

outside the formal paid economy – are examined. Extraordinary successes are also illustrated. Portraits of diverse broadcasters and journalists (pp. 378, 381, 385), engineers (p. 396), and foreign aid workers (p. 417) underscore the complexity of the work lives of Canadian women and the challenges that women faced in traditionally male-dominated occupations.

As the editors of *Framing Our Past* admit, the book is not “completely representative of the total experience of twentieth-century Canadian women” (p. xxiii). Their vignettes, photographs, and essays are limited by the “constraints of formal archival collections” (p. xxiii). Although considerable effort is made throughout this collection to include material about non-dominant social groups and “to recover the lives of ordinary people” (p. xxiii), white, English-speaking, heterosexual women, particularly successful and famous women, remain prominent. Traditional historical periodization is challenged, and definitions of work, family, politics, health, culture, and teaching are interrogated and expanded; however, important topics – sexuality, law, race relations, religion, language, and ethnicity – are given little attention. Some women will see themselves much more clearly in this description of our collective past than will others. While there are limitations in the inclusiveness of the subject matter, *Framing Our Past* successfully bridges the all-too-often great divide between academe and the public; it is accessible, inviting, and informative. This collection deserves an extensive and appreciative readership and will be found on course syllabi as well as coffee tables.

Lori Chambers
Lakehead University

Mary Hilton and Pam Hirsch, eds. *Practical Visionaries: Women, Education, and Social Progress, 1790-1930*. Harlow, England: Longman, 2000. Pp. 252.

Practical Visionaries: Women, Education, and Social Progress, 1790-1930 is a book that is long overdue. Its thirteen essays, written by educational researchers at Homerton College, Cambridge, and at other British universities, focus on the efforts of

a group of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century women to bring about radical social progress through education. All were influential activists who believed that education could solve Britain's most pressing social problems. According to the editors, however, these women, like most female educational pioneers, have been overlooked or discounted in even the most recent studies of the history of British education.

This book seeks to address a significant historiographical gap by focusing attention on a distinctly progressive, female-led educational tradition. In doing so it undertakes to broaden the scope of British educational history beyond its still largely male-dominated perspective. It also emphasizes the positive, indeed revolutionary, aspects of educational reform, and in the process provides an important counterbalance to recent studies that consider education to be little more than a tool for the manipulation, subjugation, and regulation of the disadvantaged. Taken together, the essays in this volume constitute a collective biography that highlights the educational philosophies, the familial, ideological, and intellectual interconnections, and the accomplishments of a leading group of female educators. They demonstrate how each of these women challenged and extended the roles customarily assigned them by the patriarchal institutions with which they dealt, including teacher training institutes, the church, the public school system, and the government. Concentrating primarily on fundamental issues of citizenship and social justice, these "practical visionaries" saw education as a vital means of empowerment for middle-class women and for the poor of both sexes. Their pioneering efforts had a profound effect on the people with whom they worked directly, and on British education as a whole.

The book is divided into five sections, arranged in roughly chronological order. Part One provides fascinating portraits of three of the earliest figures in the movement for progressive education. The first, Anna Barbauld, was a late-eighteenth-century children's author and literary critic who, in marked contrast to Rousseau, "believed that the powers of reason grew through experimentation, 'argumentative discussion' and familial affection" (p. 4). Her published works inspired many women of the generation that followed her, including Mary Carpenter, the subject of the second chapter. Barbauld and Carpenter were both Unitarians, a radical group of intellectuals who rejected the notion of original sin and had a deep faith in the power of science and reason. In Mary Carpenter's case these convictions led her to

create a series of ragged schools for very poor children, an endeavour that eventually propelled her into the forefront of the early-nineteenth-century movement for educational reform. Rejecting a commonly held belief that poverty was solely the result of the inherent sinfulness of the poor, Carpenter argued that destitution was largely the outcome of society's grave neglect of the pressing needs of indigent children and their families. Her life story links nicely to the third biography of this section, which focuses on Catherine McAuley. An Irishwoman, McAuley was the founder of a Catholic teaching order that concentrated on providing a basic education to poor young women, as well as servants' training for some, and lay teacher-training for a promising few. Her instructional methods were, as her biographer demonstrates, far ahead of their time. Moreover, her work, undertaken in Britain just after the potato famine, addressed a significant educational inequality at a time when Catholics in general, and the Catholic poor in particular, faced a considerable degree of bigotry from mainstream British society.

The sections that follow make crucial links between the expansion of women's opportunities for secondary and tertiary schooling and the roles that those who embraced these new opportunities played in the transformation of the British teacher-training system, educational research, and the enhancement of early childhood education of the urban poor. Part Two offers new perspectives on women's struggles for higher education, starting with an exploration of author Anna Jameson's contributions to the education of women through her many widely read essays, books, museum guides, and travel narratives. The next essay examines the career of one of Jameson's protégés, women's rights activist Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon, who financed the creation of Girton College, Cambridge, in 1873 in the belief that women's higher education was the key to genuine social change. This section also includes essays on Newnham College's Anne Jemima Clough and her niece Blanche Athena Clough, and on Clara Collet, a late-nineteenth-century girls' high school administrator who became one of the first women to enter the British civil service. Part Three takes a close look at the transformation of teacher training in turn-of-the-century Britain through the lives of two teacher-educators, Sarah Jane Bannister and Mary Miller Allen. Part Four then turns to developments in kindergarten education, examining first the career of Jane Roadknight in the impoverished Board schools of Nottingham, and then the English Froebelian, a group of professional women who had a significant influence on

the schooling of poor children. In Part Five the focus shifts to the impact that Maria Montessori had on educational praxis and on the development of educational research among the very young. The final essay in the collection looks at Susan Isaacs, a highly innovative teacher, teacher-educator, and researcher who made a number of major contributions to the study of early childhood development and the training of kindergarten and primary school teachers.

Many of the women examined here were linked to each other through ties of faith, family, and friendship. The majority were Unitarian, a fact that serves to introduce one of the volume's most fascinating and important insights: Unitarianism figured far more prominently in the movement for progressive social and educational reform in Britain than many educational scholars have previously recognized. Inspired by their rationalist and humanist beliefs, Unitarians strongly supported the education of women. They also stressed a pragmatic commitment to curing the ills of the present world and worrying less about the next, a philosophical orientation that provided the individuals considered in this book with a strong foundation for their educational initiatives. This commitment also fuelled their activism on behalf of women's political and economic rights, and spurred their efforts to extend their own scholarly studies. Of course, Unitarians were not the only religiously motivated educational reformers in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries; Catholic women, as this collection points out, were also important educational innovators. The collection highlights as well the impact of women's expanding secondary and post-secondary educational opportunities, and the development of the social sciences, on the British educational system as a whole. Altogether, *Practical Visionaries* explores the myriad ways in which these various elements are linked, offering in the process a unique analysis of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century educational reform.

This is an essential book that draws attention to a group of women educators, hitherto largely neglected, who saw educational reform as a significant means to political, economic, and social advancement. It will help to raise awareness of the importance of religious faith in the thought of many British women educationalists and reformers. It will also help to illustrate the complexity of progressive reform and the effects of change at the level of the individual and at the level of policy-making itself. The essays are, for the most part, well-written, and the introduction effectively frames the individual studies while drawing out the

major themes and connections between them. In sum, *Practical Visionaries* is a book that belongs on the shelf of everyone who is interested in the history of education.

Cathy James
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/
University of Toronto

Paul Axelrod. *Values in Conflict: The University, the Marketplace, and the Trials of Liberal Education*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002. Pp. 203.

When picking up a book on the crisis in the university these days, I too often make it only about half-way through. I read the Introduction and two or three chapters, assume I've got the point and toss the book aside. In contrast, reading *Values in Conflict: The University, the Marketplace, and the Trials of Liberal Education*, by Paul Axelrod, professor and dean of the Faculty of Education, York University, a leading historian of Canadian education, author of *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914* (1997), and *Making a Middle Class: Student Life in English Canada During the Thirties* (1990), I felt challenged from the start. As I read *Values in Conflict* through – it is compressed, about 200 pages, including an Introduction, Conclusion, Notes, Bibliography, Index, and five thematic chapters in the centre of the book – I found myself filling its margins with notes. Although I wanted to quarrel with several points, that was part of the challenge. There is no space in a short review even to list the topics for contention *Values in Conflict* generates, but one can point at least to a few of them. (Beyond the scope of this review but worth mentioning even briefly is that we benefit from Axelrod's broadening the historical lens from Canada to include some comparative study of the university in the United States, Britain, and Australia).

In the past there was a unified pattern to higher education, an essential, core, defining idea or vision of what a liberal education ought to be, whether articulated in terms of balance and harmony, religion, science, the well-rounded Christian gentleman, Mathew Arnold's "the best that is known and thought in the world," or what the late Bill Readings called the "university of culture." Axelrod