

Book Reviews

Terry Wotherspoon, Editor.
THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CANADIAN SCHOOLING.
Toronto: Methuen, 1987

D.W. Livingstone and Contributors.
CRITICAL PEDAGOGY AND CULTURAL POWER.
South Hadley, MA: Bergin and Garvey, 1987.
342 pp. \$16.95 paperback.

Governments have acted to expand the accountability of educational institutions at the same time as they have decreased funding, cut back programs, restricted access, fired teachers, and privatized services. School boards have been exhorted to provide more relevant schooling at the same time as they have had their financial resources cut out from under them. Teachers' unions, parents' associations, and community groups have similarly had local decision-making and community control eroded.

The ideology of schooling expands to make this inequality even harder to perceive by promoting reform under the exigencies of fiscal responsibility, market forces, and the new rationality. As Schechter says in Wotherspoon, "Centralization helps to ensure that even the debate of educational reform is framed within the parameters of the discourse of modernity: progress, welfare, meritocratic equality."

These two books make an important contribution in the area of the political economy of Canadian education. In the past, political economy has focused its energies largely on economics and politics, while neglecting education. This has been a shortcoming in political economy and a drawback to the analysis of the Canadian education system. In Wotherspoon

and Livingstone political economy is not only applied to education, but it is done with a distinctively Canadian focus.

The Political Economy of Canadian Education relates changes in education to changes in the political and economic structure. Interconnections are traced between "goods and services which are produced and consumed, major patterns of trade and finance, patterns of class and social conflict, and the types of individuals, groups and institutions which prevail." There is an emphasis on structure and subjects in their relation.

Wotherspoon's book is a broad analysis of the relationship between political economy and education. Fifteen articles deal with the themes of the process of educational reform and its attendant conflicts, curricular development in the schooling process, postsecondary education, and schooling for work and unemployment.

Fisher and Gilgoff's article on British Columbia's postsecondary education is especially interesting because it analyzes cutbacks in the public sector. Their examination of the impact of federal postsecondary fiscal transfers on provincial educational policy can readily be applied to other Canadian provinces. The impact of new technology, rationalization and bureaucratization, the diversification of educational services, multiculturalism, the segregation of work, and vocationalism are examined in separate chapters. The subordination of women, barriers to native Indians, class stratification, and gender-role stereotyping are also presented. Together these issues provide a broad spectrum of analyses in the political economy of educational development.

Livingstone's *Critical Pedagogy and Cultural Power* is one of a series of critical perspectives in education, this one originating in a two-day forum of the Critical Pedagogy and Cultural Studies Group in 1984 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. This multidisciplinary group has been collaborating for many years. There are thirteen chapters organized into four sections, each with its own topical introduction. The chapters include the analysis of cultural perspectives, general ideological forms in education, schooling and skilling, and political practices. There is also an excellent introduction by Henry Giroux and Paulo Freire which succinctly reviews major theoretical problems in the area of pedagogy and cultural studies. Whereas early radical analyses of education criticized solely the reproduction of class divisions in school, Giroux and Freire say that there is a need to theorize about the diversity of oppression, and to propose alternatives. Experience is legitimized through various historical forms: popular culture, mass media, trade unions, and the family.

Livingstone says that there is currently less normative support for established institutions. Political controversy and ideological uncertainty

have conspired to produce a context appropriate for the analysis of educational practice and rhetoric and the discussion of alternative educational futures. The tasks are to: 1) understand educational relationships as social constructions with historical antecedents; 2) identify discrepancies between ideology and experience; 3) take the vantage point of the subordinated; 4) make the political pedagogical and the pedagogical political, and thus extend the sphere of educational critique; 5) discuss the analysis of experience with those who experience; and 6) expose relations of cultural domination.

The first section of the book clearly builds on the "new sociology of education" of the early 1970s which sought to link a phenomenology with a Marxist structural analysis. Corrigan's article argues that the routinization of the curriculum schools subjectivities. The formal and hidden curriculum reproduces fragmentation, and artificial separations of academic subjects also disguises the connections and relationships which exist between both social and academic subjects. This article echoes his shared article in Wotherspoon's book. Through this chapter, and that by Mary O'Brien, on how the analysis of gender relations has been factually neglected in the study of class oppression, there is a general attempt to expand the traditional scope of political economy through the analysis of schooling relations.

The second section on ideology and education contains articles on the mass media and how it obscures cultural contradictions, promotes compensatory values, and diminishes oppositional consciousness. These articles emphasize that through the analysis of the mass media dominant myths can be deconstructed and resistant strategies built.

Livingstone's article on upgrading of skills and increasing occupational opportunities in section three is similar to his article in Wotherspoon. Gaskell analyzes the devaluation of clerical work, Simon examines the social construction of subjective orientations to work, and Olsen argues that the increasing use of computers in education will make the mental/manual labour distinction more pervasive and inequitable. The fourth section has a critique of radical pedagogy and its discourse, and it also includes an article on alternative schools in Toronto.

In addition to the important areas covered in Wotherspoon and Livingstone, there are two further tasks which need to be explored in a political economy of Canadian education. First, we need an analysis of the rhetorical constructions of public discourse and controversy over educational reform. People's identities are constructed in public life, as well as in school. We need analyses of the discourse of reform which accompanies changes in the public school system, for this discourse about schools affects the discourse which happens in schools. Second, we need to situate the analysis of political reform within a regional analysis of the political economy of Canadian education. There is very little work on the regional

dimension of Canadian education and on how the differences in the regional economies affect schooling. These directions need to be explored for all levels.

The books edited by Wotherspoon and Livingstone are excellent, up-to-date collections of work in the Canadian political economy of education. They are not just treatments of Canadian education by political economy, but reflect developments of a distinctively Canadian political economy. They would be appropriate for a senior undergraduate class in the sociology of education, and they should be necessary reading for students of education.

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Sandra Burt, Lorraine Code & Lindsay Dorney.
CHANGING PATTERNS: WOMEN IN CANADA.
Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988.
345 pp. \$16.95 (paper).

Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin & Margaret McPhail.
FEMINIST ORGANIZING FOR CHANGE:
THE CONTEMPORARY WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN CANADA.
Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988.
332 pp. \$19.95 (paper).

Alison Prentice, Paula Bourne, Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Beth Light, Wendy Mitchinson & Naomi Black.
CANADIAN WOMEN: A HISTORY.
Toronto: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovitch, 1988.
496 pp. \$22.95 (paper).

Popular opinion about the current status of women in Canada ranges from the view that "Nothing has changed" to the notion that the battles for equality have been essentially won and we are now living in the "post-feminist era." The truth may lie anywhere along this continuum. As we approach the last decade of the 20th century, we may scrutinize the opportunities given women, the respect accorded them, their constitutional rights, and their educational advances but still find these indices of social justice wanting. Or we may rejoice that, unlike our grandmothers, Canadian women are legally "persons," we constitute more than half the undergraduate population at Canadian universities, we may have access to all kinds of jobs and professions, and we can lay claim to "equal pay for work of equal value." On the one hand, we could say that discrimination has not disappeared, rather it has become more difficult to deal with because it is