

emerges forcefully and is highlighted by a quotation from Richard B. Howard, Headmaster of Upper Canada College Preparatory school: "Institutions are born, grow and prosper or wilt and die in relationship to the quality of the human beings who serve them." What an indomitable group those early leaders were! And what different and refreshing approaches to education inspired many of them to set up their own schools!

Now that Gossage has opened the way, perhaps there will be more research into the role and character of the private school. Certainly there should still be a place in our world for choice, and the case for the independent school needs to be heard.

**Jean C. Scott**  
*The Study*

**Alf Chaiton and Neil McDonald (Editors).**  
**CANADIAN SCHOOLS AND CANADIAN IDENTITY.**  
**Toronto: Gage Educational Publishing Ltd., 1977.**  
**189 pp. \$4.65.**

*Canadian Schools and Canadian Identity* is a laudable effort at a difficult but very important task. The task was to deal with a facet of Canadian education from a national perspective rather than an aggregation of regional perspectives. Recognizing this difficulty, the editors chose to use a "unifying theme" by which common factors could be pursued.

This central theme might be defined by the question: what role does the school play in the development of national consciousness in Canada? Naturally, other questions emerge. What role *should* schools play in the development of national consciousness? Do Canadian schools foster nationalism? If so, what sort of nationalism? What is the relationship between national consciousness and civic education?

The book is intended to be open-ended, even though the eleven articles have obviously been carefully planned so as to contribute to thought and understanding relative to the central theme. The editors seem to be aware of the fact that there is no clear-cut, monolithic Canadian identity. The book seems to have been produced in spite of this fact. The conclusion emerges, at least in my inference, that the inculcation of patriotism or some ill-defined nationalism seems to have been the result of our efforts in many jurisdictions — although in certain instances the loyalty developed has been to some "nation" other than Canada, such as Britain or Quebec.

This is primarily a history book, though it attempts, with some success, to deal with a very current issue in Canadian curriculum and

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education. Particularly valuable, in my opinion, are the opening articles by George Tomkins and Robert M. Stamp, which deal with the contemporary question of national consciousness in Canadian education. I would find these particularly helpful in stimulating a lively discussion in either an appropriate pre-service teacher training course or in a continuing education program examining current issues in Canadian curriculum.

The book is not without its short-comings. The eight case-study articles are essentially drawn from the Prairie and Central Canadian experience. With the exception of incidental references, Atlantic Canada, the North, and British Columbia are totally ignored. While this may be typically Canadian, it is nevertheless galling to a reviewer from the Maritimes — particularly in view of our rich historical legacy and the historic thrust of the examples presented. The editors' statement that "each (case study) is meant to reflect activities and trends throughout Canada" may not adequately accommodate the regional diversity of Canada.

Similarly, one valuable addition might have been an article directly dealing with the historic implications of our constitution for civic education in Canada.

If the book has a major weakness, it is that the authors do not seem to take account of the fact that in the end what is significant is what happens to the child in school. Often any correlation between what is mandated and debated by provincial authorities and what happens in the classroom is purely coincidental. Similarly, the knowledge and experience of teachers is fundamental to what happens to children in school. Thus one would have thought that some examination of teacher training in Canada would be fundamental to understanding what role our schools might play in the development of a national consciousness.

Despite these short-comings, *Canadian Schools and Canadian Identity* is a valuable contribution to the literature of Canadian education. It is a highly readable examination of a topic of no small significance in the great unity debate in Canada today. Until such a time as a more complete work is produced, this book should become basic reading in pre-service teacher training programs across Canada.

**Peter L. McCreath**

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