

to explain the change. This may be so, but then what is the normative power of his theory in assessing the truth or reasonableness of the new beliefs? In key respects brainwashing and cult conversions may, as Petrie claims, be models of rational conceptual change (seeing anomalies in one's existing conceptual scheme and making adjustments that achieve what one sees as a more adequate reflective equilibrium). But doesn't this suggest that his theory has gone too far in its preoccupation with processes?

In various sections the book seems to be intended for teachers. Apart from the prominence given to the *Meno* argument, I think this audience is likely to be deterred by the complex explanatory models and the unfamiliar technical vocabulary derived from them. Even those who think they are familiar with "assimilation", "accommodation", and "equilibrium" from the study of Piaget will eventually realise that, although borrowed from Piaget, these terms are used by Petrie in a rather different way. The book will be of use mainly to graduate students and educational theorists with a philosophical interest. For this audience its value would have been increased if the author had developed more thoroughly his epistemological theory, centred as he claims on the process of learning.

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Porter, John, Porter, Marian, and Blishen, Bernard, *Stations and Callings: Making it Through the School System*. Toronto: Methuen Publishers, 1982. 332 pp. \$28.95

Stations and Callings reports a massive 1971 survey of the educational aspirations of Ontario high school students. The survey is notable because it was directed by the late John Porter, probably Canada's most eminent sociologist, and because it was an unusual opportunity to survey such a large number of high school students. Some of the findings of the survey were published earlier in *Does Money Matter?*, a book which summarized the data briefly and used it to address the issue of how financial aid should be provided to university students. In contrast, this book provides a very detailed analysis of the data, and emphasizes the theoretical bases of the survey rather than its practical implications. These bases are firmly in the structural-functionalism popular in the late 60's. The result is a book that would have been interesting in the early seventies, but that now seems 'old hat' and tells us little about the questions we are asking today.

In any survey like this, the complexity and detail of the questions asked is sacrificed for the breadth of coverage. This research is no open ended exploration of what high school students think about school and work. The researchers proceed by identifying critical "variables", which they "operationalize" and measure on standardized scales. Even the "interviewing" with parents apparently amounted to filling out a questionnaire, one very similar to the one the students completed. Only data that fits the researchers' model is collected. The adequacy of this model then is critical.

The rationale for the research design is set out in chapter three. It provides a structural functional model of "post industrial" society where integration is pivotal, where childhood socialization is the most important influence on adult behaviour and where education is the route to success. Educational aspirations are described as "the prerequisite for filling a complex structure of adult roles." Wealthier families and well integrated families are described as "successful" and likely to produce high aspirations. "Role tensions", when behavioural norms are not shared, will lead to "having low self-concepts and abandoning education." Individual differences, determined in childhood, explain adult work patterns; "Once the individual has been socialized, he is pretty much the victim of the particular circumstances of birth."

In a recent article, Marion Porter says that by the time of the McGinnis lectures in 1977, her husband had abandoned many of these assumptions, and "re-examined the technical functional theory" in light of work by Illich, Friedenburg, Bourdieu, Bowles and Gintis, Braverman, Collins and Berg. However, in chapter three of this book, there is no sign of these second thoughts, and no reference to works published later than 1972. We proceed from these general statements about society to a justification of status attainment research.

Porter, Porter and Blishen rely largely on the model that was being used at the University of Wisconsin in the late 1960's, a model which uses social class, ability, self concept and expectations of significant others to predict aspirations. Aspirations are measured on a unidimensional scale from high, representing post-graduate education, to low, representing dropping out before high school is completed. Peter Pineo, who worked with Porter on

other research, has stated that Porter chose unadventuresome topics for his large survey studies, topics which replicated American research and about which the results were never seriously in question. The purpose was more to legitimate survey research than to discover new information. This can certainly be said of the survey reported here. The model is not innovative, and the findings are not surprising. They replicate what other research in this tradition has found. Social class, self-concept of ability, parents, programs and gender predict educational aspirations. The analysis is done through innumerable cross tabulations, and unfortunately not compared with other research; so that we do not learn how Ontario's students in 1971 compare with U.S. youth in the same period, or with Canadian youth today when a much larger percentage go on to post secondary education.

A final chapter uses path analysis to estimate the relative effects of different variables. The model is able to explain about sixty percent of the variance in educational aspirations. The strongest path is from mental ability to school program to the influence of significant others to level of educational aspiration. Mental ability is slightly more important than father's occupation, but both have indirect effects on educational aspirations. School program is very important, whereas school grades are relatively insignificant. The model is about the same for both sexes and for grades ten and twelve. In grade eight, school program was not a factor as students had not yet been streamed, and much less of the variance in aspirations could be accounted for.

There are three chapters which I found particularly interesting, because they deal with areas where many questions remain unanswered. The book devotes a chapter to gender indicating much more sensitivity to the different career paths of girls and boys than most of the work that was being done in 1971. The researchers went beyond the Wisconsin model in adding a measure of attitudes towards the feminine role to the original questionnaire. They find, as most research since has found, that a working mother is more likely to have a girl with high educational aspirations, and that attitudes toward the feminine role are also related to educational aspirations. The chapter does, however, sound as if it was written ten years ago. Simone de Beauvoir and Kate Millett are taken as spokespersons for the women's movement. In the functionalist tradition of seeing integration as good and dissensus as bad, they argue that the women's movement creates "confusion" for women, "baffling" girls who are trying to decide what to do with their lives. Commitment to work and commitment to a family are treated as polar opposites, and a girl is only considered to be "modern" if she has negative attitudes towards participation in family life, as well as a positive attitude towards her career.

The chapter on the impact of school programmes sets the research firmly in its historical context, at a time when Ontario was changing from the Robarts plan, with three clear high school streams, to a more open system of individualized timetabling and few requirements. Its value is in collecting data on enrollment patterns and plans within this particular educational structure, research that allows a comparative look at the way we organize high school programmes today. The authors are particularly interested in social class differences and thus in 5 year versus 4 year programmes. They conclude, not surprisingly, that students in arts and science were "younger and brighter, their parents had better jobs and more education, and the students thought more of themselves and were in turn better thought of than those in other programs." Gender differences can also be explored in their data, although they do not work it out. Through recalculating one of the tables, I found that 30% of the girls and 6% of the boys were taking a business programme; 35% of the boys and less than 2% of the girls were in a technical programme.

The chapter on Franco Ontarian students addresses what has continued to be an important political issue. These students were oversampled in the research design because of their political importance. The survey found that Francophone students in French schools had higher aspirations than Francophone students in English schools. This finding is compared to other research which comes to the same conclusion, and the authors conclude tentatively that "the lack of opportunity to take their secondary schooling in French accounts for the lower educational levels of the Franco Ontarians." This kind of policy assertion is quite uncharacteristic of the rest of the book and draws the reader back to the political world of education, convincing us of the importance of the questions that are being researched, and the difficulty of finding good answers. These questions are informed not simply by Wisconsin's research model, but by the specifically Canadian context in which the research was being done.

But what the book is primarily concerned with is the issue of class, the fate of poorer students. The authors show that class of origin is a critical variable in school success. Perhaps in the late 60's it was important to show this empirically, to show that the research coming out of the U.S. could also be applied in Canada. It was certainly important for purposes of teaching Canadian students. But now we are all convinced of the finding. Any survey that did not find the relationship would be suspect. We now need research that gets inside the 'black box', whether it is the box of 'student' or of 'school' or of 'family', and tells us more about how the correlation is produced.

I suppose it is not fair to ask the authors to have written a different book, but I think they would today.

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Stamp. Robert M., *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982, xxxiv-293 pp. \$30.00

With the publication of his latest book, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976*, Robert Stamp has culminated over a decade of research and writing on Ontario's educational history. It was a tribute to his scholarship that he was chosen by the Board of Trustees of the Ontario Historical Studies Series to write a detailed description and analysis of the province's primary and secondary school system in the post-Ryerson century, 1876-1976.

Classed as a "moderate revisionist" by his peers, Stamp interprets his data with optimism, emphasizing periods of innovation, such as the New Education reforms of the 1890-1910 period, the progressive thrust of the 1937 Ontario curriculum, or the Hall-Dennis Report era of 1968. His main theme, the striving of educational reformers for equality of opportunity, runs as a thread throughout these innovative periods.

This is not to say that Stamp lacks critical acumen. Another major theme of the first few chapters is his debunking of the traditional twin myths of centralization and superiority. According to the first it was assumed that the province suffered from extreme centralization and excessive control by its ministers and department of education. In the second myth, Ontario supposedly was renowned for its school system. Following up new evidence, particularly of R. D. Gidney, Stamp effectively demonstrates that in reality strong local control of school policy existed long after Ryerson's retirement. This localism, coupled with Ontario's conservative smugness, served as a deterrent to any radical or widespread school reforms. Stamp's chapters mirror the pendulum swings between periods of conservatism and innovative reform, bringing to bear on these themes new insights derived from feminist, childhood and public health literature, from radical revisionist studies of school attendance patterns and urban school reform, from recent biographies of political leaders, and from a variety of archival sources.

Throughout his narrative Stamp makes important distinctions, often overlooked by more functional social historians, between the policies and motivations of provincial politicians and the recommendations of leading departmental officials, for instance in the Whitney policy over Regulation Seventeen. He highlights the discrepancy between the curricular aspirations of pedagogical reformers contained in the new 1937 progressive curriculum and the strong demand of the electorate for political stability. The election of George Drew followed by the implementation of religion in the curriculum during the 1940's, he argues, was a direct result of this discrepancy. And he points out the growing dichotomy during the 1950's between the policy of financial centralization and de-centralized decision-making practised at the curricular level. Stamp's "ideological position on questions of pedagogy, curriculum, and educational programs" is used to good effect in Chapter 9, "The Triumph of Conservatism", in which he unequivocally condemns the lack-lustre policies of Education Minister William Dunlop, whose teacher training system he considers "one of the most dictatorial and thoroughly state-controlled systems . . . in the Western world" (p.200).

In this chapter, too, Stamp's highly-readable narrative style proves to be particularly effective. His realistic descriptions of the typical Ontario high school class-room (his own?), the life-styles of the teen-age students in the 1950's, the traditional teaching methods and conformist emphases of their teachers vividly charge the reader's imagination. They also provide powerful reinforcement for his conservative-liberal pendulum theme and for his major argument that despite statistical evidence of a longer retention of students and of more highly-qualified teachers, the 1950's, as previous periods of conservatism, reflected the strong political pressure of local school boards and rural voters against any overly-expensive or too extreme innovative measures by either departmental officials or politicians. Dunlop and his Conservative Premier, Leslie Frost, gave the rural voter the order, decorum and stability that he demanded and they were returned to power with solid majorities in three successive elections during the 1950's.

In many of his chapters Stamp also links these conservative forces to issues raised by radical revisionists, such as their underlying aim to prevent deviant behaviour and crime, their desire to maintain the *status quo* or protect private property, and their promotion of moral education and character training in the schools. The exploitation of women in the early years when there was a high transiency rate, and when teachers suffered from low