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-

pression are gone, child abuse is still with us.

In short, *The Erosion of Childhood* is a book with a purpose, but as an exposé of nineteenth and early twentieth-century child subjugation in the work-place and the school it offers little in the way of new insights. It may well be that if Lionel Rose had lived, or if the editors had taken more time with the text, this work might have been more impressive. As it is, the content of the first eleven chapters, which parade an endless saga of unverified statistics on child labour, has been dealt with many times over in other more definitive works. Similarly, much of the educational and childhood history in the remaining twelve chapters of the book has received ample treatment elsewhere.

More problematic than the rewriting of history is the almost complete lack of references to studies in labour history which have in the last twenty years or so moved away from discussions on the exploitation of little lives and placed child labour within the context of the working-class family. Such histories recognize the youngsters' wages and other contributions as necessary to the survival of the family and probe such questions as the development of class consciousness and the resistance of young people to class-controlled authority.

By contrast, Rose's work is a throw-back to an earlier style which E.P. Thompson has characterized as "the atrophy of consciousness," where passive and oppressed children are viewed apart from the socialization of class and only within the isolated work-place setting. Indeed, each of Rose's brief chapters surveys a single child occupation ranging from factory to fairground workers, and apart from a few examples of working conditions, focuses almost exclusively on the number of children employed.

Instead of analyzing the economic and social roots which gave rise to the children's exploitation and, it might be added, to that of their mothers and fathers, Rose argues that it was not the factory owners, but "mercenary parents" who oppressed their children by forcing them into unsavoury employment. He asserts that "the image of a harsh, callous capitalist profiteering from his child slaves is simplistic." Factory juveniles, he contends, were healthier and better paid than children engaged in domestic workshops, where parents could be "harder and more ruthless" than a large factory employer. While accepting the paternalistic side of the nineteenth-century capitalist and acknowledging that working conditions may have been better in some industries than those in home employment, such statements obscure other factors favourable to the child's well-being in family industry and neither prove nor disprove the case for child oppression.

Rose uses the theme of "incompetent or poor parenting" to link the past to the present employment of children, but in both time-frames such a concept is extremely problematic. While acknowledging that the motives of the middle-class factory and educational reformers were not always altruistic, Rose nevertheless relies heavily on their reports of child subjugation to support his contentions and

shares their condescending attitudes towards working-class parents.

Indeed, there is little to distinguish Rose's views from the turn-of-the-century child rescue workers. Like them, he confuses the biological existence of children with the social construction of "childhood." As a consequence, he views any deviation from what has been described as the "traditional model" of childhood as a negative distortion of the "proper" child role. While adopting Philippe Ariès' term "miniature adults" in reference to child workers, he ignores Ariès' thesis that childhood was "invented" in the sixteenth century, as well as more recent studies, such as those of John Sommerville, Elizabeth Eisenstein, and Joshua Meyrowitz, which give further weight to Ariès' concept of childhood as a social construct.

In the final analysis, Rose's narrow cultural and historical perspective of childhood demeans the working class. It denies that childhood has been conceived of differently in different cultures and within the same culture from one historical period to another. It refuses to acknowledge the separate existence of a working-class culture with its own norms and values concerning children and childhood.

As a former schoolteacher, Rose is on safer ground in the second half of the book, which deals with the movement of children from the work-place to the classroom. Here the text is interspersed with personal accounts from children and other anecdotal material (including Rose's personal opinions) and presents a more complete picture of student life than was provided of child workers. Rose relates the now-familiar thesis of how modern technology in the work-place gradually displaced the labour of children, creating widespread unemployment which in turn led to fears that the idle young would make society bottom heavy with "dead-enders and delinquents" if compulsory schooling was not enacted. In Rose's opinion, however, the turn-of-the-century school legislation was flawed. It allowed parents to find loopholes in the law to ensure their children's gainful employment, even when such monies were not needed.

Rose also maintains that the movement of an increasing number of youngsters to the classroom did not end their oppression. He points to the failure of the part-time system, the inadequacy of school curriculum, the rigidity of teaching methods, the emphasis on payment by results, and the use of corporal punishment in the schools as continuing, in new form, the abuse of children until the Fisher Education Act of 1918.

As the text concludes, Rose begins for the first time to explore the relationship between his statistics on child labour and school attendance, on the one hand, and child rearing and family life, on the other. In these last three chapters, the best in the book, Rose begrudgingly acknowledges that the bonding between parents and children might have made the drudgery of daily life more bearable for youngsters. "In many homes," he writes, "there was much love and warmth in a rough and ready way, in others drunkenness and brutality" (p. 215).

In Canada as in England, the number of young people under 16 years of age in the work force increased significantly over the last decade. In my university classes, the average age of students who began working for wages in and out of home in the 1980s was 10.5 years. In households where both parents work, domestic chores once carried out by adults have been assumed by children. Like their British counterparts, child workers in Canada are subject to exploitation by employers who disregard the laws governing underage employment. Rather than moonlighting for pocket money, however, child earnings appear to make a significant contribution to the households.

Although the present situation needs further investigation, child labour appears to be linked to the growth of the service sector of the economy which employs many youngsters, the recession of the past decade, the increasing number of households headed by underpaid females, and changes in the concept of childhood which over the last thirty years or so suggest that adult/child roles are less distinct and more homogeneous than they once were.

While today's child workers share some resemblances to their counterparts in the past, child labour at this time holds neither the same place nor the same value that it did in the nineteenth century, and attempts such as this one, which pivot on a search for modern attitudes in the past, are faulty. Like other topical subjects, child abuse lends itself to sensational treatment by those who seek to reform society. Although it is clear that Rose had the best interests of children at heart, this book lends itself, be it ever so slightly, to the sensationalist charge. It will no doubt shock those unfamiliar with child oppression in the past, while those who have read fuller and more detailed accounts may find the overgeneralized and bleak summaries troublesome. The comparison to the present, however, should alert readers to the changing nature of childhood in our society and new forms of exploitation which have developed in the last decade.

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Donald Fisher. *The Social Sciences in Canada: Fifty Years of National Activity by the Social Science Federation of Canada.* Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1991. Pp. 115. $19.95.

The social sciences have attained a place of prominence within Canadian higher education, and have been recognized as deserving of support by state agencies. They have been much less successful in capturing the imagination of the educated public. The names of Canadian social scientists are hardly household words, and the products of their labour, aside from monumental works such as John Porter's *The Vertical Mosaic*, are generally only familiar to a relatively narrow band of cognoscenti. Even less is known about the organizations that have made social scientific re-