

and of the unforeseen consequences of policy shifts; by any teacher educator grappling with what is meant by professional knowledge and how it intersects with the practicum experience. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it should be read by classroom teachers to reinforce their long and essential role in the development and induction of new members of the profession.

Like the Hirsh and McBeth study, *Becoming Teachers* further illuminates the historical roots of many of the dilemmas faced by both institutions of teacher education and their faculty. It points to the critical role played by the classroom teacher in all components of education – including teacher education. It presents a fine argument for looking at educational policy more broadly – especially through the eyes of those responsible for most of its implementation. It illustrates the necessity of including the voice of the student (in this case, the voice of the student teacher) in our understanding of the rise of teaching as a profession.

Series Editor Peter Gordon should be commended on two such excellent additions to the Woburn Educational Series – and I look forward to reading further in the series, in hopes that the rest of it continues the high quality of these two fine works.

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**Adam Chapnick, ed. *Through Our Eyes: An Alumni History of the University of Toronto Schools, 1960-2000*. Victoria, B.C.: Trafford Publishing, 2004. Pp. 200.**

Some words of disclosure are necessary right at the start. This reviewer was invited to participate in this project at the outset, saw the terms of reference, and refused. Consequently, he picked up this volume with the full intention to write a scathing review about the folly of a multi-authored autobiographical approach to the history of an institution, especially when such a project is primarily aimed as a fund-raising effort.

These churlish aims were defeated. *Through Our Eyes* will be of use to historians of education for the foreseeable future. Not only does it highlight elements of general trends in education in Ontario and Canada over a forty-year period, but it also speaks to more specific questions about the role of elite training in a pluralistic society, the

steps by which academic precociousness becomes labelled “gifted,” and indeed the limits of “gifted” education as a whole.

Although editor Adam Chapnick does not make this clear in the book, the starting point of 1960 was both accidental and unforeseen. This book must be understood as volume two of an intended two-volume set on the entire history of the school through the perspective of alumni reminiscences. The first volume, which would have covered a period from 1910 to 1960, apparently was abandoned. Chapnik, in an overly apologetic Editor’s Note, remarks that the project took five years to complete instead of the planned two. One can sympathize with his desire to get what was complete into print. The absence of the first volume thrusts the reader into the middle of a very complex story.

The University of Toronto Schools (UTS), after all, was the stealth aircraft of the Ontario educational system. It successfully flew above or under the radar of most observers. Originally founded in 1910 as an experimental model school for the University of Toronto Faculty of Education, it changed into a limited-enrolment public school with written entrance examinations, and in this form it lasted until 1993. Only once before 1960 did this transformation become widely known. The Royal Commission on Education in Ontario in 1950 (the Hope Commission) recommended that the school either return to its original mandate or be closed. It was not closed. Whether or not this had any relation to the fact that the Minister of Education in the 1950s, W.J. Dunlop, was a former teacher at the school, is not clear.

With that background, the school’s history can be comprehended. In 1960 it was a conservative, authoritarian, boys’ school with a strict dress code, mandatory cadet corps, formal assemblies, and no written publicity material to hand out to inquisitive parents. The book implies that this had been the case since 1944, when W. Brock MacMurray assumed the position of headmaster. Chubby Coatsworth adequately sets these points out in his chapter on the early 1960s, and Bruce McDougall proceeds to tear them down in his chapter on the late 1960s. The school’s proximity to Rochdale College and Yorkville had a predictable effect on social thought at the school, and students had to suppress snickers at “Brock’s” more old-world ideas, such as that bad students would receive spaghetti instead of steak for dinner when their report cards were sent home to their parents. More importantly, intelligent students were being stifled by the persistence of a private-school atmosphere. They reacted with a protest in 1969, where they marched with blank placards and presented Brock with a blank piece of paper that represented their “unnegotiable demands” (p. 25). This absurdist protest was tame compared to more outspoken student protests in other Ontario schools in the 1960s, but it was a harbinger of change to come.

Rick Spence and John Robson take us through the tumultuous 1970s, when the dress code was abolished, a more individualistic curriculum was introduced, teachers replaced masters, a principal

replaced a headmaster, and assemblies were run by students instead of the principal. The new Principal, Don Gutteridge, brought in the most revolutionary change in the school – the admission of “girls.” The move to a co-educational environment was, to Spence, as much an attempt to quiet political rumblings against the school as it was a progressive impulse, but it had serious consequences. Not only did it remove the school’s ability to compete in several field sports, but it also cost the school a large chunk of its alumni support. A positive effect was improved casting possibilities for school plays. Perhaps the oddest point to be made about these chapters is that Robson, the only author in the collection trained as a historian, has written the most meditative and least historical section, in which he twice remarks that discipline and school uniforms might have been disposed of too carelessly.

Francesca Reinhardt and Asheesh Advani then tackle the 1980s, when the school entered a long-term resource crisis that led to higher tuition fees and the need for an more organized alumni fund-raising campaign to support bursaries for needy students. UTS became caught up in a general restructuring that was affecting the Faculty of Education. At the same time, as Reinhardt notes, “UTS’ peculiar status as both a fee-paying and publicly funded institution...placed it at the heart of the debate about private and public education” (p. 135). The school stuck to its policy of admitting the brightest students who wrote the examination, but there was the problem – who was writing the examination? Reinhardt says it was a school for “north-south Toronto,” and this ignored immigrant communities in the east and west ends of the city. Entrance exams were only advertised in the *Globe and Mail*. Although visible minorities were becoming a larger part of the school environment (this reviewer remembers that he wrote the entrance exam in a room full of students with the last name “Lee,” most of whom were Korean and one of whom passed), the school was still for a restricted academic elite, despite “an influx of children of Chinese, Japanese, and East Indian origin” (p. 153). The school responded to these concerns in two ways: an attempt to link themselves closer to the community, and an attempt to emphasize “Excellence” as a model for the entire Ontario school system. Advani’s comments on Principal Bill Warden’s quest for excellence will provoke laughter among those who attended the school in those years, but perhaps it was the only way for the school to find a role in the public system.

Robin Rix and Laura Bogomolny are given the hard task of dealing with the 1990s. Not only are those years still relatively contemporary, but they also cover the most seismic shift in the history of the school. In 1993, the NDP cut the gordian knot of public support for a “private” school by removing UTS from the budget. Rix notes clearly that the decision was made for political and not economic reasons. The school was educating students using less money per student than the public system. The NDP believed that the role of

“gifted” students was to improve the tone of the whole system, and that hiving them off in a separate school was harmful. The limited ethnic diversity of the school (nearly no black students attended, for example) also was a factor. With no public funding, tuition rose dramatically and the size of the school increased to generate more revenue. And, for Bogomolny, the school entered the new century with a “brave new face” and with no doubts as to its status in the educational scene.

This story of an anomalous school negotiating the stresses and strains of a challenging period of educational history is well told. It includes delightful anecdotes, tales told out of school, remarks on the changing extra-curriculum, paeans to beloved teachers, some gratuitous name-dropping of famous alumni, and a fair number of in-jokes that will go over the heads of the general reader. This could not have been avoided.

What could have been avoided was the disastrous fifty-page photo section, entitled “In Pictures.” Designed to complement the text, it fails utterly. Many photos come with no context; few are credited or annotated. I challenge anyone who was not at the school at the time to adequately explain the photos on page 60 and 76 – these are merely the most egregious examples. Future readers of the book will have no idea what to make of these haphazard collages.

The companion CD-ROM contains lists of student leaders, cadet corps commanders and students who died in both World Wars, a list of all former teachers at the school and their years of service, highlights from the school’s sporting teams, and approximately an hour of music composed by students and alumni over the past twenty years. The music alone may be worth the price of the book.

*Through Our Eyes* was written largely by non-historians, and ignores material that exists in the Provincial Archives of Ontario and the University of Toronto Archives. Two of the protests mentioned in the text, the “non-protest” of 1969 and the Rochdale intervention in UTS cadet training of the same period, were well documented and reported on in security reports now publicly available at UTA. And the PAO contains some interesting inspection reports about the poor facilities that the school was saddled with, as well as a report on the frustrations a wealthy donor experienced finding anyone at the school to answer a phone when he intended to donate.

UTS turns 100 in 2010. At some point it deserves to receive the same treatment that UCC, St. Andrew’s, and Ridley College have received – a proper academic treatment of its entire history. If a group of talented writers could produce *Through Our Eyes*, educational historians should consider what a professional could achieve. Dr. Chapnick, you have five years. Give it a shot.

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