

*School Follies: The Miseducation of America's Teachers* is neither a book for the faint-hearted nor the eternally optimistic. Furthermore, it is a book which is as relevant in Canada as in the United States. As such, it is strongly recommended for anyone concerned with the state of teacher education as it exists today.

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**EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP:  
WORD, SPIRIT, AND DEED FOR A JUST SOCIETY.**  
**Calgary: Detselig (1993).**  
**250 pp. \$20.95. ISBN 1-55059-048-0.**

The author of this book has set himself an ambitious, even daunting, task – to set forth key sociological perspectives on society and education, as well as the essences of educational management and leadership, and upon these foundations to construct *Thom's Educational Leadership with CONSCIENCE (TELC)* model. Thom describes TELC on the cover note as a “postpositivistic model [which] incorporates the reality of organizational power and politics and the bureaucratic dynamics of collectivism and individualism.” He asserts that the book “is rooted in sound research. . . and encourages a balanced application of science and spirit for understanding and gaining wisdom.” Unfortunately, the product falls short of this lofty ideal.

Part I consists of two chapters outlining the author's sociological perspectives. The first deals with society and education, the second with bureaucratic theory. Part II sets forth his vision of educational management and leadership in four chapters: educational law, educational finance, values, and organizational framework. Thom's model, which is foreshadowed throughout the first two parts, is presented in Part III, together with a concluding chapter. Several appendices are included which contain an eclectic variety of material of varying degrees of relevance to the theme of the book.

Overall, there is a lack of unity and coherence to the material presented in the first two parts. For example, under one heading entitled, “Education Within a Broader Society,” we go from a statement of the importance of the goals of education, to the division of powers over education in the Constitution, to Turner's “Frontier Thesis”, to key ideas underlying the Canadian education system, and, finally, to the character-

istics of a profession. The remainder of this first chapter presents some enrollment projections and then digresses to the author's summary of his survey of B.Ed. students. There is no bridge to chapter 2 which launches into a consideration of Weber's theory of bureaucracy, followed by Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, and a variety of topics dealing with leadership and school climate. The only attempt to pull these diverse strands together is a one-paragraph summary of the major topics covered in Part I.

The second part is supposed to build on these broad perspectives and complete the foundation for the model to be presented in Part III but, once again, we are in fact presented with a series of loosely connected topics, in this case, dealing with educational administration. The chapter on education law begins with notions regarding negligence and the importance of understanding education law, and then proceeds to present four cases. The choice of these cases and the discussion which follows exemplify the mixture of inappropriate detail and insufficient analysis to provide the reader with what is presumed to have been intended as an overview of this important policy theme. Similarly, the chapter on educational finance moves from an undiscussed illustration of federal-provincial responsibility in education, to details about the Ontario funding model, and last, to the results of a Delphi-type survey conducted by the author to determine the "ideal scheme" for the funding of education.

Without adding examples from the remaining two chapters in Part II, suffice it to say that by the end of it, the reader is left wondering how this diverse collection of bits and pieces can be pulled together to form a model that will meet the expectations set forth by the author. The description and discussion of the model only occupies 11 pages in the 250-page book. Although the model can be linked to certain ideas expressed earlier in the book, it does not flow from the bulk of material presented in Parts I and II.

The author lists six basic tenets underlying his model which are little more than *plain truths*, such as "one cannot control everything" and "a sense of humour is critical." The model itself is illustrated in a complex figure which is difficult to summarize. It shows two time frames, one long-term and the other a more immediate one. The latter is broken into second-order and then first-order activities, which are described, respectively, as "more serious" and "routine" activities. Thom states that the "bottom line" of his model is justice and fairness. This principle is not really elaborated upon except by a brief discussion of the principles of natural justice.

The presentation of the model terminates with what Thom describes as the core thesis underlying the book, namely, "that in the culture of developed societies such as ours, law and moral values stem

from theology. The dominant theology of our country is Judeo-Christianity and this doctrine defines the standards" (p. 167). This leads the author to posit *Thom's Theorem*: "[that] conscience drives behavior in mature individuals" (p. 168). Why this simple statement is dubbed a theorem is not explicated. The reference to Judeo-Christian theology is not merely offered as an exemplar of moral leadership. Thom clearly intends that Judeo-Christian theology be reasserted as the explicit ideology of public schools. Rejecting the principles of pluralism and multiculturalism, Thom laments the decline of Christian influence in society and argues that "Christians are willing to accept other religions, and educators who are Christian still are best attuned to our society's fabric" (p. 169).

Thom's model represents a retrograde step in the attempts to promote pluralism and multiculturalism in Canadian society, in general, and in education, in particular. Rather than moving toward a celebration of diversity, Thom suggests that we endorse a mono-cultural core which is merely tolerant of other cultures and beliefs. Although Thom asserts that "flexibility in interpretation of scriptures is required to accommodate such things as archaic views of the universe, sexist and racist inferences. . ." (p. 170), one is still left wondering just how much **deviance** will be tolerated in Thom's just society.

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**THE NEED FOR STORY:**

**CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN CLASSROOM AND COMMUNITY.**

**Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English (1994).**

**259 pp. \$19.95 (NCTE members \$14.95) ISBN 0-8141-3300-2.**

*The Need for Story* is a collection of 16 essays, only three of which have been published elsewhere, that focuses on the role of stories and story-telling in the construction of the individual. Essays such as these, which argue for the importance of stories in the shaping of knowledge, inevitably face paradoxes of genre: their case is for narration but such cases are traditionally made in the alternative genres of exposition and argument. Some of the essays face this paradox squarely – none more so than Jerome Bruner's. He concludes the initial expository section of his "Life as Narrative" by saying: "And that, I now want to assure you, is the end of the omniscient auctorial voice. For our task now is to sample the texts, the narratives of these four lives. . ." But of course, this is not the end of the "auctorial voice" (and in here renouncing claims to the "omniscient" he mockingly abandons more territory than he ever occupied). His sampling of the narratives is in the context of an analysis which