

of dogmatic positions of the church, particularly before Vatican II, and the actual space left for agency. This work is innovative in its attempt to draw on participants' definitions of situations, while using a variety of sources and other conceptual tools.

The book makes a significant scholarly contribution and opens a new way of writing about schooling and the Catholic Church in Ireland. On one side, there have been extremely critical writings that have not explored the complex dialectic of the relationship between church and state, the national question, and people's own religiosity. On the other side, other works have placed great emphasis on congregations' contributions to Catholic schooling without including a critical experiential viewpoint. This work brings some fresh perspectives to the issues.

The book closes by moving to the future—"Looking backwards, looking forwards" (189)—toward a new approach to Catholic education. One that is pluralist and open to the world, involving new curricular approaches and a new understanding of piety. However, the authors make it clear that within the context of the expansion of education in Ireland, inequalities persist. Thus, they conclude by saying that Catholic secondary schools, just as their Protestant counterparts, continue to reproduce inequality, and that in spite of the significant changes that have taken place in Ireland since the 1960s, such as the movement away from a theocratic state and positive developments in the provision of secondary education, the Catholic Church continues to have significant control over this level of schooling.

I am impressed by the scope and design of this research, and I am certain that it will have a privileged place in the literature on education and the Catholic Church. The authors skillfully integrate the structural elements, enrich the social analysis with contributions from cultural history, and go deep into subjective aspects and experiential testimonies. This book will be of great interest to historians of education, historians of the Catholic Church, and historians interested in Ireland. It will also attract the attention of theologians. In summary, it will be of interest to a variety of readers, and, notably, is a book that will cover a lacuna.

I strongly recommend the reading of this book.

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Campbell F. Scribner and Bryan R. Warnick

*Spare the Rod: Punishment and the Moral Community of Schools*

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*Spare the Rod* is a sobering examination of punishment in schools. While the study has global aspirations, it is concentrated on the United States. Its ontology is Western, drawing on legal, philosophical, and historical examples exclusively from scholars within the western tradition. The study is comprised of four core chapters. Scribner and Warnick are transparent about their purpose early in the introduction: "The goal

of this book is to give readers a sense of *perspective* on school punishment by exploring the various meanings of punishment in schools, how these meanings have changed over time, and how a deeper understanding of these meanings can shape schools in the future” (2).

Chapter 1 is titled “Punishment: Its Meaning and Justification,” which frames punishment as a concept. Here, Scribner and Warnick seek to frame the ethics of school punishment, offering various prompts to engage the reader in reflection. Chapter 1 of the text introduces the expressive function of punishment. Punishment is the means by which social groups, institutions, cultures, and states *express* moral condemnation. Not only is this a means of expression, but a catalyst for conversations about what is punishable. This could be understood as an iterative, dynamic conversation between a community and its members about individual action and collective moral frameworks. There is more. Particular instances of punishment are akin to phenotypes, articulating “secondary expressions” of disapproval. As particular instances, they reveal disparities in the implementation and use of punishment such as disparities that exist across schools and contexts. For instance, across the United States, schools punish students with exceptionalities, as well as Black and male students, with greater frequency than other populations.<sup>3</sup>

Chapter 2, “Punishment in Early American Schools,” tells a story of US schooling from the seventeenth to nineteenth century. The authors chart a course from the establishment of one-room schoolhouses serving a largely agrarian, rural population to complex boards and systems of schools spanning cities and large geographic spaces. As hierarchical structures, school systems are responsible for moral and nationalistic indoctrination. The authors do not use the term indoctrination, though the term is apt. Scribner and Warnick refer to school systems’ increased responsibility for “instilling strong morals and a robust national identity” (4). Scribner and Warnick identify three dominant forms of punishment that emerge from their historical examination of US schools: corporal punishment, public shaming, and moral suasion. What is more, they associate each of these primary forms with a distinct vision of American society (respectively): traditional schooling and patriarchy, progressive schooling and liberalism, and romanticism.

Chapter 3 is titled “Punishment, Bureaucracy, and Demoralization.” Here, the authors confront the professionalization of schooling and its relationship with punishment in US educational history. Scribner and Warnick demonstrate how the increasing professional status of administrators and teachers mitigated punishment in various ways. Yet this increase of educational professionals working within large regulatory systems challenged the iterative relationship between schools and the public. The administration and implementation of school punishment became the domain of experts. In the authors’ words: “Professional educators pioneered a new language of emotional sensitivity and self-regulation and replaced painful or degrading

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3 The authors cite, appropriately, United States Government Accountability Office. *Discipline Disparities for Black Students, Boys, and Students with Disabilities*. Washington, DC: United States Government Accountability Office, March 2018. <https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/690828.pdf>.

punishments with more neutral forms of physical separation, including suspensions” (5). Such exclusionary punishments, including suspensions and expulsions, disproportionately affect at-risk populations while having a deleterious effect on academic performance for students excluded from the school through punishment. As the authors note, the white supremacist roots of US schooling and the inherent biases about race and class were not snubbed out or addressed, even as punishment was articulated as a technique for classroom management rather than a moral bludgeon. The management of punishment thus establishes policies and practices that are often rigid and discourage flexibility, discretion, judgment, and subjective reasoning. The breakdown between schools and the communities that those schools serve becomes increasingly disconnected.

In chapter 4, “Punishment and the Moral Community of Schools,” Scribner and Warnick offer and defend a vision for school punishment. Their position throughout the text is that punishment has a purpose, which must rhyme with the purposes of schooling within a community or state. The authors reveal an instrumentalist purpose to this study, developing a historically and philosophically minded approach to punishment. Such an approach is informed by principles of restorative justice, drawing attention to mutual respect, conversation, community engagement, and ongoing problem solving. The chapter engages a nuanced discussion of the purposes of punishment, the means of its application/misapplication, and the role of schools as a moral community.

*Spare the Rod* raises essential questions about the meaning and purpose of schooling in society. The study can provoke conversations about what it means to be human and how schools are the sites for continuous negotiation of what it means to be human and to educate citizens through institutions that exercise moral and disciplinary authority. The authors deftly seek middle ground between positions that decry and celebrate punishment. This position affirms faith in our ability to discern but underlines the complexity of the endeavour. The text could be useful in the hands of teacher educators, school administrators, and teachers, even if the historical narrative does not necessarily reflect a global or even North American scope.

Questions of student-on-student violence are not discussed, other than to note that bullying merits punishment. Nor is another core question that many educators and students might pose—the extent to which schools themselves often feel like punishment. That Indigenous perspectives are also outside the scope of this study is unfortunate, as these could greatly inform the moral, forward-thinking approach to punishment that the authors pursue in chapter 4. That such questions along with others resonate is a strength of this book, as Scribner and Warnick provide a foundation for future research on punishment in Canadian school life and beyond.

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