

left with a rather depressing view of a smart state and groups of naive, inadequate socialists. A more carefully developed analysis of the state and a more nuanced view of socialist consciousness would have improved the book. While many socialists of this time period undoubtedly had a rudimentary critique of education, their experiments were sometimes daring for the time, and reflected, as Kean points out well for the feminists, existing political theory and practical precedents.

Extending her research into one more decade, so that the innovative, though admittedly "reformist," politics of the Communists during the Popular Front could be examined, might have provided Kean with the opportunity to explore more fully the contradictions of using education to oppose the state, and also have given the book a more uplifting and interesting ending. Unfortunately, the book contains a fair bit of repetition and detailed historiographical debate which could have been edited; this "dissertation" style of writing sometimes makes for dry reading. Nonetheless, the questions Kean raises about the difficulty of developing a critique of the state and education are provocative; they are still timely and troubling dilemmas, needing our further attention.

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John L. Rury. *Education and Women's Work: Female Schooling and the Division of Labor in Urban America, 1870-1930.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991. Pp. xix, 279. \$19.95 U.S.

Educational history has undergone a wonderful transformation in recent years. There is now a growing interest in and a growing scholarship that attempts to link educational history with women, labour, ethnic, class, and regional history. Historians have begun to look at the effect of schooling on individuals, families, communities, and the world of work. Studies have demonstrated that schooling was given and received differently by boys and girls, rich and poor, natives and immigrants, urban and rural residents, and members of various religious persuasions. Rury's *Education and Women's Work: Female Schooling and the Division of Labor in Urban America, 1870-1930* is a welcome addition to this scholarship. It provides us with an exploration of the linkages between school and work as opportunities for women for schooling and employment increased.

Rury has an important thesis, has asked provocative and fundamental questions, and has used diverse and rich sources to support this thesis and answer the questions posed. *Education and Women's Work* explores the relationship between school and work with women as the focal point. It argues that this relationship shifted profoundly as both schools and women's work changed between 1870 and 1930. The result, says Rury, has

been that American secondary schools became guardians of the general sexual division of labour in society. To this I would add that the schools themselves were prime examples of this division, a factor that Rury does not address. More about this point later in the review.

The book has five chapters, an introduction and conclusion, a statistical appendix that addresses "Teenage School Attendance in the Later Nineteenth Century" with explanation and seven tables, and a number of tables and figures throughout the text. The first chapter, "Women at School," develops the arguments for and against coeducation. Like David Tyack and Elizabeth Hansot in *Learning Together: A History of Coeducation in American Public Schools*, Rury appears to support their assessment that coeducation was generally a good thing. He suggests that the principle of male-female equality in education had finally been accepted by the turn of the century. Dr. Clarke's theories had been denounced, girls matched and exceeded academic standards set by boys, and "women students in high schools came to share in the celebration of an academic culture traditionally reserved for males." His assessment of this move was that during this time the feminization of American high schools and of American culture was attained. Given the rest of Rury's thesis and the assessment today by feminists and sociologists of the gendered relations in school and society, it is difficult to accept that this small time period would be an anomaly in the history of

women and men in American (and Canadian) schools and society.

In Chapter 2, "Participation and Purpose in Women's Education," the author successfully puts the case that high schools offered women new opportunities while stressing important limitations—limitations in numbers, both by class and region, and limitations in purpose, since the schools were not designed to afford women male-type employment. Although Rury argues that at this period education and women's work were only remotely associated, I would disagree. Here we have the classic trap—one which underestimates women's domestic work and devalues child care—that only paid employment is work. Clearly education and women's work were associated in the minds of the women who attended school to prepare themselves better for matrimony, children, and domestic duties. Rury seems to be on much safer ground when he talks about education as a "vehicle of opportunity" for some and a "mechanism of exclusion" for others. High schools were class and racist institutions, sharpening the distinction among women and reinforcing the class, ethnic, and regional division of labour for women. As expansion of female employment opportunities widened, the choices did not radically alter traditional female roles or relations between class, ethnicity, and gender. Chapter 3, "Women at Work," concludes that for middle-class, white, native-born women, changes in work opportunities meant a role in business, or government, perhaps some earning power, and an alternative to domestic roles.

It is in Chapter 4 that the thesis of this book really takes shape. After 1900, it is postulated, changes in employment opportunities for women and changes in women's schooling were inextricably linked. The result of more paid employment for women was a new, sex-typed curriculum with courses such as home economics, offered to offset loss of domestic skills and to educate the new woman to her home responsibilities, and commercial courses, developed to meet the demand created by a growing economy. Progressivism helped achieve a curriculum more attuned to the needs of the economy and because that economy was a sex-segregated one the course offerings matched this division of labour. Rury's ability to demonstrate that as soon as opportunities for women shifted to the labour market, constraints were introduced in education, provides us with a fascinating explanation of the role of education in maintaining society's standards and values and in inhibiting societal change. It raises the question of whether the role of the school is to lead the society in the area of social change or to help preserve the society as it is. There's not much doubt that the rhetoric surrounding the role of the school, then as now, as a vehicle for upward mobility, and the reality, as it affected certain groups, have been far apart.

I am troubled by Rury's use of the term "gender equity." He seems to assume that because girls attended the same schools and took the same courses, "gender equity" existed. The male organization and hierarchy, the fact that the majority of secondary teachers

were male, and the understanding that girls attended schools for different reasons than boys insured a climate that facilitated the boys. In analyzing gender equity in schools it is necessary to look at the whole school, the administrative structure, the hidden curriculum, and the decision-makers as well as the curriculum as defined by courses. Recent research by Carol Shakeshaft ("A Gender at Risk," in *Phi Delta Kappan* 67, 7, 1986), David and Myra Sadker ("Sexism in the Classroom: From Grade School to Graduate School," in *Phi Delta Kappan* 67, 7, 1986), and others would support this. I would argue that, despite a century and a half of coeducation, the women's movement of the last three decades, equity legislation, and affirmative action laws, schools are still segregated pools of labour organized on the basis of gender. A recent study conducted in the ten provinces and two territories of Canada concludes that the situation of women and men in positions in educational systems across the country reflects tradition, rather than employment equity (see Ruth Rees, *Women and Men in Education: A National Survey of Gender Distribution in School Systems*, Toronto, Canadian Education Association, 1990). Men dominate all line positions in education—on school boards and in secondary, junior high, and elementary schools. Women predominate in the lower grades and in certain subjects in secondary schools, like home economics. They are under-represented in the upper grades, in subject areas with a mathematical or scientific basis, in administrative posts

in schools, on teachers' association executives, and in ministries of education. And they make less money. Some provinces still sanction lesser qualifications for certification as an elementary teacher. Women benefit less from administrative stipends, lose in "years of experience" because of family responsibilities, are less likely to be able to pursue graduate study, and suffer from the predominance of the "old boys' network." The result of this reality is that women are less powerful than men. They have less opportunity to make a difference—to affect the curriculum, the organization, and the environment of the school and, therefore, to have their view of education taken seriously. And a powerful message is delivered to girls and young women. The schools Rury studied did not differ in major respects from today's schools. Girls were then and are today receiving different messages than boys. It may be that confining the definition of gender equity to the actual courses offered may account for the assessment in chapter one that the feminization of the American high school had occurred by the turn of the century, only to be lost in the Progressive era.

Despite the concerns I have mentioned, *Education and Women's Work* is a very good study. It explores relationships which have not heretofore been examined carefully. It combines a variety of methodologies—historical, quantitative, biographical, including diaries. It compares urban schools in more than one geographical location. It analyzes the school's ability to consider class, ethnicity, as well as gender. It delves

into Progressivism's effect on the curriculum and the change this caused in the education of girls. It shows a relationship between school and work. And last but not least, it provides a demonstration of the school's role in maintaining society's status quo. Rury has filled a gap in our educational history and suggested avenues for further research. For historians of education and of women, for sociologists, for educators, and for those interested in gender relations, this is a necessary read.

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Lionel Rose. *The Erosion of Childhood: Child Oppression in Britain 1860-1918.* New York: Routledge, 1991. Pp. 294. \$69.95.

In 1987 the National Association of Schoolmasters in Britain reported that "many tens of thousands of children" were illegally "moonlighting" for low wages in occupations which blatantly disregarded health and safety regulations. It is against this present-day reality of child labour that Lionel Rose's *The Erosion of Childhood* was written as a grim reminder of the not-too-distant past when English children were exploited in the work-place and mistreated by a malfunctioning school system. Rose warns the reader that while the most shocking forms of Victorian child op-