

Rosenberg, Rosalind, *Beyond Separate Spheres: Intellectual Roots of Modern Feminism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982, pp. xxii + 288, \$9.95 (U.S.) paper.

Rosenberg convincingly demonstrates that although some of the "fathers" of sociology may have been "sexist to a man" that others were more open to feminist thought and actively encouraged many of the American "mothers" of sociology who are the subject of this book. Rosenberg illustrates the pioneer status of sociology in the extension of higher education to women on equal terms with men, as well as the contribution made by those early women students to the refutation of ideas that would deny the capacity or inclination of women for such education.

Women's access to higher education on the same terms as men occurred first in the State universities of the mid-west and it is here that Rosenberg's discussion begins. The well-endowed eastern schools were able to resist pressures for co-education that re-surfaced after the Civil War whereas the newly established schools in the mid-west, such as the University of Chicago, could not afford to overlook the economic benefits of co-education. It was at the University of Chicago that the beginnings of women's full participation on equal terms with men begins and it is the new disciplines of the social sciences that are proving to be the most receptive to women's presence as well as being a most attractive concern for women themselves.

The attractions of the social sciences for women are explained by Rosenberg in the context of the "gynocentric ideal". This ideal stressed the particular affinity of women for social reform, indeed the necessity of women's reform activities in the rapidly growing urban centres with their attendant social problems. The connection made between scientific study and social activism by John Dewey, G.H. Mead, Albion Small and Thorstein Veblen at Chicago in the early years provided a fertile recruiting ground for women students imbued with the belief in the gynocentric ideal.

The gynocentric ideal also provided part of the rational for the first women's movement which, in turn, provided a basis from which the social science investigations of the early pioneers, such as Marion Talbot, Helen Thompson and Leta Hollingworth might proceed. The irony of the connection was that these same investigations provided the evidence that refuted the ideal with its assumptions of emotional/intellectual differences between the sexes. However, as is the case in the present relationships between feminist academics and the feminist movement in general, the contradictory findings of the social scientists remained largely within the academy and had little impact upon the continuing social welfare concerns of the women's movement.

The gynocentric ideal may have provided the general impetus for female social scientists, but the early investigations into sex differences were addressed more particularly to the ideas regarding women's intellectual capacity based on Darwin's contention that woman's brain was lighter, simpler and generally less developed than that of man. As Rosenberg points out, the early opponents of co-education at the college level such as Dr. Clarke of Harvard, believed that education would tax the brain capacity of women and impair their future reproductive abilities. This claim was taken seriously by both American and Canadian educators. The scientific refutation of these ideas was important in the continued improvement of women's position, but the very process by which the refutations might be secured separated the researchers from the reformers. As Helen Thompson Wolley and Leta Holingworth found "... their work was devoted to and made possible by the efforts of women reformers who were united by a common sense of purpose", but that "much of their work . . . was aimed at dissolving the body of Victorian assumptions that underlay that unifying purpose." As is still the case, the dilemma of the research/reform connection for feminist issues was made more problematic by the lack of significant amounts of institutional support for either activity. Rosenberg demonstrates that the increasing specialization and "scientism" of the social science disciplines combined with the teamwork approach to research gradually removes women and a concern with sex differences from the forefront of the disciplines. The marginality of women in academe was reinforced by the social and political events of the 1930's such that the issues of "women's potential seemed at best irrelevant and at worst subversive of the social order" (p. 241). The parallels with the current New Right conservatism and feminism within and outside the academy today are instructive.

See Margaret Gillet, *We Walked Very Warily: A History of Women at McGill, Montreal*, Eden Press, (1) 1981.

One of the most interesting aspect of Rosenberg's discussion lies in the details of the various women's professional and personal lives. Professionally, the problems of access and credibility were the most significant problems at the turn of the century. At the graduate level financial pressures as well as prejudice discouraged women; after graduation few women were able to find jobs in their areas of expertise; and when jobs were found that were conducive to their interests they were frequently underfunded, precarious positions. In their personal lives three patterns can be discerned as important to any continued professional life: private financial resources, as was the case for Elsie Clews Parsons; spousal support, as was the case for Leta Hollingworth and Mary Roberts Smith Coolidge; or celibacy, as was the case for Clelia Mosher. In addition, the support of mothers in the early stages would appear to have been significant for many. Margaret Mead's mother and grandmother were significant role models in her early development and encouraged her ambition. The details are fascinating in terms of current relationship of women to academe. Access to graduate school may be easier financially and more readily available to the qualified irrespective of sex, but the problem of women's credibility remains. Post-graduate positions may be more plentiful (at least prior to the last few years) but as research indicates women's incomes still fall below those of males in comparable positions even at the level of the highly qualified. In addition, the funding of much feminist research remains problematic. On the personal level, the patterns discerned by Rosenberg remain significant for women in the pursuit of a relatively uninterrupted career.

*Beyond Separate Spheres* places the pioneer female social scientists firmly in the forefront of the development of discipline and raises questions about their past obscurity in the literature dealing with the history of the social sciences. For example, Jessie Taft's analysis of the place of educated women in society at the turn of the century introduced the two concepts of marginality and role strain. The debt to Taft is obscure in the work of Robert Park and Talcott Parsons in their elaborations of these concepts. The "de facto" functionalism of Elsie Clews Parsons long before functionalism was fashionable, indeed much of her important work on marriage and the family, has been poorly acknowledged by either sociology or anthropology. The history of women's place in academe and particularly in the disciplines of the social sciences serves as a "cautionary tale" as Rosenberg suggests for the current debates regarding sex role relationships.

The book is well-written and the research is impressive. It is a book that should be a part of any social science theory course, as a necessary corrective to the all-pervasive male stream of thought that characterises such offerings, as well as providing a rich resource for research questions on the social history of the social sciences. The book is not a text in the usual sense of the term but a fascinating combination of biography and intellectual history so necessary for present-day students if the amnesia of the '40's and '50's on the question of sex-role relationships and their significance is not to be repeated.

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Titley, E. *Brian Church, State, and the Control of Schooling in Ireland 1900-1944*. Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983. 212 pp., \$27.50.

As the accepted instrument of salvation, the church dominated every facet of medieval life. But the commercial boom and urbanization of the late middle ages, accompanied by the rise of strong national monarchies, followed by the Renaissance, Reformation, religious wars, the Enlightenment, and the political and industrial revolutions all contributed to the secularization of Western society and the supremacy of state over church. Even in countries where governments financed religious schools, at the beginning of the twentieth century the state took primary responsibility for the character and quality of education.