REVIEW ESSAY

Goodson, Ivor F. and Ball, Stephen J., (Eds.), *Defining the Curriculum: Histories and Ethnographies.* Lewes, England: The Falmer Press, 1984. 309 pp., $21.00 (paper).

This work is based on papers presented at a conference in 1982 (the St. Hilda's Conference on School Subjects), enriched by a most informative introduction by the editors. Let me quickly add that it is not in the vein of some collections of papers about subjects in the curriculum. First, it does not deal, one at a time, with all subjects commonly taught in schools, nor are all such subjects considered. Second, it does not equate "curriculum" with "array of subjects taught" but treats the task and effects of schooling much more broadly, especially the social effects. At the same time, the theme "defining the curriculum" is not elaborated systematically in terms of the roles played by various influential agencies either — the sort of approach found in another recent book of similar title from the United States (*Who Planned the Curriculum?* by Saylor, published in 1982 by Kappa Delta Pi).

No, this collection is about method. Some of the papers are set in the context of one or more identifiable school subjects, some look at schooling in broader terms (both content and intent), and some are almost entirely methodological. The collection is thematically oriented towards studying how the curriculum gets to be the way it is, and the effects it has on students' lives. The message is overwhelmingly convincing: the combination of history and ethnography is potent as one methodological orientation for curriculum studies.

The volume is part of an increasing repertoire of works, many of them from the U.K., that assign meaning to educational events from a point of view that appears to ask innocently, "What's going one here?". If approached only from the level *that the events occur,* the impact of this work is almost to stun the reader. Repeatedly one sees the formulation and maintenance of curriculum, and the consideration (or the lack of it) about potential impact on students' lives, conceptualized on the basis of motives that lurk deep in all sociopolitical enterprises, motives such as territoriality, status-seeking, and the need to control other people. One comes across manifestations of gender bias, oppression through abuse of power, people cooperating in short-changing themselves, and self-fulfilling prophecies based on prejudging the potential of other human beings. It is an extraordinarily illuminating parade of the power-wielding and risk-taking which are, or should be, familiar as occupational hazards to seasoned curriculum practitioners. One finishes reading the collection with a sense, somehow, of "So what's new?". It's almost as if the power of the methodology is demonstrated too forcefully.

Readers need to approach this work at a different level, to get its significance. The interpretive framework being used provides a welcome and refreshing complementary view to the "technical rationality" approach to conceptualizing how curriculum gets defined and what schooling does to people. And indeed the particulars of the cases taken up in many of the essays provide a commendable depth and richness by the very fact of their focus and detail, which gives added credibility to this complementary conceptualization. Further, the editors (and, as well, some of the contributors) have devoted a lot of effort and care to discussing methodology. I daresay the work will stand as a contribution to methodology in the study of education; serious students of curriculum will certainly have to take it seriously.

But that brings me to the point that concerns me most. One very important group of serious students of curriculum is those curriculum practitioners who have been placed in their roles without much preparation — other than their identification as outstanding teachers having salient interpersonal skills. To be a "serious student of curriculum" is, for them, to learn how to conceptualize the tasks of curriculum from one end to the other, from policy setting right through to the evaluation of student learning (and other effects on students). From that perspective, I would have found it much more informative and interesting had there been more discussion of the *epistemological* alternative offered by the Goodson and Ball collection — that is, what the methodology lets a serious student of curriculum see and know in a different light, and why the contributors and editors think it important to do so. Perhaps that is too much to ask for in one work, particularly one of this magnitude. But I think that any practitioner who tries to take this work seriously will experience something similar to the effect on an undergraduate student who first encounter Freud: one can't even blink one's eyes without being driven by some motive lurking deep in the unknown unconscious. That potential effect tends to vitiate the power and informativeness of the work. Yet, such a conundrum is associated with any powerful methodology for interpreting human affairs. How to get out of it?

The key, perhaps, is that the view taken by historians and ethnographers is no more innocent of theory than any other conceptual view of events, despite the suggestion to the contrary in Adelman's paper (p. 79): "I was seeking less theory-laden observations — those of an ethnographic type." The innocent-observer posture suggests that other researchers are less aware of the tunnel-vision effect of their evidence-gathering metaphors than are ethnographers (or those who combine ethnography with history, perhaps). Maybe so. But that epistemological point is worth discussing, in a work like this, and the discussion would require some frank acknowledgement of the metaphors framing the research questions — the conceptual principles, the terms of inquiry, what the researchers go in looking for. The noticeable lack of extended commentary of this sort in the work leaves it epistemologically flat, as if it is intended to be a description of "what's really going on" rather than a metaphor-bound interpretation that complements, or competes with, other metaphor-bound interpretations of educational events.

Back to our serious student of curriculum, then. The power of a collection like this one is that it says "Look: if you approach the task of conceptualizing curriculum events and student effects from this perspective you see thus-and-such differently — indeed, you may not have noticed it before." The whole complex of methodology *and* what it surfaces for inspection can then function as a reflective framework for the practitioner who, after all, has to make decisions, not just be converted to a new "-ology". Those readers who can bring to the work the stance of seeking a reflective framework will find in the Goodson and Ball book a powerful one, with far-reaching consequences for the way they think about curriculum practice and, especially, the impact of curriculum on students' lives.

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BOOK REVIEWS

M.A. Raywid, C.A. Tesconi, Jr., and D.R. Warren. *Pride and Promise: Schools of Excellence for all the People*. Westbury, N.Y.: American Educational Studies Association, 1984, 49 pp., $4.25.

The authors of this cogent and timely report are to be doubly commended: firstly, for giving an account of many of the recent criticisms of American schooling, and secondly, for providing a measured response to the recommendations of the critics. *Pride and Promise* originated at the 1983 meeting of the American Educational Studies Association, when Charles Tesconi noted in his presidential address that not a few of the burgeoning list of schooling reports were out of touch with classroom realities. He called upon education scholars, notably those in the areas of educational policy and foundations, to provide a statement of how schools might be improved. Tesconi along with two other Association members, Mary Anne Raywid and Donald Warner, subsequently took on the task that led to this document.

Pride and Promise's subtitle, *Schools of Excellence for All the People*, is a common theme in the Report's six sections. The authors begin by reviewing the major beliefs behind the American commitment to public schooling. When combined with a belief that democracy depends on an educated citizenry, two convictions account for the invention and continuance of the American public school. One of these is that schooling promotes social improvement and individual realization; the other, that it assists in the successful performance of adult roles.

Such an ethos gave the public school enormous power that was not challenged by most Americans as long as the expectations arising from these convictions were being met. As many of the recent twenty or so major national reports on schools indicate, however, public schools have been losing favour. What is remarkable is that most of the calls for their improvement rest almost exclusively on matters relating to standardized tests of performance. This narrow perspective ignores the range and diversity of the tasks that have been assigned the public school. Tesconi and his colleagues reject the simplistic solutions of the new reformers, their presentism, their marketplace mentality and their failure to identify forces which link educational success to social and economic class, race, ethnicity and gender. As the same time, the authors are far from being apologists for the current state of schooling. In the ensuing sections of the Report, they discuss the kinds of excellence which tend to have been largely overlooked in the current debate.

These discussions are particularly encouraging in that they provide more than a critique of what is currently being proposed. And while the authors' arguments are not always convincing, they are not easily ignored. They give full reference to the relevance of outcomes, but at the same time they address the more complex matter of school experience, that is, not only what is done in schools, but the spirit in which it is done and what it means to the participants. They argue that neither the outcome nor experiential purposes ought to be sacrificed to each other:

> We do not want 'nice' school experiences which lead nowhere and produce little learning; neither, however, do we want pedagogically efficient activities which are physically, psychologically, or morally injurious to children. (p. 9)

Tesconi's call for an environment that is conducive to a shared commitment to excellence reflects Goodlad's comments in *A Place Called School:*

> The ambience of each school differs. These differences appear to have more to do with the quality of life and indeed the quality of education in schools than do the explicit curriculum and the methods of teaching. (p.14)

The achievement of a desirable school climate will not be gained by rules and regulations or by increasingly detached, top-down school practice specifications. What is needed is not teacher-proof methodologies, but teachers who have "the power to produce desired effects . . . a sense of potency, of knowing that one's efforts count" (p.15).

The belief that the external mandating of curriculum and achievement levels will lead to educational excellence is pronounced wrong-headed. It assumes that "determined teachers will simply demand the appropriate performance and the students will comply" (p.21). The authors contend that no one familiar with classrooms would accept such a scenario. They have little to say "to those who insist on superior results who have little to suggest on how to obtain them" (p.21). They would apply instead the same principles of efficacy and collegiality to students as they would to teachers. Such familiar adages as that people learn in different ways and that they learn more fully and widely in a community that respects their individuality underline many of their proposals to achieve educational excellence.

"Educating Teachers for Excellence", the fifth section of the Report, advocates major reforms in the teacher preparation programs of colleges and universities including "rigorous admission requirements and academic standards, a coherent general education, professional students that draw upon research and knowledge, and an area of specialized knowledge and expertise" (p.41).

The authors' conclusion returns to the Report's central theme that schools should be places of pride and promise for all people. They have put their arguments well and with conviction. The text is unambiguous, marginal quotations are both timely and compelling and the bibliography lists the major sources of their comments together with other current references.

The Report is particularly pertinent to Canadian educators who, if such recent events as the new set of evaluation procedures and the secondary school review in Alberta are taken into account, can no longer hold to the view that American excesses take some time in taking hold north of the border. The authors' observations suggest that current American educational reforms such as those suggested in *A Nation at Risk*, are moving North much more rapidly. It is clear that if Canadian educators are not more vocal and vigilant, they may well be heirs to a system about which Tesconi and his colleagues have given fair warning.

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Hopkins, David and Wideen, Marion. *Alternative Perspectives on School Improvement.* Philadelphia, PA: The Falmer Press, 1984, 212 pp., $16.00 (paper).

The prevailing school improvement movement rests on the wide-spread belief that schools are, at worst, less-than-satisfactory and, at best, marginally acceptable. This belief would appear to be founded more on exhortive polemics than on empirical evidence. Regardless, however, of the reasons for its existence, this

belief raises at least four questions. First, in what ways, and to what extent, are schools in need of improvement? Second, in whose opinion, and upon what basis, is the effectiveness of schools below par? Third, assuming the validity of the prevailing belief, how can schools be improved? And fourth, how can it be ascertained that the schools have actually improved in some measurable way? If questions such as these are accepted as non-trivial, then it is appropriate to ask whether or not the substantive issues they raise and the empirical problems they pose are addressed in the book under review.

Interestingly, all the authors whose papers comprise this volume seem to subscribe to the prevailing belief. None of them challenges the assumption that schools are somehow sub-standard. Yet, despite their belief in the need for improvement, no author indicated explicitly the kind of problems which, if identified and solved, would result in more acceptable schools. Thus, to the extent that many of the authors are highly respected scholars (e.g. Aoki, Fuller, Joyce, Runkel, Schmuck, and Stenhouse), the belief that improvement is needed gains considerable credibility. It is therefore not surprising, given the absence of specific deficiencies in schools, that no attention is paid to the measurement of improvement. The only question addressed in the book concerns how to improve schools.

The book is divided into four sections, the first of which attempts to frame the concept of school improvement. The proposed alternative perspective tends to emphasize the human side of the educational enterprise. It is phenomenological in its orientation. While there is much to commend this point of view, it brings into conflict two opposing forces which are not easily reconciled. On the one hand, there is a highly critical public which is impatient for immediate evidence of improved performance by pupils, teachers, and administrators. On the other hand, there is a group of academicians and practitioners who, given the largely unsuccessful record of top-down improvement attempts, has explored more participation-oriented, problem-solving approaches to school improvement. Although this perspective has the potential to create long-lasting improvement, the length of time required to produce results is too long. The dilemma created by the demand for instant excellence and the knowledge that real improvement is a slow process is not addressed in the first section of this book. This omission not only constitutes a substantive weakness, but also casts considerable doubt on the practical utility of the alternative perspective. This omission, however, does not mean that the remainder of the book should be dismissed. In fact, each of the ensuing three sections is worthy of attention.

The second section addresses the people whose lives are most directly involved in the improvement process. The first of four essays discusses the role of pupils, regarded by Rudduck as a neglected variable in the attempt to understand how changes takes place in schools. The next two papers look at the improvement of teaching. Stenhouse focuses on the classroom teacher as a researcher and points to the need for methods other than those prescribed by what he calls the "psycho-statistical" paradigm. He emphasizes the merits of an action research alliance between schools and universities. Joyce and Showers advocate the use of peer coaching, observing that such training should involve both teachers and principals. It should be noted, however, that there is little empirical evidence to support the view that dyadic interaction is the most productive way to improve the quality of teaching. The last essay by Fullan discusses the role of the school principal as a central agent in the change process. Unfortunately, the paper assumes that the readers understand what is meant by "knowledge utilization" (KU). Given the importance and usefulness of KU, it would have been beneficial had the editors included an explanation of the concept. Without at least some understanding of it, the central importance of the principal in KU is considerably reduced. While the literature review on the role and behaviour of the school principal is informative, even without knowing about KU, the essay does little to show, for instance, how, when half of the principals are concerned with administrative functions, they can be involved in more than a passive way as leaders of school improvement.

The third section is concerned with different perspectives on change. In the first of the four papers, Aoki challenges the prevailing producer-consumer model of curriculum implementation arguing that implementation should be a matter of praxis rather than action. The next two papers report the results of research projects conducted in Australia (Eltis et.al.) and in New Zealand (Robinson). In the former, the authors offer a series of guidelines for the development and implementation of school-based, long-term in-service programmes. In the latter, the author concludes that the school review model is successful only when there is a pre-existing norm of collegiality not only among teachers, but also between staff and administration. The section concludes with Runkel and Schmuck's discussion of the role of Organizational Development (OD) in schools. Their paper concludes with a concise and useful statement about what OD can and cannot do to foster school improvement.

The last section contains two papers both of which synthesize, in very different ways, the main themes to emerge from the book. Runkel discusses the need to promote and maintain diversity. Using a biological analogy, he argues that variety is the best insurance against inflexibility and offers five suggestions for improving the adaptability of schools as they attempt to respond to societal change. What remains implicit in Runkel's argument is that schools have somehow improved if they respond flexibly and adapt to changes in the external environment. By contrast, Wideen and Andrews identify four themes, namely the needs for: increased awareness, active support and facilitation, understanding the complexities of the process, and diversity. The implications of each theme for the classroom, the teacher, the school, and the supporting agencies are discussed in terms of current practice, possible alternatives, and plans for action.

Despite some shortcomings, this volume has earned a place in the literature on educational change. For those who have not read widely in the field of school improvement or effectiveness, the book provides a limited but useful introduction to some of the pertinent issues. For those who are better acquainted with the literature, the book contains enough content variety and ideational diversity to stimulate discussion not only among academic colleagues but also between academicians and practitioners. There is enough merit in the book to make reading it worthwhile.

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Sherman, Robert R. (Ed.), *Understanding History of Education.* Second Edition. Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Company, 1984, 200 pp., $11.95 U.S. (paperback).

In a new Preface to the second edition of *Understanding History of Education*, editor Robert R. Sherman points out with some truth that "the study of the history of education has been pursued in the past, usually by observing the historical study of education done by others and by memorizing the content" (p.vii). His belief is that "history of education becomes meaningful to the extent that some of it is done by oneself" (p.vii). Hence, this collection of essays which attempts to introduce to students the techniques and methods of the study of history in order that they may then pursue their own original research in the more specific area of history of education and at the same time achieve an understanding of the importance of the history of education in their professional preparation. This is a tall order by any standards and is probably unattainable in a single book or indeed in a single course of lectures. However, the shortcomings of the collection extend beyond simply a failure to achieve too broadly-based a goal. The shortcomings stem from Sherman's entire approach to and understanding of the topic.

I have no argument with Sherman's attempt to set the study of history of education firmly within the broader discipline of history. Nor do I disagree with his belief that students should understand what is involved in "doing" history. But, having accepted these points, I have two major arguments with his approach. The first may be termed a practical objection and deals with the difficulty of moving from a broad study of historical method to the narrower study of educational history without some specific knowledge of the latter. The second involves a basic disagreement with Sherman's own concept of the nature of historiography in relation to the history of education. Let me deal with each of the points in more detail.

Sherman is not explicit about the type of student for whom the book is intended. Some mention is made of the importance of the study of education for "teachers" but on the whole the impression is that the book is directed to those who are involved in pre-service programs. The majority of these will be neophytes not only to the study of history but also to the study and practice of education. To introduce such students to a wide-ranging collection of essays on various methods of historical writing and then expect them to understand, let alone write, history of education, is unrealistic. Of the twenty-two essays in the collection only one, and that one the very last in the book, actually deals with education in an historic context. I would strongly argue that the beginning student of educational history needs not only to know how to set about understanding and writing history, he also needs to be acquainted with what has happened in the past in relation to education. This does not necessarily imply the memorization of vast numbers of facts or a sole reliance on what has already been written. But the student, if he is to make any sense of, or be able to interpret the information which his own

research brings to light, must be able to set those facts into a context of past developments. He must be aware of what "education" at a given time and place in the past actually meant to those who provided it and to those who experienced it. Without at least a basic knowledge of this nature Sherman's suggestion that each student "identify an interest in education, research it historically and teach about it in [a] class" (p. 126) of his peers will almost certainly result in the uncertainty that Sherman mentions. Worse still, it will likely result in something that is not history.

My second criticism is based on Sherman's understanding of the term "historiography," or perhaps I should say lack of understanding. Historiography is more than just "the study of how history is done and what is involved in doing it" (p. vii). It is also the history of how history has been done in the past and how and why this has changed over time. Sherman pays lip service to this change but his approach is basically ahistorical. He notes in his introduction to Chapter 3, "The Nature and Value of History," that change has occurred; he could hardly have chosen two better examples to illustrate change than Carl Becker's 1931 Presidential Address to the American Historical Association and Howard Zim's 1970 article on radical history. But he omits any comment on why such change has taken place or on its significance in relation to the study of history.

To further compound the omission, this new edition is introduced by Sol Cohen's *The History of the History of American Education 1900-1976: The Uses of the Past.* This article goes some way towards documenting and suggesting reasons for the changes that have taken place in the writing of American educational history in this century. But Sherman dismisses its significance with the glib comment "It should be useful to note where it [the history of education] has been and where it may be going (p.1)". Apparently, as far as Sherman is concerned, any point of view at any point of time in the past is simply another "perspective" and all are equally valid in the present. In other words, one does not need to use historical method when dealing with past writings on the history of education — only when dealing with historical facts themselves. To my mind, this is a gross and unforgivable error on the part of any historian. However, perhaps it explains the inclusion of several thirty-, forty- or even fifty-year-old essays and numerous suggestions for the further reading of a similar vintage without any editorial or historiographic comment by Sherman. Age alone does not necessarily diminish the value or validity of a piece of historical writing but it may well add a different significance. To omit any comment on this point in a book which purports to teach historical method is a serious weakness.

One final comment must be made. Revisions of publications are sometimes made more with the interests of the publisher than those of the reader in mind. But in this case Sherman assures us that the purpose of a second edition is to bring the book up-to-date. Why then the lack of up-to-date material? Of the new additions in the revised edition, the most recent (with the exception of Sherman's own contribution in Chapter 4) was published in 1979. More than half predate the publication date of the first edition. Likewise the extensive lists of suggested further readings contain only a handful of recent titles.

Understanding History of Education, then, does not live up to the promise of its title; it offers little enlightenment on the problems of writing history, less still on the history of education.

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Slavin, Robert E. *Cooperative Learning*. New York: Longman Inc., 1983, ix + 147 pp., $39.50.

Robert Slavin's purpose in writing *Cooperative Learning* was to describe the status of cooperative learning research. He accomplishes this goal by first establishing selection criteria and then grouping the investigations into four categories: academic achievement, intergroup relations, mainstreaming of academically handicapped students, and other non-cognitive outcomes. He devotes a chapter to each of these research topics. Along the way, Slavin defines important concepts and briefly describes cooperative learning methods. He concludes by summarizing the major findings of research and by suggesting directions for future investigations.

Before reviewing the research, Robert Slavin makes a number of important distinctions. He maintains that cooperative incentives, cooperative task structure and cooperative motives are not synonymous with cooperative behavior. Cooperative behavior is the actual activity of two or more persons which through coordinated effort facilitates goal achievement. This differs from cooperative incentive structure wherein two or more individuals are reinforced on the basis of their collective performance. Cooperative task structure involves two or more persons who work together on a particular task. Cooperative motives are predispositions to behave cooperatively rather than individualistically or competitively. All of these phenomena constitute cooperation, but they are rarely found in a pure state.

He further distinguishes between group productivity and individual learning. Group productivity refers to the results of cooperative behavior such as building more stable towers with additional blocks, whereas individual learning is an inferred process related to relatively permanent changes in students' behaviour tendencies. Increased learning produces higher achievement. The significance of this distinction should not be underestimated in that cooperation may result in higher levels of group productivity without realizing concomitant increments in individual learning. While group productivity is not without value, individual learning is more important for students.

The descriptions of cooperative learning strategies are accurate, but at times too short to provide the uninitiated reader with a thorough understanding of how teachers promote cooperative learning. Greater detail would have been helpful. For example, the description of the jigsaw technique omits reference to teambuilding and follow-up activities such as "fishbowling" which are important to the success of jigsaw classrooms. Given the main purpose of the book, however, this shortcoming is tolerable, especially in the light of the additional references provided by the author. A useful table compares cooperative learning methods in relation to four characteristics: specific group rewards, task specialization, group competition, and equal opportunity scoring procedures.

Robert Slavin identifies the design features necessary for adequate field research as follows: a duration of at least two weeks; the presence of a control group which is assumed to be equivalent to the experimental group through randomization, or through statistical control of pretest data; when special achievement tests are used, equal opportunity for all groups to learn the material, or when standardized test are used, no special teaching for the tests; equal instructional time for all groups; and the control of teacher effects by rotation of teachers across groups. Only studies which met these criteria were included.

Forty-one field studies of the effects of cooperative learning on academic achievement met Slavin's design criteria. Sixty-three percent of these studies demonstrated positive results. The strongest effect on achievement derived from specific group rewards based on members' learning. Black students gained more than Anglo-American students. In addition, the influence of cooperative learning on achievement was primarily motivational. Slavin embellishes the discussion of cooperative learning and achievement with an attempt at model building. His attempt, similar to efforts elsewhere in the book, is not very helpful, especially when he graphically represents the various relationships.

The research on cooperative learning and intergroup behavior supports contact theory. This theory states that prejudice is reduced by equal status contact between minority and majority group members when such relations are supported by authorities, and when there is a realization that the individuals involved have common goals and a common humanity. Ten of the thirteen studies showed positive intergroup relations effects. A table, similar to those in other chapters, succinctly summarizes important features of the investigations and their results. Slavin suggests that future research should determine the crucial components of cooperative learning for intergroup relations.

Frequently, "mainstreaming" academically handicapped pupils means placement in a regular classroom where they are again segregated. Cooperative learning on the other hand promises true integration. Seven of the ten studies related to cooperative learning and mainstreaming showed positive effects. Cooperative learning overcomes resistance to friendship and interaction between regular and handicapped pupils while at the same time it enhances the academic achievement of both groups. A concern for future research is that long-term benefits are not sustained.

The influence of cooperative learning on non-cognitive outcomes such as self-esteem, pro-academic norms, locus of control, time on task, liking of class, liking of classmates and cooperation is generally positive. For example, the research on self-esteem produced eleven of fourteen studies with favourable results. Future

research, Slavin suggests, should identify the source of the positive findings related to non-cognitive variables. Are the results due to changes in the classroom incentive structure, task structure, feedback systems, authority processes, and/or teacher's roles?

Slavin concludes with a discussion of several unresolved issues. Variables such as specific group regards, task specialization, long-term retention, scoring methods, subject specificity effects and new cooperative learning methods all require further, more detailed study in relation to academic achievement. The unresolved issues related to intergroup relations and acceptance of mainstreamed students are associated with the generalizability of the effects of out-of-class relationships. Moveover, it may be that the variables that produce the effects observed in cross-ethnic relations are different from those that are important in cross-handicap relations. Finally, a list of seventeen theoretical and practical issues which must be resolved are listed. These issues are fertile ground for the creation of future research hypotheses.

After beginning students of cooperative learning have read introductory texts such as *The Jigsaw Classroom* (by E. Avonson, N. Blaney, C. Stephan, J. Sikes and M. Snapp, published by Sage Publications in 1978) and *Learning Together and Alone* (by D.W. Johnson and R.T. Johnson, published by Prentice-Hall in 1975), they, like their more advanced colleagues, will find this volume informative and provocative.

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Willinsky, John. *The Well-Tempered Tongue; The Politics of Standard English in the High School*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 1984, 183 pp., $23.15 (hardcover).

Given the current panic over academic standards and the related enthusiasm for returning to "the basics," John Willinksy's study of the teaching of English seems timely indeed. Against the background of recent sociolinguistic and sociological studies of language mastery and school achievement, Willinksy presents a case study of the teaching of English in a Canadian high school. A crucial feature of Willinsky's account is his intention to treat "standard English" as a social fact, to critically expose the social construction of the standard. Throughout, his investigation highlights the persistence of a politics of inequality in the face of recent attempts to develop an enlightened language curriculum policy based on the current state of knowledge in linguistics.

Willinsky begins his analysis with a historical overview of the emergence of standard English and its place in the school curriculum. The historical constitution of standard English as a prestige form is shown to be a political fact, the imposition of a definite moral order associated with the development of the nation state and the rise of the bourgeoisie. The educational significance of the prestige form is associated with the school's role in contributing to a more efficient division of labour in society. Willinsky notes that the attempt to explain social inequality in terms of essential (or "natural") rather than socially constructed differences has remained constant, although the locus of essential difference has shifted. Thus during the 1960's, language replaced earlier notions of intelligence and motivation as an explanation of inequality of educational outcomes, marking a shift from a biological to an environmental explanation of difference. This shift has posed a dilemma for teachers. They can no longer naively rely on the older moral posture of imposing the standard; they are to cease disparaging working-class English or Black English. Yet, perhaps unavoidably, they continue to insist on the superiority of their own way of speaking English.

Willinsky observes that in educational literature and policymaking, this dilemma is handled through a new ideology of language teaching which officially renounces a judgmental, correction-oriented approach in favor of modelling the standard against a background of linguistic neutrality and value relativism. Non-standard English is no longer to be regarded as wrong; rather, it is just different. But non-standard English is also *not* what teachers exemplify or recognize. The new ideology thus glosses over the persisting divisive effects of the standard's use on academic achievement and identity formation.

Having set forth an overview of the ideological significance of standard English in both the wider culture and the schooling process, Willinsky turns to his study of English instruction in one Nova Scotia high school.

What he finds there supports his contention that the new linguistic sophistication in curriculum theory and program development has not resolved the politics of English instruction but only changed the terms. What the teaching of English amounts to *practically* differs drastically in the general (non-university bound) and academic streams. With respect to both what teachers attempt to teach and what gets learned by students, standard English is experienced as either an alien form (by general stream students) or a confirmation of one's own mastery and credibility (by academic stream students). Linguistic neutrality notwithstanding, students grasp that what counts about the standard is its character as a prestige form. For both groups, the standard identifies what kind of speech, and therefore, which speakers, are worthy to be recognized. Preponderantly, non-standard, general stream speakers find themselves denied not only academic status but also a credible identity, and their instruction is largely given over to the identification and correction of mistakes. Academic, standard speakers, on the other hand, are encouraged to express themselves. Having shown themselves worthy to be entrusted with the standard, they are "free to think within ideology." In short, given the politics of streaming, the new, linguistically informed approach to English instruction is least practicable where it should count the most.

Two important influences appear to guide Willinsky's interest in language use. On the one hand, his approach to standard English as a social fact draws upon the symbolic interactionist conception of the development of the self: language plays a crucial role in the formation of identities, and thus in the possibility of stigmatization. As with other interactionist treatments of deviance, Willinsky tends to depict the linguistic deviant as the victim of invidious social dynamics such as labelling.

On the other hand, Willinsky shows enthusiasm for approaches to discourse analysis associated with recent French social theory. The latter develop investigations in which the phenomenon of language is viewed as decentred from the achievements of the self. Here, the unit of analysis is the discursive formation, not the acting individual. The various sorts of linguistic deviance can then be viewed, with Foucault, as one among many diverse "effects" of the working of specific discursive practices.

These approaches cannot easily be theoretically harmonized, since discourse theory (in its various forms) rejects the homocentric assumptions of interactionism (man-the-speaking-actor) in favour of decentred analyses of discursive forms and practices. Willinsky has blended the earnest interactionist concern with the victim with a more decentred approach to language as a field of practices in which formations of power/knowledge are produced. At the level of theory, then, Willinsky's approach remains equivocal.

At the level of research design, however, a preference for experiential over structural analysis is clearly evident. Willinsky's data collection is attuned to the experiences of participants — to their perspectives, intentions, reactions, and reflections — as these become evident to him through observing classroom lesson activities and more particularly through conducting interviews and administering a questionnaire (in the form of a fill-in test). It might have been appropriate to make use of formal techniques of classroom interaction analysis or textual analysis, which emphasize the social organization of knowledge and which are more in keeping with his interest in discourse theory.

If my assessment is correct, Willinsky's analysis is implicated, if not ensnared, in a paradigm shift which affects much recent research in education, language, and culture. Yet this observation is not meant to detract from the importance of Willinsky's contribution. This book helps to fill a serious gap in the social analysis of education in Canada, which includes few case studies of school practice. Further, Willinsky's work exemplifies the virtue of social analysis which eschews the extremes of either ungrounded cultural criticism or technical-administrative studies which uncritically affirm the priorities of established institutional arrangements. Unfortunately, the book's publication is limited to an American hardcover version. The result is a price tag which will preclude wide adoption for undergraduate education courses. This is a pity, since Willinsky's study could provide the centrepiece for a course segment investigating the place of language in the culture of the school.

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Friesen, John W. *When Cultures Clash: Case Studies in Multiculturalism.* Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1985, 171 pp. $14.95 (paper).

Despite its attractive title, this book promises very much more than it actually delivers. There is no attention to the clash of cultures in any of the chapters — neither in the first two general chapters on "Multicultural Education in Canada" and "Ethnic Minorities in Canada" nor in the last chapter on "Teaching and Cultural Survival." In each instance, such attention would have been appropriate. Nor are the remaining five chapters on the French in Western Canada, the Plains Indians, the Métis, the Hutterites and the Mennonites case studies in multiculturalism. Apart from the chapter on the French, in which Western Canada's negative attitude toward an immigration policy which brought diverse peoples to the West is noted, the attitude of each of the groups toward multiculturalism is not mentioned. Nor is there any attention to the attitude of each toward ethnicity or ethnic groups. With the French and Métis the stress is on biculturalism, with language and culture (historically, the classical 'schools question') seen as the traditional main support of the Roman Catholic religion. Religion is also the focal point in the treatment of the Hutterites and Mennonites, neither of whom are approached as ethnocultural minorities. With the Plains Indians, the main concern is racism and intercultural education, which to the author is synonymous with multicultural education.

Such loose thinking characterizes the whole book. As if lumping multiculturalism and intercultural matters together without discussion were not enough, the author refers to multiculturalism as "a relatively young academic discipline" (p. 159) and to becoming "a multicultural person" (p. 49), without indicating either the nature of multiculturalism as a "discipline" or how one becomes "a multicultural person." Is a person who concerns himself with multiculturalism "a multicultural person"?

But not only is the author confused, he occasionally misleads as well. It is erroneous to refer to "the original Government Act on Multiculturalism" (p. 2) in discussing the introduction of the multicultural policy in October, 1971. There was no federal legislation at the time and there has been none since. And why, moreover, the capitalization? The book also abounds with statements such as the following: "In terms of support for multicultural activities, however, Alberta Culture has lived up to the Minister's (of Culture) statement" (p. 4). Left alone, the sentence is a political statement and has no place in what is supposedly a scholarly work.

And in the end, the above supposition is the book's main problem. Despite its numerous footnotes and other scholarly apparatus, the book is not a scholarly work. It not only lacks definition and purpose, it shows little understanding of the subject matter it purports to discuss. How, for example, does one reconcile a statement like "School programs should not focus on the 'contributions' of a particular ethnic group but rather on the roles of various groups in the development of Canada" (p. 166) with another statement such as "Encourage children to learn about and appreciate the unique contributions of their own culture" (p. 169)? These statements are in the same chapter and only three pages apart! And further,

> How do we perceive the development of the Native or the immigrant child? Should he become a "typical" Canadian student when he reaches grade twelve — manifesting the same values, desires and goals as other students, or are some differences to be tolerated? If so, what kind of differences? Ethnic groups often place varying emphasis on academic achievements; in light of this, to what extent should the teacher identify those preferences and cater to them in the classroom? (p. 48).

The above are, of course, good questions, but in the book they are unfortunately only asked and not discussed. One could single out much similar 'unfinished business' in analysis and in conceptualization in this book.

The book, in short, has all the appearances of one which seeks to cash in on multiculturalism as the current fad or vogue. In the end, it fails to do justice to multiculturalism *per se* or to the minority situations which it does treat. Numerous instances of sloppy editing such as omitted or misplaced quotation marks [pp. 4,9-10]; inconsistent form such as "nineteen-sixties" [p.159] and 1960s [p. 72], 1940's [p. 59] and 1940s [p. 63]; "succession" when "secession" is intended [p. 31]; inconsistent citation of doctoral dissertations [pp. 79-80]; the use of the verb "enamour" as a noun in "I can pursue my enamour of studying . . . " [p. 11], to cite only a few deficiencies, only add further to the aggravations which the reader sustains because of the superficial nature of the overall content.

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