

**Paul Anisef & Paul Axelrod, Editors.**

**TRANSITIONS:**

**SCHOOLING AND EMPLOYMENT IN CANADA.**

**Toronto, ON/Lewiston, NY: Thompson Educational Publishing, 1993.**

**280 pp., \$19.95.**

Educational reforms, policies, books, and articles dealing with “the basics” abound. They appear in an almost cyclical fashion often to the condescending nods of approval from members of society who feel that they, too, instinctively know that some subjects are more important and hence more noble than others. The subject fields most likely to be touted as “the basics” frequently fall within the rubric of liberal arts which may, or may not, be linked to the sciences. Other subjects, especially those of a more “hands-on” nature, or associated with future employment, are more often marginalized or at best tolerated. As the Greeks might have expressed it, a question of the liberal arts versus the servile arts.

The fact that this dualism has been perpetuated through centuries cannot be explained solely by believing that we have inherent biases towards the liberal arts. Such bias also results from the lack of good literature, both philosophically and factually based, which points to the values and appropriateness of employment-related education and the need for programs which bridge the gap between education and work.

This book fills a niche in this market. In the search for parity of esteem between the so-called general and vocational areas it points to the many ways that lifelong education mandates a mixing of school and work. In the 1990s, education for employment is never simply training for a specific technical job skill that will last a lifetime. Employment increasingly involves communication skills, awareness of our global market place, an understanding of economic realities, the need for just-in-time delivery, the competitiveness of a zero-based-defects market, and the importance of quality circles.

The difficulty of making transitions between education and work is the focus of approximately one-half of the chapters. In spite of our high per capita spending on education there are few provisions in Canadian education to ensure that such transition takes place smoothly.

Krahn, Mosher, and Johnson note that this transition from school to work has become more prolonged and complex, “Young people are remaining in the educational system longer and are mixing school and work in a variety of different ways.” As more young people continue

their education they simultaneously work part-time with the result that it is increasingly more difficult to determine whether one is truly a student or a worker; the line is blurred for the two have become intertwined. We can no longer say that this transition is an event occurring at an identifiable moment. It is a process that occurs from youth to mature adulthood, one that is far more complex than existed even a decade ago.

Livingstone questions whether government schemes give the wrong message. While the need is for "multiple substantial transitions" between education and employment, emphasis is being placed on "stay-in-school" initiatives. He doubts whether the lockstep type of formal schooling and the "ad hoc growth of non-formal adult courses" will adequately respond to the real desire for lifelong education. Neither is it likely to prepare a versatile and technically knowledgeable labour force adapted to the requirements of an industrial society undergoing continual change.

The actual skills of the workforce are addressed in other chapters. Lewko, Hein, Garg, and Tesson predict that many jobs will require math, science, and computer skills to fill needs in microelectronics, communications, pharmaceuticals, robotics, aerospace, and biotechnology fields, fields in which women and minorities are under-represented.

This subject of why females do not choose the sciences, or how they could be persuaded to believe that careers in these fields are of equal importance to them as they are for males, is raised but not adequately pursued. However, the concept of a strong support network is stated as being of fundamental importance to females who choose a career in a nontraditional science. In the meantime, as Mandell and Crysedale state, women are more disproportionately found in the academic stream, in the humanities and social sciences. Also in the vocational stream they select business courses over technical careers. Not to say that there is no connection between the humanities and work, Anisef and Axelrod remind us that the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) provides research grants for "education and work in changing society" and "managing for global competitiveness."

The concept of transition would be incomplete without the companion topic which piques the nation's conscience, that of dropouts, those least prepared to face future challenges. Bellamy notes that nearly 50% of Grade 12 graduates do not directly continue on to post-secondary education. Those who do are described as having a "feel for the game" that occurs in childhood and those who lack this "feel" are condemned to limited job opportunities, monotonous work, and bleak futures.

Dandurand and Ouellet point to the democratization of education as being one of the main components of the 1960s school reform. But as a collective vision one cannot help but be left with the notion that future democratization may be based on a different culture, one that is more than continuous formal education, more than a tenacious moving-in-and-out between work and studies. The new student-employee link may be less formal. It may be a "learning culture" that includes paid educational leave, the compilation of a learner's "portfolio", and other means to gather and demonstrate that learning for employment continues to occur.

**John B. Gradwell**  
McGill University

**Joseph G. Ponterotto & Paul B. Pederson.**  
**PREVENTING PREJUDICE:**  
**A GUIDE FOR COUNSELLORS AND EDUCATORS.**  
Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications (1993).  
184 pp. \$29.95 cloth; \$14.95 paper. ISBN 0-8039-5284-8.

Canada and the United States, and indeed, western countries generally, have become increasingly racially and ethnically heterogeneous societies over the past few decades. The new diversity has been bringing a cultural richness and vibrancy to western societies, yet there has been at the same time cause for concern over the accompanying problems of interpersonal and intergroup prejudice. We have become aware of manifestations of ethnic and racial tensions through publicity give to "race riots", "hate crimes", and "ethnic cleansing", as well as to the existence of the many more subtle forms of prejudice.

Recognizing that racism is a major concern in the modern world, the authors of *Preventing Prejudice: A guide for counsellors and educators* have searched for more effective and carefully thought-out modes of combating prejudice and racism. They have produced a clear and concise overview of the nature of prejudice and gathered succinctly what we know of its prevention and remediation.

The book first considers the process by which people are socialized into racist thinking and behaviour. It examines the various forms in which prejudice can be expressed from the relatively mild and covert to its more abusive and visible forms. It also interestingly examines the effects of racism both on the perpetrators and their victims.

The second part of the book presents a review of various theories of minority identity development, adolescent ethnic identity develop-