridge University. They then set an historical context for their work by tracing the history of teacher education in Britain from 1807 to 1902. The text proceeds to two single-authored life-and-career histories of Browning and Hughes. The authors analyze the letters, lectures and writings of Browning and Hughes, alongside government reports and the accounts of their students and colleagues. The resulting study reveals two individuals whose relationship with each other was as complex as their relationships with their students, colleagues, and families. The work concludes with a co-authored chapter that explores what the careers of Browning and Hughes can contribute to our understanding of contemporary education.

Hirsch and McBeth have produced a well-written, well-argued contribution to the literature on teacher professionalization. Through their analysis of the personalities, politics, and pedagogies of their subjects, they document the troubled path of British teacher education from pupil teachers to the establishment of a “foothold at one of the ancient universities” (p. 229). While strategies their subjects employ – personal and professional connections, a sense of tenacity and vision – may have resulted in this gain, the authors quickly point out the fact that educational studies were located on the margins – physically isolated from the real and perceived centres of power. Contemporary teacher educators will find Browning and Hughes’ thoughts on teaching as a profession, the role of the university in teacher education, and the structuring of pedagogical studies both thought-provoking and enlightening.

This study of teacher education at Cambridge as seen through the lives and careers of two key individuals set against a background of policy studies begs comparative studies. The upbringing, education, and professional career of the Welsh Elizabeth Hughes could well be compared to that of the Swedish educational pioneer Cecilia Fryxell (1806-1887), the founder of Kalmar Teacher Training College – whose life experience parallels that of Hughes in many ways. McBeth’s flamboyant Browning, a strong-willed pedagogical innovator, calls for studies of individuals whose career and personality might serve as parallels and foils. From a policy perspective, comparative studies might be undertaken of how the many universities whose campuses now include education struggled with and continue to struggle with the place of professional education within a research-driven university, the intersection of professional studies with other departments, and the career/research profile of a teacher educator.

Becoming Teachers: Texts and Testimonies, 1907-1950 is the work of two Cambridge University Faculty of Education Senior Lecturers, Peter Cunningham and Philip Gardner. In this volume,

they bring together their research interests in teachers' identities and the history of education to examine what they describe as "a largely forgotten episode in the educational history of England and Wales" – the student teacher. Student teaching, the authors tell us, was a part of the pre-teacher education career preparation of many men and women who sought to become elementary school teachers in the first half of the twentieth century. Its goal was to give a potential teacher "practical forays" into "the realities of everyday work" (p. ix) in an elementary school. It served as an intermediary stage, the authors argue, between the apprenticeship model of the nineteenth century and the post-secondary institutionally based models that have dominated teacher education in most of the twentieth century. In 1923, some 45 per cent of students attending teacher training colleges had served as student teachers. Yet, for a number of reasons,, most significant of which was the withdrawal of central support, by 1939 the student teaching year was "extinct in most areas" (p. 40).

In contrast to the contemporary view that student teaching "had for some while seemed to be little value to those in a position to assess its worth" (p. 229), Cunningham and Gardner learned in their course of oral history interviews of retired teachers that it played a critical role in the formation of professional identity.

Cunningham and Gardner have created a work that makes use of both documentary analysis and oral testimony. They focus on the experience of classroom teachers – and by doing so, address a lacuna in the literature. As well, they further the theory and practice of oral history by demonstrating that "memory may...have as much to tell us about the nature of the past by the what of its selective or fictive devices as by virtue of its factual accuracy" (p. 5). They present their study in three parts. Part 1 provides the rationale and methodological underpinnings. Part 2 examines student teaching from three perspectives: policy, profession, and practice. Part 3 adds the fourth "p" in the authors' conceptual framework – person. Here, the voices of seven former student teachers are heard. They are drawn from the 250 individuals who completed the authors' questionnaire. From that pool, 100 former teachers were interviewed by the research team. The histories of seven subjects were selected for the text in order to exemplify the range of student teachers' experiences. In the final section of the book, the authors present their thoughts on the significance of the study.

Becoming Teachers is a superb piece of work. It is a must read for many stakeholders in teacher education. It should be read by any researcher using the tools of oral history as part of a research agenda; by any graduate student seeking an excellent model of how theory, methodology, findings, and analysis should coherently be presented; by any author who seeks to learn how interview data can be skilfully interwoven with analysis; by any policy-maker who seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the roles of individuals in implementation –

and of the unforeseen consequences of policy shifts; by any teacher educator grappling with what is meant by professional knowledge and how it intersects with the practicum experience. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it should be read by classroom teachers to reinforce their long and essential role in the development and induction of new members of the profession.

Like the Hirsh and McBeth study, *Becoming Teachers* further illuminates the historical roots of many of the dilemmas faced by both institutions of teacher education and their faculty. It points to the critical role played by the classroom teacher in all components of education – including teacher education. It presents a fine argument for looking at educational policy more broadly – especially through the eyes of those responsible for most of its implementation. It illustrates the necessity of including the voice of the student (in this case, the voice of the student teacher) in our understanding of the rise of teaching as a profession.

Series Editor Peter Gordon should be commended on two such excellent additions to the Woburn Educational Series – and I look forward to reading further in the series, in hopes that the rest of it continues the high quality of these two fine works.

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Adam Chapnick, ed. *Through Our Eyes: An Alumni History of the University of Toronto Schools, 1960-2000*. Victoria, B.C.: Trafford Publishing, 2004. Pp. 200.

Some words of disclosure are necessary right at the start. This reviewer was invited to participate in this project at the outset, saw the terms of reference, and refused. Consequently, he picked up this volume with the full intention to write a scathing review about the folly of a multi-authored autobiographical approach to the history of an institution, especially when such a project is primarily aimed as a fund-raising effort.

These churlish aims were defeated. *Through Our Eyes* will be of use to historians of education for the foreseeable future. Not only does it highlight elements of general trends in education in Ontario and Canada over a forty-year period, but it also speaks to more specific questions about the role of elite training in a pluralistic society, the