

changing of "boundaries of consciousness" (p. xiii). The subject matter of a number of papers in this section would have lent themselves to a micro-level treatment. It is a pity that methodologies (like participant observation) which accompany the newer theoretical approaches were not used by the Australian researchers. There is a pressing need for empirical testing of the "new" sociology of education in order to gauge its achievement in both sociological description and explanation.⁵

Part Four returns to a familiar theme, academic socialisation. This has been a popular interest in North American sociology. The value of the discussion in the present book lies in the study of Australian contexts, as so much of the reference material used previously has been derived from American settings.

The final section of the book is, in my opinion, the most important contribution. It consists of three substantial essays on theoretical advances in the sociological study of education and on the problems and dilemmas of the field. One advantage of coming late to an academic discipline is the avoidance of some of the earlier stages of development. In this case, the papers of Miller ("Social-Cultural Theories of Education and the Sociology of Education"), Hunt ("Perspectives in the Sociological Study of Education"), and Balmer ("Education and the Sub-Disciplines of Sociology: A Perspective on the Sociology of Education") serve the extremely useful function of placing the reader right at the heart of current sociology of education. The crucial issues of identity and definition of the field and of the implications of the patterning of social-cultural theories into two groups — the structure- or system-centred theories and the content-centred theories — receive explicit attention. With this background, even a neophyte could orient himself in the literature of the discipline. The *Sociology of Australian Education* is a significant addition to the professional libraries of those teaching sociology of education and has much of interest and challenge for their students. In addition, overseas readers will gain a useful overview of distinctive aspects of Australian education.

The material in this book of readings provides an opportunity for a survey, however incomplete, of the present state of the field of sociology of education in Australia. Of importance also is the general function of assessment of current concerns and emerging problems. The danger I see in the trend towards books of readings in this country is the possibility of premature closure. Closure may be applied in two ways. The first is that, in their enthusiasm to publish quickly, workers in the field may be deterred from more extensive explorations of substantive theory and methodology. On the other hand, readers may be led to grasp at the distillations of theoretical approaches made in a collection of papers without reading deeply in their origins. One can only hope that this book will stimulate further research and writing in the endeavour to develop a theoretically informed sociological analysis of Australian education. In a situation where sociology of education is a relatively new discipline, awareness must be fostered that a widely-based connection between sociology and the sociology of education strengthens the source of legitimation for the field.

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⁵A view expressed by A. H. Halsey, "Theoretical Advance and Empirical Challenge," in *Readings in the Theory of Educational Systems* E. Hopper (Ed.), (London: Hutchinson, 1971), p. 263.

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Pat Duffy Hutcheon. *A Sociology of Canada Education*. Toronto: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1975. Pp. vi, 282. \$7.95 (paper).

This first textbook for the sociology of education in Canada will be widely used. Ms. Hutcheon's book is certainly better than the motley readers that previously have attempted to provide Canadian material, the great alternative to American textbooks, and perhaps the book should be welcomed as a classroom resource in our universities.

It is certainly difficult to fault the author since she has usually set careful limits on her work. The book is said to be Canadian in that "example and cases are drawn from the social and

educational context of this particular country.” It would then appear foolish to claim that this book is not a text for Canadian sociology at all; however, because of its lack of realism or empirical support, that is exactly what I will show is the case. Initially, it is easier to question the author’s assertion that the “conceptual structure . . . its mode of systematic analysis are of course generalizable . . . anywhere in the world.” Only if there is no relation between evidence and concepts can such a statement be made.

There is clearly a conceptual structure as the book proceeds from socialisation to school organisation and from formal organisation to community relationships. Each chapter, a separate unit, is organised from an introduction to educational ideas and theories to multiple choice questions which are supposed to review the student’s learning of the text material. Within the chapters are separate Canadian case studies and annotated bibliographies. Within this elaborate structure, suspicion grows that a little something is missing, that is, Canadian education.

Dewey is cited as an authority so that the teacher would avoid the use of an authoritative position without any direct awareness that pressures from other students may be more of a limitation than teacher authority. In the same initial chapter, teachers and a principal are shown collecting sociograms, developing student government, and conducting research on graduates for the past ten years. There is hardly awareness that Canadian teachers might be tired from overwork and lazy from a lack of mental stimulation, something less than the active problem solver of Dewey.

Like Dewey perhaps, the reality of power differences is blinked at in a nice manner by Ms. Hutcheon. She says, “In time, the educator may even be able to show how prestige and respect can be earned by excellence of performance, judgment and social concern rather than be demanding privilege to the limit of the power wielded by one’s professional association” (p. 134). More strangely in a case study a younger teacher with problems between herself and an old guard group of teachers expects to take her problems up in a staff meeting; the same teacher expects her homeroom students to come “to her for help and advice” (p. 108). Equilibrium is so good and chaos so bad that the present system of public education is seen historically as having always been with us (p. 129).

The artificial structure of the individual chapters and the whole book constantly grinds and knocks against any sense of reality. The first reference in the text to a Canadian study occurs on page 154. The bibliography of Canadian studies is very separate from the text. The bibliography in Chapter I contains references to Bernstein’s work, G. H. Mead’s theories, and social class research without any introduction in the text. The actual text presents ideas without empirical testing or even suggesting alternative interpretations. The most frequently cited authors are Dewey and Piaget, hardly an innovation for a Canadian text. The case studies are artificial and superficial. Use might have been made of sociological case studies in order to construct case studies that are neither a dream nor a nightmare. As for the multiple choice questions, I can only suggest a parallel one on the book as a whole:

- I. Ms. Hutcheon’s book should be defined as an experiment which fails because:
 - (a) a specific focus on Canadian values, power relationships and roles is omitted
 - (b) the text is simple enough for students while the bibliography is to impress University teachers
 - (c) she has taught education students too long
 - (d) educational philosophy and sociology are mixed without any appreciation of the distinctive nature and limitations of either.
 - (e) all of the above
 - (f) all but (b)
 - (g) none of the above

Answer: (g), none of the above, there is more of a problem here than space or time permits us to examine.

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