trolled, Kleijwegt's work is still plagued by an irregularly developed argument, and the inclusion of detailed scholarly excurses of marginal utility to the prospective reader. Despite two large-scale, and expensive, labours of calvinistic assiduity, therefore, we are left wanting a truly satisfying work on the subject. Given the economics of the academic book trade, we may well have to wait for some time—a shame, because even Eyben (p. 9) is able to argue that age is a characteristic of social behaviour that is as significant as gender or class. It deserves its own competent analysis.

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K. Goodenow and William E. Marsden, eds. *The City and Education in Four Nations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Pp. 250. $54.95 U.S. cloth.

There are, according to Ronald K. Goodenow, a set of needs which have not, until now, received the attention they deserve within either the historical or the comparative educational canon. They include, first and foremost, the need to examine, question, and extend the current boundaries of historical research and writing in the field of urban educational history. Addressing this need is the principal aim of *The City and Education in Four Nations*. In this volume Goodenow and his co-editor, William E. Marsden, present us with eleven essays, written by scholars in Britain, Canada, the United States, and Australia, which deal with important issues rising from the complex relationship between historical research and praxis, and with the theoretical foundations upon which urban educational historians write.

Each of the contributors to this book maintains, either implicitly or explicitly, that the study of the history of urban education will be immeasurably strengthened both through international, national, and regional comparisons of developments in urban schooling, and through the international collaboration of urban educational historians which might result from such comparisons. Many of the contributors also point out that in order for this field to grow and gain prestige, it is essential that urban educational historians strengthen the theoretical basis upon which they write—in many cases borrowing from, and therefore presumably collaborating with, scholars in cognate disciplines.

The book is divided into three parts. In the first, contributors from each of the four nations discuss the historiographical trends in the study of urban schools in each of their respective countries. As the series editors, David A. Reeder and Pete Clark, note in their preface, all four of these papers demonstrate that educational history has come a long way from its institutional and celebratory roots, and that many of its current practitioners are manifestly absorbed in exploring "the inter-relationships between schooling, work, residential development, family life, and the experience of growing up in different environments" (p. xv). This point has a significant bearing on

the discussion in Part Three on methodological issues. Indeed, it provides a firm foundation for the main argument of this anthology—that such a broadly defined field as urban educational history calls for the use of a greater variety of methodological tools and, most especially, a wider and more sophisticated use of theory and comparison in its analysis and writing than has heretofore been the case.

While the contributors seem agreed on the unifying argument of the anthology, they present a great diversity of interests and opinions on other points. For example, in Part One the surveys of the literature from Britain, Canada, and the United States indicate a shared conviction that urbanization is central to the history of education in their nations. In contrast, Kerry Wimshurst and Ian Davey suggest that in Australia the effects of urbanization on schooling have been over-stressed—indeed, that the rural-urban dichotomy is a false one. On another point, Jean Barman and Neil Sutherland note that while scholarly research in Canada has begun to explore terrain outside the classroom, what is central in these explorations is less often the "city" and far more often concepts such as gender, class, and ethnicity. David A. Reeder, in his fascinating account of the development of the field of urban educational history in Britain, makes an important connection which Barman and Sutherland apparently missed by first demonstrating that the writing of educational history is deeply influenced by more contemporary social concerns and critiques. Clearly, in Canada as elsewhere, issues of gender, class, and ethnicity have come to the fore in historical writing because they are just such contemporary social concerns.

Part Two is intended to illustrate, with case studies based on quantitative analysis, the points made in Part One. Three of the four papers in the section deal, in very different ways, with the advent of government-mandated mass schooling and its social and economic repercussions for families, particularly working-class families in Britain and Australia. However, in the fourth article of this section Barbara Finkelstein concentrates on both reflecting the current "state of the field" of urban educational history, and proposing a variety of innovative themes within and approaches to the history of education. Most importantly, she contends, historians of education must "attach" their field to the "historical study of human consciousness and potential" (p. 185), focusing on the ways that local groups mediate pressures from with and without.

Methodological issues are central in Part Three—in particular the relationship between theory and the analysis and writing of history. Carl F. Kaestle begins this section by noting that while most historians remain adamantly non-theoretical, the systematic study of theoretical work in other disciplines can assist them both to recognize the informal, unacknowledged theories which already guide their work, and to shape their understanding of the experiences of historical individuals. Kaestle points out that historians can also participate actively in the process of theory-building—confirming, refuting, or modifying theories in the light of empirically based historical

research. He then goes on to illustrate five specific ways in which historians can incorporate the conscious use of theory into their work.

David Coulby's contribution in this section, on the other hand, provides a detailed critique of three approaches to urban education derived, as he says, from social theory, from comparative and international education, and from history. Coulby ultimately suggests an alternative—a comparative approach to urban education which abandons the nation-state as the unit of analysis in favour of units both larger and smaller, and therefore, he maintains, more useful. David L. Angus takes up Coulby's argument, contending that the use of comparison is inherently necessary to the field of urban educational history if its practitioners are to address the chaos which, he maintains, currently characterizes the discipline, with its myriad ideological and methodological disputes and the tangential nature of much of the work done under its mantle. Attention to comparison in the study of the history of urban education, Angus notes, will make historians' work more cumulative and their research more useful to others. Angus is careful to point out that there are different modes of comparison which are context-specific and must therefore be chosen carefully, but, he maintains, it is clear that whether researchers compare groups, times, or locations within single cities, rural and urban social settings, or cities in different regions or nations, if done properly such comparisons will combat the now widespread tendency among urban historians to generalize well beyond the limits of their evidence, particularly when discussing the outcomes of urbanization and industrialization.

The City and Education in Four Nations is an important book which, if it gets the attention it deserves, may well profoundly influence the way urban educational history—indeed, perhaps all urban history—is written. While many educational historians, in Canada and elsewhere, have long recognized the need to come to a more sophisticated understanding of theories developed in related disciplines, others *have* been reluctant to acknowledge, as Kaestle says, that the answers arise not only from the materials, but also from historians' personal "temperament, convictions, hunches and theories" (p. 195). Whether or not historians are aware of it, historical research and writing is grounded in theory—about social structures and social change, and about methodology. In conjunction with comparative work across nations, regions, and time periods, the sensitive, discriminating use of theory in the writing of urban educational history could well strengthen what is now a somewhat eclectic field. Clearly, as the series editors suggest, this anthology introduces issues significant to all urban historians.

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