

Review Essays/Notes critiques

The New Diversity in Canadian Educational History*

IN WRITING THIS ARTICLE, I feel somewhat like the Cree hunter who when asked to describe his way of life in a James Bay lands case hesitated: "I'm not sure I can tell the truth.... I can only tell what I know".¹ For the past two decades, the field of educational history in Canada has been a lively one, some would even say a leading one in Canadian social history. That being the case, it is not an easy task to pass judgement on the monographic literature which has appeared since 1986 when Chad Gaffield made the last assessment of the field in the pages of this journal.² My objective here is simply to comment on some interesting examples of particular trends in Canadian educational history against the backdrop of the evolution of the field since 1970. I shall confine my detailed remarks to monographs and collected works written in English since 1985 without any pretence of bibliographic completeness. Indeed, the past five years have seen the appearance of several major works making it possible to discuss major differences of approach, methodology, conception and interpretation. Of course, important research continues to appear in academic journals,³ but I shall make only infrequent reference to this literature. Once we put this commentary in the context of the past 20 years, we should be able to make some judgment about what has been accomplished as well as some tentative suggestions as to where the field might be headed in the 1990s.

To do history these days involves, for many historians, looking for "a usable past",⁴ and this search inevitably leads to revision and controversy. Older

*I wish to thank the Historians' Group in the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia for their helpful critique of an earlier version of this article, especially Jean Barman, Bill Bruneau, and Neil Sutherland.

- 1 James Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths", in James Clifford and George E. Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley, 1986), p. 8.
- 2 Chad Gaffield, "Back to School: Towards a New Agenda for the History of Education", *Acadiensis*, XV, 2 (Spring 1986), pp. 169-90.
- 3 If we take but one region, Atlantic Canada, and one journal *Acadiensis*, we find that in almost every issue since the fall of 1984 there was at least one article concerning educational history. I am thinking of articles by John Reid, Robert Bérard, Paul Axelrod, Donald Macleod, Janet Guildford, Anne Wood, and Martin Hewitt.
- 4 Elisabeth Hansot and David Tyack, "A Usable Past: Using History in Educational Policy", in *National Society for the Study of Education Yearbook*, 1981, part 1 (Chicago, 1982), pp. 1-22; Donald R. Warren, "A Past for the Present", in *History, Education and Public Policy* (Berkeley, 1977), pp. 1-20. Lawrence Cremin views history as "a lamp to light the present". "Forum on the Metropolitan Experience in American Education", *History of Education Quarterly*, 29, 3 (Fall 1989), p. 440.

interpretations are called into question not only because of the discovery of new data, but more significantly, by virtue of new interpretive frameworks. The process of revision is complex. Another approach allows a revision of focus (a new way of seeing the boundaries of the field), a revision of perspective (bringing a new set of questions or conceptual frameworks to the data), or a revision of method (the application of new means of obtaining data such as quantitative methodology or ethnography).⁵

To the degree that historical interpretations have become personalized around moderate revisionists, radical revisionists, and their successors, the field of educational history resembles that of labour or working class history in Canada with its bitter wrangles between what Bryan Palmer calls first and second generation historians.⁶ Historians become associated with certain approaches to the past that are said to reflect not only their methodology but also their personal views on human nature and society's political and economic structure. "Each interpretation", in the words of David Tyack, "directs attention to certain kinds of evidence which can confirm or disprove its assertions of causation.... One is likely to adopt a framework of interpretation that matches one's perception of reality and purpose in writing".⁷

Similarly, it has been no coincidence that ethnic history, working-class history, and women's history, all originating in their "new" form in the early seventies, derived their impetus from the social changes of the late sixties nor that their representation in various books often carried ideological overtones. Thus, as Carl Berger asserts with reference to women's history, "the determination to recover the distinctive historical experience of women was quite consciously fostered to redress the bias of a history that had been written by men, and to

5 David Tyack, "Ways of Seeing", *Harvard Education Review*, 46, 3 (August 1976), pp. 355-89. For a discussion of ethnography in this connection, see Jean Barman, "Constructing the Historical Ethnography of Childhood Through Oral History", paper given at the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, 27 March 1989.

6 See J. Donald Wilson, "Some Observations on Recent Trends in Canadian Educational History", and Bryan Palmer, "Working-Class Canada", both in Carl Berger, ed., *Contemporary Approaches to Canadian History* (Toronto, 1987).

7 Tyack, "Ways of Seeing", p. 388. For the United States, see Diane Ravitch, *The Revisionists Revised: A Critique of the Radical Attack on the Schools* (New York, 1978), and Michael Katz's slashing response in "An Apology for American Educational History", *Harvard Educational Review*, 49, 2 (May 1979), and his more recent "The Politics of Educational History", in his *Reconstructing American Education* (Cambridge, MA, 1987), ch. 5. For Canada, see J. Donald Wilson and David C. Jones, "The 'New' History of Canadian Education", *History of Education Quarterly*, 16, 3 (Fall 1976), pp. 367-75; J. Donald Wilson, "Historiographical Perspectives on Canadian Educational History: A Review Essay", *Journal of Educational Thought*, 11, 1 (1977), pp. 49-63; Bruce Curtis, "Policing Pedagogical Space: "'Voluntary' School Reform and Moral Regulation", *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 13, 3 (1988), pp. 283-304.

satisfy a demand for recognition of members of the female sex not only as a passive group but as important actors in their own right”.⁸ Likewise the perspective of educational historians on the past was conditioned in part by dismay over the state of the public schools in present-day North America. All this makes the certainty of historical generalizations quite problematic. One is reminded of E.H. Carr’s famous fish:

Facts are like fish swimming about in a vast and sometimes inaccessible ocean; and what the historian catches will depend partly on chance, but mainly on what part of the ocean he chooses to fish in and what tackle he chooses to use, these two factors, being, of course, determined by the kind of fish he wants to catch. By and large, the historian will get the kind of facts he wants to catch. History means interpretation.⁹

Two books that will likely set the agenda for writing educational history into the 1990s are Susan Houston and Alison Prentice, *Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1988) and Bruce Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871* (Lewes, Falmer Press, 1988). The three authors of these books are also representative in that one teaches in an Education Faculty (Prentice), one in a History Department (Houston), and one in a Sociology Department (Curtis). Susan Houston and Alison Prentice may well represent for educational history what Bryan Palmer describes as the “realists” of working-class history: Irving Abella, Donald Avery, David Bercuson and Ross McCormack. “Their work, they would argue”, writes Palmer, “tackles the important questions, and does so without undue dramatization”.¹⁰ The sources in these books are mainly official and top-down. The view is revisionist but only mildly so. Description and narration predominate while the theoretical takes a back seat. The central administration in Houston and Prentice is seen as all-powerful, this in the face of much evidence presented since the early 1970s by Robert Gidney, Douglas Lawr and Wyn Millar that the local authorities had a significant impact on the development of the system. Houston/Prentice hold that Ryerson’s “advice would never have been sought or needed in the first place [by the local boards] had not the laws of the 1840s and 1850s created a complex and frequently changing set of rules governing the management of the province’s publicly supported schools” (p. 155). This leads the authors to the rather cynical conclusion that “Ryerson’s mill” had over the span of three decades moulded compliant subjects who “knew,

8 Carl Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History* (2nd ed., Toronto, 1986), p. 312.

9 E.H. Carr, *What is History?* (London, 1964), p. 23.

10 Palmer, “Working-Class Canada”, p. 129.

at least, how to fill out a form. If the thing were done right the fountains of government opened and the money poured (or trickled) out” (p. 156). Not even Bruce Curtis has such a pessimistic view of human nature.

Pursuing the analogy, Bruce Curtis is for Canadian educational history what Greg Kealey and Bryan Palmer have been for working-class history. The Marxist approach is front and centre, model-building and theoretical components are important, and the conclusions are meant to have import for the present day, to help us understand the purpose of schooling in the modern state. In other words, this is “usable” history. Curtis’ approach is an excellent example of what Carl Berger has described with reference to the “new” history as “a more intense involvement with anonymous social processes and structures that underpinned whole ways of life”.¹¹ Or as Chad Gaffield points out: “Rather than a simple dichotomy of powerful/powerless, many historians now argue that actual power is distributed in unequal proportions but among all social groups. The object of historical analysis is therefore to explore this range and to determine the specific circumstances within which agency is exercised”.¹² Methodologically, Curtis exemplifies the bottom-up approach. His meticulous research in the collection of correspondence in the Education Office for Canada West in the Public Archives of Ontario allowed him to render for the reader a picture of how students and parents on the one hand and trustees and teachers on the other felt about education and each other 150 years ago. Despite his often thick and turgid prose (oh, for a firm editor!), Curtis does portray the lived experience of the participants in mid-19th century school systems while trying to provide “a more authentic description and analysis of ordinary life and the material regularities that shape group existence”.¹³

For Curtis, schools are repressive instruments of social control designed to protect bourgeois society against social nuisances and the ominous threat posed by the “dangerous classes” as Ontario emerged into the industrial age. In this interpretation teachers were the main agents of repression, and the classroom the main arena for carrying out this repression. In his insistence upon dominance and class conflict Curtis is intent upon emphasizing the repressive functions of the public school. Ironically, like most other historians of the period, he too is fascinated with Egerton Ryerson and the role of the individual in history. For Curtis Ryerson personifies the ruling elite. Throughout the book there is a strong political framework of analysis and a heavy reliance on Marxist theory, but “a Marxism sensitive to cultural forms” (p. 19). His main focus is on the role

11 Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History*, p. 301.

12 Chad Gaffield, “Coherence and Chaos in Educational Historiography”, *Interchange*, 17, 2 (1986), p. 117.

13 Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History* (1st ed., Toronto, 1976), p. 264.

of education in what he calls “state formation”.¹⁴ One of Curtis’ strengths is to put the politics back into social history; for too many social historians their work has become history with the politics left out.¹⁵ Political structures do, after all, set the boundaries of public discourse.¹⁶ He thus restores politics to its rightful place in historical analysis and helps us to see the origins of the modern interventionist state through his discussion of the central role played by public schooling in creating such a state. In his own words, Curtis concludes: “The control exerted by the school consumers [parents and students] and teachers over school knowledge and school methods was removed in principle, and increasingly in practice, and was vested in a centralized public authority. The free market in school knowledge largely disappeared. School knowledge became state knowledge, uniform and specified from the centre”.¹⁷ This Foucaultian perspective with its concerns for power relations and conflict over power is certainly very different from Houston/Prentice and allows us to take note of the distance between these two interpretations of 19th century Ontario. Curtis’ perspective also betrays the influence of Antonio Gramsci’s theory of bourgeois cultural hegemony, although Curtis curiously makes no reference to him. Fundamental social divisions develop and change over time, and Curtis is intent upon tracing these.

The nub of Curtis’ thesis is surprisingly simple, namely, that the common schools of Upper Canada were vastly different after mid-century reform than before. Both the form and content of schooling were radically changed as the forces behind “state formation” took charge. According to him, this is the crucial point that the critics of radical revisionism, the “voluntaryists”, miss or underestimate. There is, then, no continuum, in his view, between the myriad of schools Gidney, for example, discovered in operation before the 1840s and the schools which composed the Ryersonian system after 1850. “State school reformers...sought a new political role for the local school”, according to Curtis, “and opposed many popular educational practices”.¹⁸ In other words, they did more than simply build upon what went before: “The construction of the Educational State was accomplished only through the destruction of a prior educational organization and the marginalization of the structure of educational possibili-

14 This term was made popular by Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer in *The Great Arch: English State Formation as Cultural Revolution* (Oxford, 1985).

15 See John English, “The Second Time Around: Political Scientists Writing History”, in *Contemporary Approaches to Canadian History*, pp. 245-7.

16 Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, “The Political Crisis of Social History: A Marxian Perspective”, *Journal of Social History*, 2 (Winter 1976), pp. 213, 219.

17 Curtis, *Building*, p. 302.

18 Curtis, “Policing Pedagogical Space”, p. 292.

ties” (p. 15). And the management which carried out this transformation was a small but effective bureaucracy headed up by Ryerson. It was this framework, firmly in place from the School Act of 1850, which the local populace, parents and taxpayers, reacted and petitioned against, thus forcing the bureaucracy in turn to react with new procedures and a larger administrative structure. Part Two, the last five chapters of *Building the Educational State*, consists of a very detailed account of how what Curtis calls “pedagogical space” becomes a form of “state space”, and thus how the schooling system carries out its function of state formation. As Curtis has stated elsewhere:

The School Acts put new forms of political governance in place. They abolished the power of school meetings in the locality to directly govern the local school. The direct and regular participation of parents in pedagogical space was suppressed. Measures were taken to differentiate teachers from the community. Legal penalties were applied to effective opponents of pedagogical activity. The state came to specify the curriculum and the nature of school books. The direct participatory democracy characteristic of communal schooling was replaced in state administration by limited forms of representative democracy.¹⁹

Faced with Curtis’ state-imposed “pedagogical space”, 19th-century parents accommodated themselves and made the most of the situation presented to them. Parents and students found ways to make use of what was learned at school, and very often the outcome was not as anticipated by the authorities in charge.²⁰ Just as native education in industrial schools sowed the seeds of pan-Indian consciousness and protest by bringing native people of diverse backgrounds together for the first time, so public school students often found uses for the literacy and social consciousness learned in school of which the authorities did not approve. For such students schooling became a liberating not a socially restricting experience.

Where Curtis shifts most markedly from social control theorizing is in his insistence that the public school’s main function was to bring about a state of self-governance and self-regulation among students, or as he puts it, “the anchoring of the conditions of political governance in the selves of the governed” (p. 15). He insists: “Education, for Ryerson, was not a *means* to government; education *was* government: government of the self” (p. 110). Soon the new educational arrangements came to be accepted as “natural”. The very notion

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

²⁰ See Brian Simon, “Can Education Change Society?” in J. Donald Wilson, ed., *An Imperfect Past: Education and Society in Canadian History* (Vancouver, 1984), pp. 7-29.

that students were to learn to govern themselves and that the machinery of schooling was constructed to achieve this end may be Curtis' most important contribution to the educational historiography of the period.

Curtis devotes one long chapter (eight) to "popular resistance" to public schooling which takes the form of both student and parental resistance. To combat opposition, teachers and trustees had their weapons ranging from humiliation to strapping to suspension. Parents did not always accept these punishments gracefully, however, and sometimes even took teachers and trustees to court when they could not attain satisfaction. In recounting the extent of this opposition, Curtis has performed a useful service. It is undoubtedly true that there was more opposition to the form and practice of schooling than earlier writers would have us believe. Curtis also offers another important insight by suggesting that some new "social categories" were created in part through educational reform. The dependent status of childhood was definitely reinforced and the terms "truant" and "delinquent" found new definition or were actually invented. In the contest between state and public, between governors and governed, there can be little doubt about which side had greater access to the resources of power needed to force adjustments on the other. And this remained true despite the evolution of more "democratic" organs of political representation. Herein lies the strength of his perspective and its insistence upon defining capitalism as representing something more than factories and cities, industrialization and urbanization. Or as Curtis insists, "capitalism...points to certain ways of organizing the production and reproduction of material life in broad historical periods" (p. 289). There is no question but that by 1850 in Canada West, "public education" had come to replace "popular education". Curtis offers us a new way to conceptualize this change, and thereby has succeeded in pushing forward the educational debate regarding the origins of public schooling.

Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario, a volume in the Ontario Historical Studies Series, was written by two of Canada's leading educational historians, both of whom studied under Michael Katz but have long since formed their own academic reputations. Despite the attempt in chapters one and two to convey a sense of the common family and views about education and schooling, by chapters four to six the authors emphasize control from the centre. They admit that theirs "is a view drawn chiefly from the centre" (p. 96). As the book proceeds, the family, so evident in the early chapters, as both educator and educational strategist, recedes from view and the traditional heavy hand of Ryerson and his administrators asserts itself. By the last decades of the century the school had become central to the lives of all young children and many teenagers too. As the authors so perceptively conclude: "When [where?] once the time spent at school was fitted around the demands of family time, now the situation was reversed. Increasingly, the regulated hours of the school day,

week, and year would dictate the routines of family life” (p. 344).²¹

“Respectability”, so central to the new bourgeois social order, “was to be the key to the mid-Victorian schoolroom culture”, write Houston and Prentice (p. 308). Public education and temperance were, of course, the new reform movements of the 19th century responsible for redefining the very notion of respectability. Houston and Prentice make much of the role the public school played in instilling in its clients both a work ethic and moral discipline. Textbooks reflected these values, whether we consider the Irish National Readers or Ryerson’s own *First Lessons in Christian Morals: For Canadian Families and Schools* (1871). Teachers, fresh out of the Toronto Normal School, carried the same message in both their daily lives and their pedagogical practice.²² The “hidden curriculum”, as we know it today, was equally important. Houston and Prentice are very good at describing this educational ambience. “Many children and parents”, they write, “experienced this complex process of social redefinition most directly in and through the local school and there, often unwittingly, learned above all to accommodate to a different social reality than they had previously known” (pp. 308-9).

One of the strong points of *Schooling and Scholars* is the emphasis the authors place on the “going back to school” theme, the title of Gaffield’s article in this journal in 1986. If we assume that history is created by the ordinary participant acting within structural constraints, it is noteworthy that for the past two decades most Canadian educational historians have managed to avoid examining the process of schooling and the culture of the classroom. Ironically, the strength of the prototypical whig historian of an earlier era, Charles Phillips, lay in this very area.²³ But since 1970, attention has focused on the “big picture”, the creation of structures, big reform movements, and the sweep of change. While not neglecting these matters, Houston and Prentice give us some real insight into the content and experience of schooling in early Ontario. They, like Curtis, even dwell on the resistance to teachers and trustees on the part of students and their parents, stressing that the legislation and school regulations were not always readily complied with by the schools’ clientele.

21 See also John Bullen, “Hidden Workers: Child Labour and the Family Economy in Late Nineteenth Century Urban Ontario”, *Labour/Le travail*, 18 (Fall 1986), pp. 163-87, and Lorna F. Hurl, “Restricting Child Factory Labour in Late Nineteenth Century Ontario”, *Labour/Le travail*, 21 (Spring 1988), pp. 87-121.

22 For details, see Alison Prentice, “‘Like Friendly Atoms in Chemistry’: Women and Men at Normal School in Mid-Nineteenth Century Toronto”, in David R. Keene and Colin Read, eds., *Metropolis and Hinterland: Essays on Old Ontario Presented to J.M.S. Careless* (Toronto, forthcoming).

23 R.D. Gidney, “Egerton Ryerson”, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. XI (Toronto, 1982), pp. 783-95.

Schooling and Scholars marks the culmination of two decades' research and writing in the area of mid-19th century Ontario education. The current concerns of social class, gender, race and ethnicity, while certainly not absent, have no central consistent focus in the book. The history of ideas is almost completely overlooked, although Bob Gidney's excellent biography of Egerton Ryerson in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* was available to the authors.²⁴ The book synthesizes a vast amount of material produced about mid-19th century Ontario since 1970, but surprisingly it lacks the excitement these two authors and their doctoral colleagues at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education were responsible for engendering into the field in the 1970s. Maybe that is expecting too much from what is essentially a work of synthesis, as was its counterpart in the series, Robert M. Stamp's *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976* which appeared in 1982.

As in the 1970s, educational historians in the 1980s preferred to stick to local and regional topics for their monographs. But one historian did venture into the forbidding waters of a nationwide study. That was the late George Tomkins in a major overview of the history of Canadian curriculum, entitled *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum* (Toronto, Prentice-Hall, 1986). In his elegant "Forward", Tomkins' friend and colleague Neil Sutherland stamps the book as "seminal" in the history of Canadian education, and points to the areas of overlap with Canadian intellectual and social history. "Unlike much of the recent and important monographic work in the history of education", Sutherland continues, "Tomkins' book will be widely read within academic fields in education as well" (p. x). This is because Tomkins takes us into the classroom, as does Sutherland himself in his recent work,²⁵ permitting us to experience, mainly through the analysis of textbooks, what it must have been like to go to school in the past. Tomkins also is strong on pedagogy, tracing the shifts through Pestalozzi, Froebel, Herbart, Dewey, and neo-progressivism, and on establishing the socio-economic context of change. All of this eventually provides the reader with "a realistic perspective on present prescriptions and practices regarding the public school curriculum" (p. xii). In brief, it is a "usable" history.

Although far too detailed for easy reading, Tomkins' study shines a light on often neglected aspects of educational history, such as an analysis of what lies behind decision-making on curriculum issues — who decides and why and with what results, both intended and unintended? He carries the reader through

24 C.E. Phillips, *The Development of Education in Canada* (Toronto, 1957).

25 Neil Sutherland, "'The Triumph of Formalism': Elementary Schooling in Vancouver from the 1920s to the 1960s", in R.A.J. McDonald and Jean Barman, eds., *Vancouver Past: Essays in Social History* (Vancouver, 1986), pp. 175-210.

numerous case studies from the *ratio studiorum* in New France to the Hall-Dennis Report in 1960s Ontario, showing how curriculum decisions tended to reflect popular values and assumptions about what constituted a proper education at a point in time. A central theme in Tomkins' book is his contention that the curriculum faces a paradox: it is expected to transmit culture from one generation to the next (here he draws on Bernard Bailyn), but also it is expected to meet the demands of social change. According to Tomkins, curriculum issues in Canadian education can be relegated to one of three categories: first, the moral and intellectual function of the curriculum; second, the debate over what knowledge is of the most worth, the cultural ("the best that has been thought and said in the world") or the practical/useful ("to prepare us for complete living"); third, the curriculum for cultural survival, that is, the creation or maintenance of Canadian identity. *A Common Countenance* has a message for educational historians and curriculum theorists alike.

In a biting commentary on the fragmentary nature of Canadian history, Queen's historian Donald Swainson has lamented the demise of the "classical historians" who "left one with a feeling that Canada was, at least potentially, an integrated unit". "A reading of recent historians", the local and regional and "new" historians, he concluded, "leaves one with an atomistic view of the country".²⁶ Well, Swainson would be happy with Tomkins' synthesis. A nationalist to the end, and of the "traditional" school, Tomkins saw Canadian history as an integrated unit. That is one reason why he changed his political allegiance from the CCF to the Liberals under Trudeau. But in reading Tomkins' book one can see clearly the very dilemma that grips Canadian historians today: Canada is an amalgam of regions, not to mention a population of "limited identities" defined by class, gender and ethnicity. That being so, it is not surprising that historians tend to write of communities, regions, and classes of people rather than the nation as a whole. One of the main weaknesses of Tomkins' book is that in the last analysis it cannot support the national framework that he builds it on. "It has long been evident", he writes, "that a distinctive Canadian education and curriculum clearly exist" (p. 2). But there has never been a national curriculum and probably never will be. And yet, Tomkins organizes his entire book as if there were a national curriculum, as if trends noticeable in one province were simultaneously observable elsewhere in the nation. He stresses commonality over diversity to such a degree that one feels a throw-back to the 1950s consensus view of Canadian history. For Tomkins this was a matter of emphasis. He was certainly well aware of the reality of diversity and regionalism in Canada, but he considered that we had neglected somewhat the similarities and historical continuities.

26 Donald Swainson, "Tribal Drummers", *Books in Canada* (March 1980), pp. 3-6.

The apparent need for national synthesis is addressed once again, this time indirectly, through the pages of Chad Gaffield's *Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict: The Origins of the French-Language Controversy in Ontario* (Kingston and Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987). This important book stands as both a challenge and a response to Bernard Bailyn's lament in his 1981 presidential address before the American Historical Association that "the great proliferation of historical writing [in the 1970s] has served not to illuminate central themes of western history but to obscure them". Bailyn went on to condemn "detailed community studies", because they "multiply with such speed in so many places on such disparate data that synthesis into a coherent whole, even for limited regions, seems almost impossible".²⁷ Gaffield's study brilliantly lays to rest Bailyn's "fragmentation" argument and his concern that community studies are unable to say something significant about the past, to speak to the big issues. Through a carefully crafted local history, Gaffield gives us a close-up picture of a broad economic transformation taking place in Ontario and Canada at the end of the 19th century. He shows precisely how studies of topics such as the agricultural economy, the lumber industry, geographic mobility, social structure, and family and kinship in Prescott County in Eastern Ontario offer insights into larger issues, such as the French-language controversy in late 19th century Ontario and the emergence of serious French-English tensions on the national scene. The author admirably demonstrates how a historian relying upon the social sciences rather than traditional narration can move between a discussion of specific communities and general experiences, and analyze the interplay between human agency and socio-economic structures and the relationship in this case between official policy regarding minority French-language schooling and the actual educational experience of the objects of the policy.

Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict is a detailed case study of a small region in the tradition of Mary Ryan's study of Oneida County, Kenneth Lockridge on Dedham, Massachusetts, and John Demos on Plymouth, Massachusetts. The strength of all these studies lies in revealing patterns of everyday social life with potential for generalization. The residents of Prescott County, for example, are examined, qualitatively and quantitatively, "in the context of their own material lives" (p. xvii). Gaffield is motivated by a conviction that "culture, ethnicity, and identity are not static categories but rather dynamic processes occurring in changing historical contexts" (p. xvi). Thus, to appreciate these dynamics it is not sufficient to study simply the "struggle of the ideas and ambitions involving politicians, bishops, and various social leaders" (p. xiii), as

27 Bernard Bailyn, "The Challenge of Modern Historiography", *American Historical Review*, 87, 2 (April 1982), pp. 1-24.

recounted in the earlier histories of church-state relations in Canada by C.B. Sissons, Manoly Lupul, Paul Crunican, and Franklin Walker. Rather, Gaffield insists upon the importance of understanding the social context of the language controversy. That means understanding the everyday life of the average resident of Prescott County right down to the level of the household and family economy; the anonymous francophones and anglophones as well as their “unknown” (to history) leaders; the life chances of children and youth (whether to work or go to school, for example); rural/urban distinctions and the difference in perspective of a school trustee in Hawkesbury as opposed to a Department of Education official in Toronto; and operations of what Gaffield calls the “système agro-forestier”. In short, we are presented with a case study of the effects of industrialization and economic change on a particular, representative community: a discussion of the relationship between individuals, families, and groups, on the one hand, and the so-called grand events of history on the other.

As a piece of quantitative history, Gaffield’s approach resembles Michael Katz’s book on Hamilton and David Gagan’s on Peel County. The numerous tables and figures (over 50) attest to the author’s reliance on quantitative methods. The specific groups chosen for study were defined by variables such as birthplace, ethnic origin, religion, language, age, gender, marital status, social and economic position, political party affiliation, and school attendance. The author’s demographic work based on the use of quantitative techniques releases a series of important new findings, such as those set out in chapter two, that contradict the accepted view of English-French relations in Prescott County and Ontario generally. Thus new historical techniques are applied to old historical questions with stunning results. But Gaffield knows also how to use qualitative sources to effect. In fact, the balance between quantitative and qualitative is exemplary and marks a distinct improvement over Katz and Gagan in this respect. His “bottom-up” history puts a different perspective on social and economic developments than the traditionally rendered “view from Toronto”.

Despite its title, the book is not only an educational history. There are important elements of political, agricultural and ethnic history, but the book’s most exciting sections may be those on the history of the Canadian family and childhood, a common feature of good educational history these days. Gaffield is able to show how age, gender, and family operated as causal as well as derivative forces in the shaping of the society and economy of Prescott County. As the wage-labour economy came into being, forcing the separation of home and work, the public and separate school systems facilitated for both francophones and anglophones the passage of children out of the home and into the changing provincial society and economy. Once again, the advantage of a narrow focus on a single region helps to establish precisely the links between the family and other social institutions. The reader puts down this book with a genuine sense of the private experience of the inhabitants of Prescott County, of the role of children in that society, and of the process of family formation.

What started out as a frontier zone sparsely settled by anglophones became by the 1880s a populated area as the Ontario government shifted from a policy of voluntary assimilation, which dated back to Egerton Ryerson's days, to a deliberate series of measures, culminating eventually in Regulation 17 in 1912, designed to curtail French-language instruction in all provincial schools. Francophones turned in greater numbers to the temporary shelter of separate schools and, as Gaffield demonstrates a Franco-Ontarian identity was born. Herein lies an example of what Thomas Bender calls relating history to public culture. "It is", he avers, "by understanding parts in their relation to other parts, as opposed to conferring upon them, whether by intention or through inadvertence, a false autonomy, that history becomes whole, a synthetic narrative".²⁸ The main strength of Gaffield's microhistory is that he is able to show where "the history of the *longue durée* in Prescott County intersected the larger Canadian *événementielle* to produce the cultural discontinuity of the late nineteenth century" (p. 187).

In the enthusiasm for the "new" history, important contributions from the "old" history are sometimes forgotten or neglected. Yet as Arthur Schlesinger has written, "the unique subject matter for the intellectual historian is the role thought plays in enabling men and women to accept and to transform their environment. The unifying focus is the problem how and why people change their minds".²⁹ Therefore, just as McKillop's *A Disciplined Intelligence* could be an inspiration to Tomkins in his history of the Canadian curriculum, so might we expect William Westfall's *Two Worlds: the Protestant Culture of Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Kingston and Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989) to offer new insights to educational historians, since he approaches religious history as in part an aspect of intellectual history. And, as we know, many of the chief school promoters were themselves churchmen and their viewpoints spilled over into the curriculum and textbooks. Studies such as Westfall's can offer new perspectives on issues central to educational history. For example, on the controversy among historians over whether educational change in the 19th century was prompted by social reform or social control, he suggests that school promoters could preach both control and reform "because they justified public education by appealing to a secularized version of the basic story of Christian redemption. Since all people bore the weight of original sin, society must sustain public order by supporting schools, prisons, courts, and churches,

28 Thomas Bender, "Wholes and Parts: The Need for Synthesis in American History", *Journal of American History*, 73 (June 1986), p. 131. For another example of a successful microhistory with an excellent chapter on schools, see David C. Jones, *Empire of Dust: Settling and Abandoning the Prairie Dry Belt* (Edmonton, 1987).

29 Quoted in Joel Colton, "Intellectual History in the 1980s: The Case for the Defense", in Theodore K. Rabb and Robert I. Rotberg, eds., *The New History: The 1980s and Beyond* (Princeton, 1982), p. 279.

which moderated the anti-social repercussions of human nature". In this case redemption was attained by the public school and in the process society raised "to a higher level of existence" (p. 7). Moreover, Paul Axelrod and John Reid's collection of essays on the history of higher education in Canada entitled *Youth, University, and Canadian Society* (Kingston and Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989) combines social and intellectual history in its examination of university life. In focusing for a change on the student experience, it does for post-secondary education what some of the titles reviewed above have done for the public school classroom experience. Relating universities to their regions is also a feature of this book, underlining once again the vitality of regional cultures in Canada. Four articles out of fourteen, for example, concern Atlantic Canada: Judith Fingard on Dalhousie, Malcolm MacLeod on Memorial, Barry Moody on Acadia, and John Reid on university reform in the Maritime provinces up to 1933. Together with Reid's outstanding two-volume *Mount Allison: A History, to 1963* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1984), it would seem that the area of greatest strength in educational history in Atlantic Canada currently is the history of higher education.

The essays in *Youth, University and Canadian Society* serve to give us a much clearer picture than we had of Canadian universities and students in the past century. Questions of accessibility and the nature of the student body — class, gender, age, place of origin, and religion — are particularly well addressed. Even what students did with their lives after attaining their degrees, a thorny problem for researchers, is documented in several articles. Likewise, the changing student profile as courses were added and the intimate links between higher education and the emergence of professionalism in Canada — law, medicine, education, nursing — are topics that are introduced in this collection but merit further attention. The impact of depression and war are thoroughly canvassed. The conclusion seems to be that higher education contributed to social mobility in Canada rather than social control. This is a thoroughly engaging book, opening up new questions and avenues of research.

Like intellectual history, historical biography has been experiencing hard times of late, in part because so many biographies in Canadian history since the 1950s have been of political figures, and-not always figures of the first rank. Perhaps because of the continuing notion of the importance of "school promoters" in Canadian educational history, biography has never slipped entirely from view. In 1974, Robert Patterson assembled a collection of such biographies in *Profiles of Canadian Educators*, and four years later Neil McDonald and Alf Chaiton published a volume of essays entitled *Egerton Ryerson and His Times*.³⁰ More

30 Robert S. Patterson, John W. Chalmers, and John W. Friesen, eds., *Profiles of Canadian Educators* (Toronto, 1974); Neil McDonald and Alf Chaiton, eds., *Egerton Ryerson and His Times* (Toronto, 1978).

recently, Anne Wood's biography of the noted progressive educator and Ottawa schools inspector J.H. Putman continued the tradition. *Idealism Transformed: The Making of a Progressive Educator* (Kingston and Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985) was a much-praised book; in fact, it won the book prize of the Canadian History of Education Association in 1986. The close analysis of John Watson's Hegelian idealism, John Dewey's instrumentalism, G.S. Hall's functional psychology, and Edward Thorndike's behavioural psychology — ostensibly because they all influenced the book's subject — may please intellectual historians like Brian McKillop, but does all this make for good biography? Unfortunately, the personal touch that makes biographies live is almost entirely missing. The book's real value, however, may lie quite outside the scope envisioned by its author. David Jones in a critical review of the book considers Putman a prototypical Canadian progressive, afflicted by what he calls the "palsy of progressivism". Jones' scenario of the typical cycle of progressive reform dating from 1900 to 1940 and well represented in Putman's efforts in British Columbia and Ontario as detailed by Wood is worth repeating *in extenso*:

In time the expertise triumphs in the minds of the [progressive] reformers and they begin disqualifying recalcitrants from full participation in their reforms on the basis of their alleged ignorance. It is the old, old story of reformers who bespeak the joys of self-realization in active involvement in a new order, who cannot understand the opposition that rears up against them, and who in the end are quite happy not only to force the sinners into heaven but also to tell them once they are there that they have less control over their destinies than before.³¹

This process was repeated by the likes of George M. Weir and H.B. King in British Columbia, James L. Hughes and John Seath in Ontario, Alexander MacKay and Loran De Wolfe in Nova Scotia, and Hubert Newland in Alberta. Patterson's book contained biographies of these very men. Like Wood's Putman, they were all celebratory in the fashion of the sixties. What we need now is a collective biography of these progressives within the conceptual framework Jones suggests. Such a study would shed new light on Canada's progressive era.

That biography still has a place in educational as in mainstream history can be seen in the form of James Greenlee's study of Sir Robert Falconer, president of the University of Toronto from 1911 to 1932.³² Greenlee admirably situates

31 David C. Jones, review of Wood, *Idealism Transformed* in *Canadian Historical Review*, 67, 3 (September 1986), p. 445.

32 James G. Greenlee, *Sir Robert Falconer: A Biography* (Toronto, 1988).

Falconer in the context of his times as does Marguerite Van Die in her outstanding combination of biography and intellectual history, *An Evangelical Mind: Nathanael Burwash and the Methodist Tradition in Canada, 1839-1918* (Kingston and Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989). Van Die lays stress on Burwash's influential role as an educator, including childhood religious education, theological education and university federation (while president and chancellor of Victoria University). Two other examples of effective biographies are Brian Tittle's *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 1986) and David Nock's account of the Rev. E. F. Wilson's work as a missionary to the Indians near Sault Ste. Marie, entitled *A Victorian Missionary and Canadian Indian Policy* (Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988). Another use of the biographical approach has not proved so successful. *Founders: Innovators in Education, 1830-1980* (Edmonton, University of Alberta Press, 1987) by Ernest Stabler is in reality a collection of discrete essays about so-called "innovators" in education, of whom only two are Canadian, James Tomkins and Moses Coady. Stabler tries in the final chapter to tie the book together by offering a theory of "innovation" based upon the achievements of his innovators. But at the end one can only conclude his theory is "not proven". What he says makes sense, but is his material generalizable beyond the subjects of his study? His selection of educators extending over a 150-year period from several countries is extremely arbitrary. Why one would want to compare the likes of N.F.S. Grundtvig and Harold Wilson I can not imagine. The point of the book, which remains heavily reliant on secondary sources throughout, remains a bit of a mystery. The model may well have been W.A.C. Stewart and W.P. McCann's *The Educational Innovators* (2 vols., London, Macmillan, 1967, 1968) but at least their educators were all British and therein lay a common basis of comparison.

It is satisfying to see that general histories of Canada are at last beginning to devote more space to schooling, children and education. One example is J.R. Miller's *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1989) with an important chapter devoted entirely to the schooling of Indian children. A second example, *Canadian Women: A History* (Toronto, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988), written by Alison Prentice and five other women, is a remarkable book. Although multi-authored, it hangs together as well as many single-authored accounts, perhaps because of the authors' shared feminist perspective defined in part as a recognition "that women's situation and experience are distinctive" (p. 14). With both Prentice and Beth Light already well-published educational historians, it is not surprising that many sections of the book dwell in some detail on schooling, particularly that accorded girls, and on women teachers, a topic of particular

interest to Prentice.³³ This book offers an entirely new view of Canadian history organized as it is around “three major turning points in the history of women in Canada” (p. 13), and not around the usual political/military turning points male historians have traditionally chosen. One can imagine that numerous master’s and doctoral theses will be prompted into existence over the next decade because of the new perspectives presented in this book. It will be for the nineties what the work of Creighton and Careless was for the sixties.

A number of anthologies on various aspects of Canadian educational history have appeared since 1985. In the interests of space, I shall cite only four anthologies, all of which are typical of the genre in that each has a very specific focus. In 1986, two of note appeared: *Indian Education in Canada: The Legacy* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 1986), edited by Jean Barman, Yvonne Hebert and Don McCaskill, and *Schools in the West: Essays in Canadian Educational History* (Calgary, Detselig, 1986), edited by Nancy Sheehan, J. Donald Wilson and David Jones. The former collection covering topics from the era of New France through the British colonial period to 1970 was timely because of the current controversy over integration of Indian children into “white” schools as opposed to Indian control of their own education. These current issues are highlighted in a second volume by the same editors subtitled *The Challenge* (1987). *Schools in the West* continues the pattern of regional collections established a decade ago in a book called *Shaping the Schools of the Canadian West*.³⁴ These books have served well the dual purpose of providing course material for classes in Canadian educational history as well as presenting in one place the results of new research into the region’s educational history, often carried out by graduate students. Two other collections worthy of mention are Michael Welton’s *Knowledge for the People: The Struggle for Adult Learning in English-Speaking Canada, 1828-1973* (Toronto, OISE Press, 1987), an attempt to make adult educators aware of their history and to push educational historians into giving more consideration to adult learning; and George Rawlyk’s *Canadian Baptists and Christian Higher*

33 Alison Prentice and the late Marta Danylewyz published between 1983 and 1986 three important articles on the history of teachers in Ontario and Quebec in the 19th century culminating in “Teacher’s Work: Changing Patterns and Perceptions in the Emerging School Systems of Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Central Canada”, *Labour/le travail*, 17 (Spring 1986), pp. 59-80. For work on the history of teachers in British Columbia, see J. Donald Wilson, “The Visions of Ordinary Participants: Teachers’ Views of Rural Schooling in British Columbia in the 1920s”, in Patricia E. Roy, ed., *A History of British Columbia: Selected Readings* (Toronto, 1989), pp. 239-55, and “‘I am here to help if you need me’: British Columbia’s Rural Teachers’ Welfare Officer, 1928-1934”, *Journal of Canadian Studies* (forthcoming); also Jean Barman, “Birds of Passage or Early Professionals? Teachers in Nineteenth-Century British Columbia”, *Historical Studies in Education* (forthcoming).

34 D.C. Jones, N.M. Sheehan and R.M. Stamp, eds., *Shaping the Schools of the Canadian West* (Calgary, 1979).

Education (Kingston and Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), a discussion by four authors of the divergent views on the efficacy and proper forms of higher education held by Canadian Baptists. Of particular interest to readers of this journal are the chapter on the Antigonish Movement in the Welton book and two chapters on Acadia College and Watson Kirkconnell, longtime Acadia president, in the Rawlyk book.

Michael Welton, a professor at Dalhousie University, has been leading a two-pronged personal campaign of late to encourage adult educators in Canada to consider more seriously the history of their field and to prod educational historians to broaden their focus beyond the traditional public school system and the life experience of children and adolescents in order to incorporate systems of adult education. Briefly stated, his argument goes as follows:

Adult learning is more central to societal reproduction, resistance, and transformation than that of children. Resistance to and transformation of societal structures emerges from the adult population, and is premised upon men and women's ability to learn new ways of seeing the world and acting within it.... We ought to think of all of society as a vast school and begin to understand how autonomous learning emerges or is blocked and distorted within our political economy.³⁵

It is in this sense that *Knowledge for the People* is an important book. All nine essays adhere to Welton's above prescription whether the subject is the Montreal Mechanics' Institute, Frontier College, Women's Institutes, the Workers' Educational Association, the Antigonish Movement, workers' theatre, the National Film Board, a Co-operative College, or adult education under the new CCF government in Saskatchewan in 1944-45. The challenge is there and as with the Axelrod and Reid collection, Canadian educational historians are once again urged to get out of the rut of defining their field solely in terms of the history of schools and schooling.³⁶

Canadian Baptists and Christian Higher Education is a slim volume exploring the Baptist contribution to the philosophy and practice of Canadian higher education. In his introduction the editor stresses the variety of views held by Canadian Baptists over the past two centuries about the purpose of higher education. A tension emerged between the Evangelicals' fear that higher education would destroy spirituality and its defence by liberals as a means to contend with modern doubts about religion. Also, were Baptist institutions to be instruments

³⁵ *Knowledge for the People*, p. 7.

³⁶ See also the special issue of the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education *History Bulletin* (May 1989) devoted to "Decoding Coady: Perspectives on Reading a Text".

of evangelical piety or economic advance for Baptists? Three educational institutions are examined: Acadia University, McMaster University, and Brandon College. The essays all attempt to link the world of religious and secular ideas with the socio-cultural context in which they thrived, with particular reference to the effect of regionalism. Barry Moody's contention that the contribution of the Baptists (and Acadia University) to Canadian intellectual life has been seriously undervalued by intellectual historians is, however, wide of the mark. "Developments within the dissenting tradition", he asserts, "have been largely ignored by those historians who would attempt to understand the intellectual origins of twentieth-century Canada" (pp. 28-9). He seems unaware of, or at least has not acknowledged, the work of Marlene Shore on the subject. In a 1985 article and a book two years later, she paid particular attention to the role which Canadian Baptists played in developing social science.³⁷ Shore points to the work of C.A. Dawson and Harold Innis, both Baptists, and suggests that "the affinity between Dawson's and Innis' outlooks lends credence to the argument that the Baptists played an important role in the development of social science in North America during the early twentieth century".³⁸

Over a decade ago, in reviewing a collection of documents on educational history, Greg Kealey warned: "The alarming subdivision of social history into miniscule specialties has become a serious problem. Those of us who work on education history, immigration history, labour history, women's history, family history, or whatever must continue to see our work as interacting and forming part of a larger whole. Without this constant dialectic the new social history will not only fail to provide the desired synthesis but also runs the real danger of falsifying the past by fragmenting reality beyond lived experience".³⁹ The situation today is no better than that Kealey described in 1977. Each sub-field of social history has its own particular interest group in the Canadian Historical Association, most have a newsletter, and some even have their own journal, such as *Labour/Le Travail*, *The Urban History Review*, and *Atlantis: A Women's Studies Journal*. Canadian educational historians have now joined the ranks by recently transforming their newsletter into a full-fledged biannual journal entitled *Historical Studies in Education* published at The University of Western Ontario. The first issue of this journal appeared in June 1989. But do educational

37 Marlene Shore, "Carl Dawson and the Research Ideal: The Evolution of a Canadian Sociologist", *Historical Papers* (1985), pp. 45-73, and *The Science of Social Redemption* (Toronto, 1987). Although an intellectual history, this book has import for both educational history and Canadian historiography in general.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 94.

39 Gregory S. Kealey, review of Alison Prentice and Susan Houston, eds., *Family, School and Society in Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto, 1975), in *Canadian Historical Review*, 58, 3 (September 1977), p. 317.

historians share self-conscious identity? Do they operate in increasing isolation from other historians? The foregoing section would seem to indicate not. On the contrary, perhaps more than other social historians, educational historians are reaching out to link up with other sub-fields. Gaffield's *Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict*, Neil Sutherland's forthcoming book on Canadian childhood from 1920 to 1960, and Jean Barman's micro-history of Powell River as a company town all point in the opposite direction away from isolation.⁴⁰ And this is a development to be applauded.

Similarly, brave historians may venture into comparative history, as has Teresa Richardson, a recent UBC graduate. Her new book, *The Century of the Child* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1989), seeks to analyze the mental hygiene movement and its effect on social policy affecting children in the United States and Canada. An extension of the 20th century public health movement, mental hygiene "symbolized and advanced the application of science to social life", and "encompassed the medicalization and popularization of psychiatry within the framework of the modern institutional state" (pp. 1-2).⁴¹ Fortified by the idea that the scientific promotion of well-being in children could prevent adult dysfunctions, the mental hygiene movement addressed child-saving on a broad front but the medicalization of public schooling was central. Richardson not only approaches comparative history in a sophisticated way but she also opens up new perspectives on the use of school as a vehicle of social reform.⁴²

Other new directions were evident in some of the papers given at the biennial meeting of the Canadian History of Education Association in London, Ontario, in late 1988.⁴³ "Patriarchy" as a mode of analysis became almost a shibboleth at the sessions.⁴⁴ But one of the most innovative and suggestive papers was that of

40 Jean Barman, "The Dynamics of Control in a Model Company Town: Powell River, Canada, 1910-1955", paper delivered at American Historical Association, Cincinnati, 28 December 1988.

41 See also Sol Cohen, "Every School a Clinic: A Historical Perspective on Modern American Education", in Sol Cohen and Lewis C. Solmon, eds., *From the Campus: Perspectives on the School Reform Movement* (New York, 1989), pp. 18-34.

42 See Konrad H. Jarausch, "The Old 'New History of Education': A German Reconsideration", *History of Education Quarterly*, 26, 2 (Summer 1986), pp. 240-1.

43 A selection of papers from the conference will be published in the new journal *Historical Studies in Education* over the next two years. Conference proceedings are often valuable sources of educational history. For example, a conference on the evolution of higher education in the Maritimes called "Maritime Roots of a Liberal Education" held at Mount Allison University in April 1989, is expected to produce a publication soon. And a conference on "The Contribution of Methodism to Atlantic Canada", to be held at Mount Allison in October 1989, includes several papers with import for educational history.

44 See, for example, Ian Davey, "Rethinking the Origins of British Colonial School Systems", *Historical Studies in Education*, 1, 1 (Spring 1989), pp. 149-60; also his "Capitalism, Patriarchy

Chad Gaffield and Gerard Bouchard entitled “Literacy, Schooling, and Family Reproduction in Rural Ontario and Quebec”.⁴⁵ Their starting point is to emphasize that rural societies had their own dynamics despite the influence of metropolitan forces. Thus to understand all of Canadian society historians must spend more time studying rural Canada on its own, and not only as the presumed recipient of urban ideas. After all, rural society was the predominant feature of social formation for most Canadians as late as the early 1900s. Secondly, rural areas were expanding, not declining in Ontario and Quebec throughout the very decades when public school systems were being established and literacy rates were rising dramatically. Thirdly, the authors believe that the study of family reproduction “might be an effective way to embrace the dynamics of rural society and its cultural expressions”, including the school (p. 19 ms.). One of their major findings is that a rural child’s education comes to replace inheritance of property as the way of ensuring preservation of the family class position. Rates of school attendance and number of years of schooling are thereby affected by the late 19th century, quite apart from the formal campaign to promote more regular and lengthier school attendance which is traditionally given prominence by historians. Thus, the authors conclude, “the changing role of schooling within family reproduction must be understood as part of the larger social construction of individual identity”, and “arguments about urban growth, industrialization, immigration, and a developing wage-labour economy [as explanations for educational expansion] must be considered secondary to the more important explanation of rural patterns of education” (pp. 2, 5 ms.). Imported models to explain the spread of public schooling are not the answer. Aside from their sweeping critique of the urban outlook on educational reform, Gaffield and Bouchard are no less critical of top-down views of educational change: “Whatever support families gave to public schooling during the formative decades of the educational system resulted from *their own changing circumstances* as much as from the power of elites”. (italics added, p. 9 ms.) One eagerly awaits a monograph from these authors; it could serve to re-direct the writing of Canadian educational history into the 1990s.

In the last half-decade the field of educational history in Canada has experienced a real *épanouissement*. Whereas 20 years ago educational historians were satisfied to push their way inside the door of the new social history, those same historians

and the Origins of Mass Schooling”, *History of Education Review*, 16, 2 (1987), pp. 1-12, and Chris Beasley, “The Patriarch Debate: Should We Make Use of the Term ‘Patriarchy’ in Historical Analysis?”, *ibid.*, pp. 13-20.

45 Forthcoming in *Historical Studies in Education*, 1, 2 (Fall 1989). A reappraisal of rural society and education is evident elsewhere in Canada as well, for example, in British Columbia. See J. Donald Wilson and Paul J. Stortz, “‘May the Lord Have Mercy on You’: The Rural School Problem in British Columbia in the 1920’s”, *B.C. Studies*, 79 (Fall 1988), pp. 24-58.

and the next generation following them now find many other possibilities before them, including intellectual and religious history, historical biography, administrative history and political history. No one school or approach is any longer predominant or preferred in the field. Even those who draw upon the social sciences do so in a selective manner, seemingly cognizant of Ramsay Cook's designation of history as "the invertebrate social science" and his conclusion that history "need have no fear of the other social sciences, provided it is prepared to learn from them".⁴⁶ So at a time when educational history is establishing its professional status as evidenced by a lively association and a new journal, there is evidence of a new diversity of form, content, methodology and interpretation. The history of education is studied in both Faculties of Education and History Departments and both books and journal articles on the subject appear on a regular basis. While some might lament the absence of a predominant school or approach, most of us, I wager, are optimistic about the prospects for the 1990s.

J. DONALD WILSON

⁴⁶ R. Cook, "History: The Invertebrate Social Science", in Grant Reuber and Thomas Guinsberg, eds., *Perspectives on the Social Sciences in Canada* (Toronto, 1974), p. 145.

Conflict to Consensus: The Political Culture of Upper Canada

ANXIOUS TO KNOW HOW MANY WHITE anchors adorned the sleeves of NCOs in the Queen's Marine Artillery, raised in Upper Canada in 1838, or what colour welt ran down the side of the grey trousers of the regulars of the 24th Regiment? If so, Mary Beacock Fryer's *Volunteers & Redcoats, Raiders & Rebels: A Military History of the Rebellion in Upper Canada* (Toronto, Dundurn Press, 1987) is the book for you. *Volunteers & Redcoats* is the companion piece to Elinor Kyte Senior's *Redcoats and Patriots: The Rebellion in Lower Canada, 1837-38* (Stittsville, Ont., Canada's Wings, 1985) and, like Senior's book, is intended to appeal to academics as well as the general public. Both are chock-a-block with photographs and maps. Of the two, the Senior book is the more exciting, perhaps because the story it has to tell, the response of the militia and the British regulars in the lower colony to the rebellion and the patriot raids, is a more dramatic tale than that told by Fryer. In Lower Canada pitched battles were fought and villages set ablaze. Upper Canada's rebellion was more *orderly*. Part of the greater excitement of the Senior book, though, stems from the fact it is better written. Unlike Fryer, Senior has no trouble moving from one subject to another, nor does she describe uniforms at length! Nonetheless Fryer's book is a