

CECILIA REYNOLDS & BETH YOUNG (EDITORS).

Women and Leadership in Canadian Education.

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The impetus behind this book, as announced by the editors, was to develop Canadian scholarly resources for students and school practitioners addressing "gender issues in education" (xv). To do this, the editors "issued a call for papers in 1992 and initiated a collaborative review process by which contributors commented on each other's work" (xv). Hence, this is not simply a collection of previously published works but rather a completely new contribution. The results of that effort were then organized and presented under three topic headings: (1) "Why All This Fuss About Gender, Educational Administration and Leadership?" a feminist, theoretical, and social critic of educational administration and the position of women within that field; (2) "Experiences of Women Educational Administrators in Provincial Contexts" a variety of studies about women in various provincial contexts; and (3) "Leadership Issues for Teachers and Others" an eclectic amalgam covering such issues as job and family conflicts (Vivian Hajnal's "Can I Do A Good Job of Both Family and Work? Decisions Regarding Offspring"), perceptions of leadership roles (Tom Gougeon, "Teacher Perceptions of Male and Female Principles"), and the public and private dimensions of administration (Hanne Mawhinney and Linda LaRocque, "Women Educators as School Board Chairpersons: Problematizing the Public/Private Dimensions of Leadership").

At the outset, it should be noted that the title of this work, *Women and Leadership in Canadian Education*, is more accurate than the stated intention of addressing gender issues in education. With the exception of the essay by Tom Gougeon which looks at the differing perceptions of male and female principals and an essay by Elizabeth Tucker on employee assistance programs directed at teachers (a largely though not exclusively female group), the real focus of this work is on women in educational administration. More particularly, it is about women's careers in educational administration. The picture it paints of insidious deterrents (Juanita Ross Epp), systemic discrimination (Ruth Rees), and the continuing existence of the glass ceiling (Barbara Gill) is bleak. At the same time, as Roberta Russell argues, there are "survivors" to learn from, and powerful women's voices to be heard (Harris).

To say that the work is about women is not intended as a criticism but merely a clarification. Certainly, this material is of great value to

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anyone interested in educational administration. Given this focus on women, it should be of equal interest and value to anyone interested in women's studies, feminist studies, and organizational studies (among others) as a multifaceted consideration of the roles and positions of women within a particular career field and the oppression which they have and continue to experience.

While the essays in this work are all generally short, and therefore cannot be expected to develop a depth of argument or to explore all aspects of an issue that more extended articles might provide, they cover a broad range of topics and issues offering a solid introduction to each one and providing critical sources for further research. The quality of the essays is generally quite good. The developmental and collaborative process used to put this work together appears to have provided the various essays in the work with a unity within their diversity (somewhat unusual in collected works), with only a few seeming somewhat out of place, such as Katie Webb's " 'Our School': Reclaiming Teaching as Leading", a fictional, quasi-philosophic dialogue about what schools would look like without hierarchy -- without administrators. Interestingly, Webb's essay is the only one which extends the feminist critique about educational administration to consider how the critique of administration might relate to or effect education.

In summary, this book provides those individuals interested in the study and practice of educational administration in Canada with a much needed resource and a general overview of the multiple challenges women encounter within that profession.

ADA L. SINACORE-GUINN *McGill University*