

"Le Canada et la Francophonie," par Paul Gérin-Lajoie;
"Le Commissaire aux langues se présenté," par Keith Spicer (Vol. 2, no 2, mai 1973).

Le Directeur et les responsables de la Revue devraient être félicités pour la présentation ainsi que pour l'aspect esthétique et la création graphique de la publication. Nous recommandons la Revue et lui souhaitons une longue vie.

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Harry F. Wolcott.
THE MAN IN THE
PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE:
AN ETHNOGRAPHY.
Toronto:
Holt, Rinehart and Winston,
1973.
334 pp. \$5.25.

The Man in The Principal's Office should be read by every practising school principal; it is the ideal gift from a staff to the boss. It would supply him with many hours of humor, indignation, reality and even a tear or two (administrators do shed tears). In one way the book is not so much for the professional shelf as it is for the bedside stand. Wolcott noted that the "study was not designed to provide an evaluation of the role of the principal but to provide a description of what the principal does..." (p. 319)

He has provided an incisive description (as a good ethnographer should) of one year in the life of Ed Bell, principal of Taft Elementary School, located in a comfortable suburban, predominantly white lower-middle to middle-class American community. We see Ed as a person, what he does in formal and informal meetings, how he is socialized to the role and how he contributes to the socialization of others. We see Ed through the eyes of his secretary, his superintendent, his pupils, his teachers

and the parents he serves. In short, we have a multifaceted view of the man in the office. This aspect of the book is well handled.

Most chapters are devoted to specific aspects of Ed's work; each is concluded with a short "commentary" by Wolcott analysing some substantive portion of the data in the chapter. For example, after reporting the events in four formal meetings in which Ed took part, Wolcott summarized:

The manifest function of school meetings was to facilitate communication and to make decisions. As the meetings described in this chapter... suggest, these ideal functions were not accomplished to any great extent. Even in parent meetings, where the formal school organization exerted little control and the schoolman had to proceed with utmost patience and tact, communication tended to be one-way.... (p. 121)

Wolcott then went on to note:

The latent functions of meetings... accomplished rather different purposes. First, they served to validate roles — to give visible evidence of being engaged with the 'problems and issues' of schooling... Secondly, and more importantly, they served to validate existing status hierarchies.... (p. 122)

It is during these commentaries that the book moves from the bedside stand to the professional shelf. Wolcott has provided an insightful, if brief, look into his data from many conceptual frames of reference. He has touched upon manifest and latent functions, role theory, authority, status notions, role conflict and defense mechanisms, among others. His work illustrates the salience of a socio-psychological frame of reference in understanding the school as an organization and the role of the principal in that organization.

In sum, the book is both a useful and enjoyable contribution to the literature on the principalship.

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