

Editorial

Education in Unique Settings

Several authors in this issue write about the way in which school systems and educational philosophies come into existence through the influences of the culture in which they exist. Education, and the way it is carried out, usually adapts to the uniqueness of the geography, the politics, the religion, and the traditions of the country or region where it develops.

And so it is with Quebec as well as other places on the globe. Professor Roger Magnuson, Professor William F. Foster, and Professor Jean Huntley-Maynard all look at aspects of education in the province of Quebec, and all three give excellent commentary on how Quebec's religious and political history has effected very much how schools and school systems function in light of this matter.

The people of the Shetland Islands off the coast of Scotland have learned to deal with their geography in such a way that they have developed a creative and inspiring type of school system that meets the needs of their population. Professor Edmonds explains in detail how these schools function.

Eastern Europe, in the last two or three years, has gone through many changes and the schools have not been untouched by their past history as well as the present challenges. Professor Pokorna, of Charles University, describes the range of psychological and pedagogical services offered by schools in Czechoslovakia. It is interesting to note that situations change so fast in Eastern Europe that from the time Professor Pokorna had submitted her paper and it was published, Czechoslovakia had become two countries, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Other papers in this issue present the outcomes of educational research that have been conducted in various regions of Canada. Professors Bérard and Murphy, of Dalhousie University, examine the practice of placing student teachers in independent schools, and their findings help

clear up many misconceptions about “private” (independent) schools. Prof. Binda, of Brandon University, looks at teachers’ perceptions of some attributes of social studies curriculum, as derived from a study done with social studies teachers in Manitoba.

Professor Duquette, of the University of Ottawa, and Professors McNay, University of Western Ontario, and Cole, of Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, have conducted some on-site research relative to the selection of teacher education candidates and the “whole school” approach to the student teaching practicum. Both of these studies, while done at local levels and plainly identified as being idiographic in nature, reveal outcomes that could be applied in many other settings.

The use of metaphor, myth, fable, and parable has been a time-honored means of reinforcing the presentation of abstract concepts. So it is with Professor Walker, of The University of Saskatchewan, whose swimming pool metaphor is used as a means of expressing philosophical and ethical concepts about integrity in educational policy-making.

This issue of the Journal is more lengthy than usual and, taken as a whole, represents some of the best education writing and research of Canadians we have come across in a while. It is our sincere hope that this issue can serve as a special window on what is happening in education, not only in Quebec, but in the rest of Canada as well.

W. M. T.