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A Review of Selected Materials in the Educational History of Western Canada: Opportunities for Further Research

The study of the history of education in Western Canada presents educational historians, particularly those interested in reinterpretation and revision, with almost unlimited opportunities. The majority of the relatively small number of publications in this field, a few provincial histories and a small number of articles scattered through the periodicals, tend to glorify past educational achievements as logical steps in the inevitable march of the progress of schooling. Given the quickening interest in "new" interpretations of educational history which this journal has witnessed in the past five years it would appear that the history of education in Western Canada is open to revision. Writing on the historiography of education in the United States Patricia Rooke opened the way for subsequent articles by Donald Wilson and David Jones which examined the subject in Canadian context.[1] Wilson and Jones indicated the revisionist advances made in Ontario and there is evidence to suggest that a similar trend is under way in Western Canada.

Such advances have been made possible because the majority of the published work pertaining to the history of education in Western Canada is firmly entrenched in what Herbert Butterfield has termed the whig interpretation of history.[2] According to Butterfield such an interpretation views past events as a series of links in an inevitable chain of progress culminating in the present. This interpretation portrays the history of education, or more correctly the history of schooling, as the inevitably progressive development of "good" and "sound" public schools under the leadership of benevolent and farsighted governments, public officials, and reformers. Educational change originates at the "top," as it were, and an exhaustive study of enactments, regulations, departmental activities, and educational personalities provides a complete description and, possibly, explanation of the function and development of schools. In many cases the school is viewed in virtual isolation from the social, political, and especially economic context of which it was part. The religious context in which developments took place is, however, rarely ignored, for as Butterfield indicates, the whig interpretation of educational history is Protestant in its bias and tends to view Roman Catholic educational activities and aspirations as disruptive of and obstructive to the smooth development of educational progress. Similarly, whig interpretations tend to view individuals and groups seeking to advance alternatives to the developing educational systems, of which the whigs write, as enemies of progress. Further, if one might paraphrase Butterfield, the whig educational historian tends to ask the question, To whom must we be grateful for our school system? In answering this

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question, according to Butterfield, the whig historian produces a "gigantic optical illusion," the portrayal of a past that never was. Whig interpretations of history have, therefore, become increasingly suspect and in the writing of educational history this has become increasingly apparent in view of the "new" revisionist interpretations which have begun to appear in both the United States and Canada.[3]

These revisionist interpretations have been shown to fall into two distinct categories, moderate and radical.[4] In contrast to whig interpretations, moderate revisionist interpretations present past events in the wider social, religious, political and economic context of the times in which they occurred. They do not view educational developments as part of a pattern of progress culminating in the present. Rather than asking, to whom must we be grateful for our educational system, moderate revisionists ask, why and how did our educational system arise? While they recognize the important and powerful influences exerted by governments, public officials, and reforms upon school systems they do not present these as the only forces which shaped educational developments. They also give attention to the influence of parents, local interest groups, and community opinion in shaping the educational past. That which whig interpretations identify as the obstructionist activities of enemies of progress these revisionists portray as attempts to establish valid alternatives to the educational practice and theory predominating at the time. Above all, moderate revisionist interpretations attempt to develop an understanding of the past in terms of the past and not in terms of the present.[5] And, while they readily acknowledge flaws in and alternatives to the education systems they remain sympathetic to those systems.

While sharing many of the views of the moderates radicals are critical of, if not antagonistic to, the educational systems which they study. In the view of the radical revisionists the school system has ensured the maintenance of an unequal and unjust social system with its basic divisions of power and wealth. Some radical revisionists centre their work around an attack on capitalism and capitalist society.[6] They depict schooling as an instrument devised by capitalists to perpetuate the capitalist system and prevent or deflect any attack on or criticism of that system. In many respects these radical revisionists argue that schools were successful in achieving their capitalist objectives. They also point out that the same schools gave birth to the very radical movements they were supposed to prevent.

While there has not been much radical revision in the history of Western Canadian education, a moderate revision is already under way. And clearly it is time to synthesize the periodical literature of the field. No longer can we be entirely content with the depiction of the development of education being solely directed by personalities and governments, and as evidence of the inevitable progress of our society. Neither can we rest content with the concern of the discipline being solely centred on the development of schooling. Lawrence Cremin, Bernard Bailyn and Brian Simon have promoted the notion that the history of education is much broader than the history of schooling and that in order to understand the historical developments in the field the wider social context in which they occurred has to be considered.[7] As part of the quickening of historical inquiry in education, Canadian scholars have increasingly questioned the conventional whig interpretations of the history of education. The revisionist challenge has forced scholars and students at least to consider, if not to develop, a revised interpretation of the history of education in Western Canada.

It is the purpose of this paper to examine the development of revisionist accounts in the learned journals which provide the majority of the teaching

materials for educational historians specializing in Western Canada.[8] Further, the paper also seeks to identify those works which offer potential starting points for the development of revisionist accounts. In ordering the large amount of material three arbitrary divisions have been imposed: the education of native peoples; pre-provincial attempts to provide schooling; and, the development of provincial schooling. Each of these sections deals in turn with the conventional whig accounts and subsequent revisionist interpretations which have been published. A brief fourth section deals with the development of videotapes which are pertinent to the discipline.

I

Given the wider perspective of the revisionists, including their concern for informal education, the educational historian studying Western Canada is compelled to consider educational activities which took place prior to the arrival of Europeans. And, while European attempts at educating native peoples is a prominent theme in the work already published, scant attention has been paid to the traditional educational practices of the native peoples of the area. In fact, an unpublished thesis by Kevin James Carr appears to be the only substantial work in this area.[9] Carr, in part, outlines the educational practices of the Blackfoot and establishes a case for considering the adult Blackfoot an educated person - educated, it should be noted, though not schooled. His writing provides an excellent background against which to evaluate subsequent European attempts to school these people. The outcome is the tragic tale of what is commonly referred to as "Indian" education. Initially the schooling of native people was left to missionaries who in many cases were, as R.J. Carney writes, "well received. . .mitigated the worst features of the fur trade, and. . .respected. . .Indian leadership.[10] While Carney recognizes the reality of native resistance and present efforts to increase native people's participation in educational decision making as it affects their children, his work remains in the conventional whig mould. His treatment of the subject is sympathetic to the people involved and assumes that past and present events are part of a pattern of steady progress toward a better and brighter future.

A feature of the development of "Indian" education which has received considerable attention from historians and has produced one moderate revisionist article is the establishment and relatively short duration of Indian Industrial Schools. Writing on this topic Jacqueline Gresko takes issue with E. Palmer Patterson's claim that the period from 1880 to 1940 was one of quiescence for the native peoples of Canada.[11] Gresko cites evidence drawn from the Qu'Appelle Indian Industrial School to refute Patterson's case and demonstrate that these and subsequent "Indian" schools stimulated resistance against rather than fostering assimilation of native people and were instrumental in the development of the Indian rights movement. Unlike Carney who portrays the steady progress of "Indian" education as being a "good thing" for the people concerned, Gresko views schooling as a divisive factor putting native peoples in conflict with contemporary Canadian society. In the course of her article Gresko also brings to light the File Hills Ex-Pupils Colony where graduates from two of the industrial schools were settled on land in an attempt to produce a model "Indian" settlement. Gresko's article is even more stimulating when compared with the reminiscences of one of the colonists.[12] The colonist, Eleanor Brass, was one of the first children born in the colony and she provides a brief account of its development. With pride she notes the colony's achievements and concludes that it stood, in 1953, as "a monument to the dreams and labour of W.M. Graham," its founder. Seeing the

colony as her "real home" she implies satisfaction at being part of the colony and does not recognize or comment upon the resistance Gresko implies ought to have been present. These two accounts appear to demand further research into this unique and, according to Gresko, atypical colony and its part in the history of education in Western Canada. Brass's account also demonstrates one of the major reasons why whig interpretations tend to dominate the writing of the history of education in Western Canada. In many cases people who actually lived in the early provincial period are still alive or have not long passed on. Given the human tendency to romanticize the past and forget its moments of bitter truth there exists what might be called an inertia of nostalgia. Thus any attempt to dispell the rosy glow of the past or to criticize schooling is to maintain that many surviving pioneers are not the authorities they might think they are.

Gresko suggests this when she examines the function of the Indian Industrial School. She discusses the arbitrary manner in which these schools were both established and later replaced by day and boarding schools. When examining the reasons for closing the industrial schools she cites the findings of the contemporary administrators. They stated that the pupils quickly regressed to their traditional life styles once they left the schools, attendance was poor and irregular, parental support was poor if not non-existent, and, more significantly, justification of operating costs was increasingly difficult to establish. Poor sanitary conditions and health problems were also given as reasons for terminating the industrial schools. Finally, Gresko notes the great financial difficulties which contributed to these problems.[13]

Given the whig interpretation of "Indian" education it is reasonable to assume that we should currently be experiencing the beginning of a new era of enlightenment and harmony in regard to our native peoples. Yet current developments in the Dene Nation or the activities of the Inuit Tapirisat indicate this is not the case. We are left to consider Gresko's case that the school, rather than reducing tension and encouraging understanding, has promoted discord, confrontation, and political activism.

II

The pre-provincial period of Western Canadian history witnessed the concentrated European activity of the fur trade. One of the major participants in this trade was the Hudson's Bay Company which besides trading was intimately associated with the establishment of settlements at Red River and Victoria. As a result of its trading activities as well as its colonial venture the Company also became involved with the establishment of schools in Western Canada. M.P. Toombs and J.W. Chalmers have published papers attempting to outline the company's educational policy in the 1820s and 1830s.[14] Toombs provides an overview of the development of educational policy by the company after the death of Lord Selkirk in 1820 after which it became directly responsible for the Red River settlement. While the company never produced a unified and comprehensive policy statement Toombs has grouped the numerous educational resolutions passed by the departments involved. Toombs also presents six major reasons the company had for becoming involved in educational activities and in so doing exposes the underlying economic motivation for the company's concern with schooling. But Toombs is inclined to down-play the company's economic motives and stress its humanitarian concerns as the chief factor for its educational activities. Furthermore, he contrasts the

activity of the company with educational conditions as they were in England at the time and concludes that, in the circumstances, the company showed itself to be exceptionally enlightened.

Chalmers' paper, on the other hand, tends to be a descriptive narrative repeating the essential elements of Toombs' interpretation. While Chalmers does admit to the company's hard-nosed economic motives he also credits it with genuine humanitarian concern. Where Chalmers goes beyond Toombs is his outline of the company's early endeavours to provide their own teachers for their own schools. Perhaps the most interesting of these examples is the case of James Clouston, appointed to teach a company school at James Bay. This example is particularly important since Chalmers has unearthed the written outline of the school's curriculum and its purpose as stated by the company: "Religion, reading, writing, arithmetric and accounts. . .to attach the children to the company and provide a future colony of very useful hands." Chalmers also points out that the company's monopoly in Canada did not go unchallenged in England and it was often forced to justify its continued and favoured position. Consequently the company found it expedient to publish records of its activities and expenditures in education and religion especially in view of its efforts to civilize the native peoples.

Both accounts attempt to identify an educational policy developed by an English based commercial enterprise which was virtually in control of Western Canada until 1870. The articles, however, raise the question of the legitimacy of historians' gathering resolutions scattered throughout company records and representing them as a unified policy. Seemingly the company officials who made these resolutions never sought to do so. Is it possible, therefore, that schooling was never of central importance to the company? Or, if it was, were the company's motives primarily humanitarian? Could it be that the reverse was the case? Both writers admit evidence which suggests the company sought to use schools to provide useful, cheap, obedient labour. Was it that the company sought to engineer social stability in Western Canada through the provision of schooling and so ensure its economic effectiveness? While such questions suggest a revisionist approach to this particular topic, revisionists may not necessarily be able to supply the answers. What does seem to emerge, however, is that there is still a need for further research into the educational activities of the Hudson's Bay Company in Western Canada.

Another likely topic of interest, especially for revisionist historians is the first sixty years of the Red River settlement. The subject has already had the attention of the conventional whigs, including Toombs who examined the foundations of the settlement at the same time he examined the Hudson's Bay Company's formulation of educational policy. The colony is presented as the brainchild of Lord Selkirk, a Scottish noble, who had already been instrumental in establishing two colonial ventures in Eastern Canada. While the Red River settlement may be considered a part of England's early nineteenth century colonial expansion it was also clearly related to the failing fortunes of the Hudson's Bay Company at the close of the first decade of that century. Selkirk and his associates were active in acquiring a considerable portion of the company's stock. Consequently Selkirk and his associates had increasing influence on company policy and were instrumental in encouraging direct competition with the North West Company in Western Canada. Selkirk proposed the Red River settlement as a retirement colony for company servants and as a future source of labour while at the same time advocating a strategic location for interference and competition with the activities of the North West

Company. The colony was also touted as a partial solution to the social problems created in Scotland by displaced Highland agricultural tenants and labourers. While conventional whig historians have tended to stress the humanitarian aspects of the planned settlement the economic motivations behind the scheme are equally obvious. These economic motivations and Selkirk's concern to see schools established in the settlement coupled with the settlers' own demands for these institutions have yet to be examined in a coherent manner. It would appear, therefore, that further investigation in this area is required if we are to improve our understanding of these early educational developments.

The Red River settlement also provides an opportunity to test radical reinterpretations of the historical development of schooling. For example, the work of Martin Carnoy, which is both a challenge and a provocation to educational historians might be so tested. He argues that

> . . .Western formal education came to most countries as part of imperialist domination. It was consistent with the goals of imperialism: the economic and political control of the people in one country by the dominant class in another. The imperial powers attempted, through schooling, to train the colonized for roles that suited the colonizer.[15]

Given Selkirk's close association with the control and fortunes of the Hudson's Bay Company and his plans for the Red River settlement it would appear possible that educational developments in the settlement were not as humanitarian as they may have at first appeared. Whatever may be the conclusions reached it seems evident that there is room for more research in this area.

Religious tolerance was a major feature of Selkirk's scheme and he was at pains to see that both Protestants and Roman Catholics were welcomed and expected to participate fully in the life of the community. The result was the establishment and subsequent development of denominationally oriented schools which are the subject of a study by C.J. Jaenen.[16] As he so clearly establishes, these schools not only represent a religious division in the settlement but racial and linguistic divisions as well. The majority of the Roman Catholics were at least part French while the Protestants tended to be Scottish, Irish, or English. The result was a system of dual schools: French speaking and Roman Catholic on the one hand; and, English speaking and Protestant on the other. While the schools sought to perpetuate language and to maintain cultural continuity, Jaenen points out that there was some attempt to make instruction bilingual. Concluding his study Jaenen asserts that in comparison with educational conditions in England, Ireland and other comparable settlements the "achievements at Red River were nothing short of amazing." Jaenen's carefully documented narrative would appear to be an example of revisionism in that he makes no implicit or explicit relationship between these events and a notion of progress. Rather he attempts to present educational developments in the Red River settlement in the wider social and religious context of the time. While the populations of both the French and English speaking groups remained in balance, the schools functioned in relative harmony. It was only when the Protestants began to predominate in numbers that the two cultures came into conflict. The result was the virtual abolition of the Roman Catholic French speaking schools by the Greenway Liberal government of Manitoba in 1890.

The Hudson's Bay Company was also closely related to early schooling ventures in the Crown Colony of Vancouver Island.[17] The establishment of a company settlement at Fort Victoria led to the appointment of a Church of England chaplain, Rev. Robert Staines, who was also made responsible for the establishment and oversight of schooling. While private venture schools were not unknown the

establishment schools flourished under Staines' supervision. Staines' successor, Rev. Edward Cridge, was ultimately given the responsibility of regularly reporting on the state of the schools to the colony's assembly. The Governor of the Colony and also the senior Hudson's Bay Company official in the area was George Simpson who himself advocated the establishment of schools for the lower class in the colony.

Given time the Crown Colony of Vancouver Island may well have developed into a copy of class ridden English society but such was not the case. The discovery of gold in 1857 caused a dramatic influx of prospectors and speculators whose presence was to become a major force for educational change. Such events might be expected to have provided material for a number of studies, and yet in the last fifteen years only two authors, F. Henry Johnson and George Woodcock, have given their attention to the topic.[18] Both present conventional whig interpretations of the educational history of the area and identify Amor de Cosmos and John Robson, both newspaper editors, as leaders in educational reform. What has escaped these writers is the major role played by the presence of Canadian prospectors and immigrants from Eastern Canada and their tendency to become permanent residents in the area. These were the people who supported the newspapers and who brought with them a desire for government and schooling such as they were familiar with in the East. While De Cosmos and Robson advocated change the prospectors and immigrants wanted an end to the family-company nature of the colony's government and the institution of responsible government along with common schools. The respect these people had for the school is clearly evident during the economic recession of the late 1860s when despite meagre government support and the lack of school funding, many schools remained open through the dedication of parents and teachers. Given these conditions it would appear timely to revise the conventional whig interpretations and re-examine the role of these schools in the light of the wider political, social and economic context.

Similar forces to those affecting education in the united Crown Colonies of British Columbia can be seen at work in the old North West Territories. Published articles focussing on this topic relate either to the role played by F.W.G. Haultain, the first premier, or D.J. Goggin, the first Superintendent of Schools.[19] These articles are excellent examples of conventional interpretations in identifying high ranking public officials and attributing the development of the education system to their foresight and guidance. Since very little academic work has been undertaken in this area it is only reasonable to expect that personalities, especially those easily accessible in terms of archival material, will remain the initial focus of attention. Thus, revisionist interpretations have yet to be applied to this area. Consequently an examination of the territorial beginnings of Alberta and Saskatchewan using the material already published and examining that material in the light of revisionist approaches provides a fertile area for both teaching and research. For example, those writers who have studied Haultain and his relationship with education have linked his policies concerning schools with his political ambitions for the territories. What he sought to impose was an Anglophone system of common schools similar to those in Eastern Canada. In doing so, Haultain, the writers contend, sought to present the Federal Government with an outward appearance of cultural unity and maturity ripe for the establishment of provincial government. It would appear that Haultain and his administrators found a model for the execution of their unicultural, unilingual school system in the educational legislation of neighbouring Manitoba. And, when the decision was made to appoint a Superintendent of Schools it was D.J. Goggin, principal of the Manitoba Normal School in

Winnipeg, who was chosen, As is the case with papers on Haultain so it is with papers on Goggin which paint a picture of a farsighted reformer who imposed order and direction on the school system. While writers make much of Goggin's administrative abilities and progressive educational philosophy little is said of the reasons for his appointment. How he was selected and his sudden resignation also remain shrouded in mystery. Even more mysterious are the reactions of the people whose children were in school. What were their attitudes, aspirations, hopes and fears regarding the provision of schooling in the North West Territories? Were Haultain and Goggin as influential and all powerful as writers so far have indicated? These are only some of the questions which remain to be examined in writing the educational history of Western Canada.

III

By far the greatest concentration of published scholarly research examines the educational history of the provincial period in Western Canada. The bulk of that work is of the conventional whig variety. There is, however, evidence to suggest a rapid development of revisionism. The literature covers a wide range of topics extending from the heavily studied Manitoba school question to the less known educational influences and activities of the United Farm Women of Alberta.

In 1890 the government of Manitoba acted to abolish the dual school system which had developed in the area before it achieved provincial status. The accompanying racial, religious and linguistic conflict and the abolition of the dual schools is frequently called the Manitoba school question. Manoly Lupul sets the question in its wider context in his paper published as part of *Canadian Education: A History* while L. Clark's book *The Manitoba School Question: Majority Rule or Minority Rights?* presents a very useful collection of contemporary documentation regarding the issue.[20] The growing Protestant vote and rapid immigration from Ontario are frequently cited as major factors leading to the action of the Greenway government. Most accounts also relate the issue to federal politics, the Jesuit Estates problem, the financial scandals which were causing embarrassment to Manitoba's Liberal government and the effects of the second Riel rebellion. Students and scholars are also well versed in the role played by Dalton McCarthy, the Ontario Protestant member of parliament, whose political speech at Portage La Prairie in 1889 is almost always depicted as the spark which set off the conflagration that, fanned by Protestant bigotry, swept the province and left the dual school system in ashes. Of outstanding importance to the study of this question is the revisionist work of J.R. Miller who has recently been subjecting this traditional interpretation and the role of Dalton McCarthy to intense scholarly scrutiny.[21]

Traditionally, McCarthy has been accused of being bitterly disappointed over the outcome of the Jesuit Estates Bill which coupled with his association with Protestant extremist groups in Ontario and Quebec led him into the West on a campaign of vengence in 1889. Miller has patiently pieced together evidence which completely discredits this view. McCarthy emerges instead as a politician whose major concern was the French instruction in the schools of Ontario, who was waging a campaign to discredit the Mowat government, was only peripherally involved with the Protestant extremists, and was very reluctant to address any political meetings during his holiday tour of the West. Recognizing the significance of the Portage La Prairie meeting Miller establishes that it was Joseph Martin, the Attorney General of Manitoba and also a speaker at the meeting, whose speech was deliberately inflamatory. Miller goes on to establish four major causes which

triggered the Greenway government's abolition of the dual school system. First, he cites the influx of Protestant Liberals from Ontario who quickly dominated the Board of Education and consequently the educational decision making process. Second, he documents a steady and growing campaign to discredit and remove French denominational schools, a campaign, it must be noted, which was begun long before McCarthy's appearance in the province in 1889. Third, he establishes the fact that Joseph Martin had warned the Protestant section of the Board of Education not to approve textbooks for 1890 since the government intended to revise the school law long before there was any thought of McCarthy being asked to address the Portage La Prairie meeting. And, fourth, he traces the development of a newspaper criticism of the dual school system and points out that, a month before McCarthy spoke, newspapers in Toronto were reporting that the dual school system and French instruction in the schools of Manitoba were about to be terminated. The foregoing account is an excellent example of the usefulness and validity of the re-examination of previous research in the field of the history of education in Western Canada. Hopefully, Miller's work is only a beginning.

These events in Manitoba were to have considerable impact on the place of French instruction and denominational schools in the North West Territories.[22] Dealing with subsequent developments in Alberta, K.H. Thomson examines the patterns of denominational instruction which emerged in the province over the last sixty-five years.[23] He outlines the historical basis for denominational schools, which in Alberta may be either Roman Catholic or Protestant, and shows how Public School supporters often view denominational schools as divisive when civic integration was prized. He then turns to the issue of the expenditure of public funds for schools other than public schools and outlines factors which result in public resistance to denominational schools. His examination leads him to propose "a theoretical basis for a common policy toward all kinds of schools." While he is seemingly sympathetic to the need for denominational schools he argues for funding a single school system where the maintenance of alternative schools would lead to costly duplication and a reduction in educational quality. The article highlights the contemporary difficulty a secular society faces in comprehending the wishes of those parents who desire to have a religious emphasis placed upon the education of their children. While his thrust may appeal to secular persons it does little to help us understand the complex interrelationship between religion and education in Western Canada's past. Significant work in this area relating to developments in Saskatchewan has been produced by Raymond Huel.[24] He draws attention to the relationship that has existed between French language instruction and Roman Catholic denominational schools. What stands out in his treatment of this issue is the nature of the cultural conflict which was a fundamental feature of the Roman Catholic struggle to maintain schools in the face of the increasingly dominant Protestant public schools. The Manitoba school question, then, opens the way to the study of religious and cultural conflicts and the influences they have brought to bear on the developing school systems of Western Canada.

Nor is this issue simply one of Roman Catholic or Protestant denominational approaches to, or Anglophone or Francophone emphases in, schooling. In terms of religious approaches the Doukhobors, the Mennonites and other religious sects are also worthy of examination. While the former remain prominent in British Columbia they have ceased to be of any major significance in either Saskatchewan or Alberta. Writing on the Doukhobors in British Columbia, F. Henry Johnson presented a traditional interpretation of events and suggested in 1963-64 that the future peaceful existence of these groups in the province depended on the success

of the school.[25] Given the current problems with the extremist Sons of Freedom in the province educational historians may well question the power of the school to achieve social tranquility. In a somewhat similar fashion, John Lyons has assessed Doukhobor schooling in Saskatchewan.[26] He stresses the importance of the political context in which these schools developed and concludes with a summary of the factors which he maintains resulted in the success of Saskatchewan in encouraging the Doukhobors to accept schooling. The Holdeman Mennonites, however, have recently been the centre of an educational dispute in Alberta. This particular group of Mennonites are committed to communal living and the stronger their commitment has been the greater has been their conflict with the public school system. Where the public schools have been used as an agent to assimilate these groups into Canadian culture, there has been increased resistance to a system which threatens to undermine the roots of their existence. Using the school as a tool for assimilation is the subject of the recent work of Robert J. Macdonald who concludes that while assimilation of the Hutterites in Alberta has failed there remains a widespread demand in the province's rural areas that schools continue to be used to assimilate the Hutterites.[27] To give the historian an inside view of one group's view of the school there is a paper by E. K. Francis which traces the efforts of the Manitoba Mennonites to maintain their own school system and the benefits that system has provided for their group.[28] There are two further cases of conflict between minority groups' desire for schooling and the public school system which stand out in the literature: the case of the Ruthenians, particularly in Saskatchewan; and, the Japanese in British Columbia.

In 1970 Jaenen focussed his attention on the development of Ruthenian schools in Western Canada.[29] Dealing with the three prairie provinces, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, he traced the pattern of development of Ruthenian and Ukrainian schools from their origins until the First World War. With the outbreak of armed conflict in Europe the Ruthenians and Ukrainians were declared enemy aliens and their schools were arbitrarily closed. In his conclusion Jaenen draws attention to the importance of the public school as an institution to perpetuate a culture and suggests that the Ukrainian community was incapable of resisting assimilation into Anglo-Canadian culture. While his account is in the conventional whig tradition it does comment on the effects of ethnic activism and newspaper coverage of events and opinions thus providing a starting point for further research and, possibly, a revisionist approach to the issue.

Jaenen identifies a number of periodical articles and theses relating to the development of Ukrainian schools which suggests a synthesis of this material may well add to our knowledge and understanding of the topic. That the Ukrainian teachers formed their own association and published their own journal, *Ukrainian Voice,* suggests a further area for research. There were also a number of court cases fought over Ukrainian schools in Alberta and it would appear that these also may provide fruitful avenues for research. Toombs' work in this area provides further information about Ruthenians' efforts to teach in the schools attended by Ruthenian children.[30] The outcome was the development of the Training School for Ruthenians for the training of Ruthenian teachers. This experiment, as Toombs calls it, came to an abrupt end when the Ruthenian and Ukrainian trainee teachers struck the institution and kept it closed for twelve months. A subsequent special course established at the Regina Normal School was terminated in 1917 as a result of war hysteria and the public fear of enemy aliens. In examining the collapse of the Training School for Ruthenians Toombs lays the blame for the whole affair at the feet of an incompetent and unqualified training school principal. Though the

students' demand for an inquiry into the principal's conduct was successful he was officially cleared of any blame. The article raises a number of questions which suggest the need for further research. What were the circumstances surrounding the principal's appointment? Exactly what was revealed at the public inquiry? Who were the trainee students involved in the strike, who led them, and what happened to them? Was the principal appointed in the hope that the training institution would fail? What were the reactions of non-Ruthenian and non-Ukrainian teachers to the affair? Was this, in fact, the experiment that Toombs maintains it was?

In a more promising approach to a similar situation involving the Japanese in British Columbia Jorgen Dahlie examines their attempts to maintain their culture through their own system of schools.[31] Taking the position of a moderate revisionist he seeks to answer four basic questions: what impetus for education was furnished by the Japanese minority; how did they react to the Anglo-Canadian value system; what were the attitudes of the community to education; and, what educational opportunities were lost and who lost most? In answering these questions he views the Japanese schools through the eyes of the Japanese community which is a refreshing change from the general approach of the conventional whigs. He concludes that the Japanese "were in the forefront of everyone who saw education and training as indispensable to success. . . ." While they retained their own language schools and maintained their cultural and ethnic traditions, after the conclusion of the Second World War they participated fully in British Columbia's educational system.

The dominant public school system as it developed during the provincial period in Western Canada is the subject of the majority of the articles published in the journals. Most of them are conventional whig interpretations. The common and central assumption in these articles is that progress is demonstrated by the development of the school system. For example, L.J. Wilson, writing on school district reorganization under the ministry of Perren Baker in Alberta asserts that this represented a "dramatic innovation" which made Alberta a leader in the educational field.[32] Wilson admits that boards of trustees and municipal councils both resisted this change but were eventually won over by the farsighted Baker. In a similar vein, G. Loken identified and described seven major administrative changes made in the school system of Alberta since 1905.[33] He too admits to various attempts at resistance to change but concludes, in conventional whig fashion, that Alberta's educational record is characterized by "enlightened educational leadership, public endorsement and clearly defined goals." That these articles are characterized as conventional whig interpretations does not diminish their relevance or usefulness to the ongoing study of the history of education in Western Canada. Not only do they identify important issues but they raise many questions and can be used to generate revisionist interpretations.

There is a problem, however, in finding material that helps establish the position taken by pupils, parents, teachers and local communities in regard to schooling. It is attention to these aspects in the development of schooling which are generally overlooked in traditional interpretations but which are essential to revisionist interpretations. Some assistance in gaining such information can be found in the plethora of reminiscent accounts of schooling that are liberally sprinkled through the historical journals published in Western Canada.[34] All these articles have a common theme, the nostalgic celebration of the romantic one-room school. No attempt is made to analyze the role of the school and its relationships with its wider

societal context. Neither is such an attempt easy to make since that would be asking products of the school system to examine objectively a process of which they were part. These accounts do, however, provide us with some insight into the daily function of the school from the viewpoint of those personally involved. But one wonders if the time consuming effort necessary to collect these articles is worth it given the publication of John C. Charyk's three volume work, *The Little White Schoolhouse.*[35] Both the reminiscences and Charyk's work provide a substantial resource for the educational historian.

Some progress in utilizing this type of material has already been made by historians of the moderate revisionist school. These historians are easily identified by their efforts to reunite political, social and economic history with educational history. This is evident in at least three articles: Alan H. Child's work on school consolidation in British Columbia; R.S. Patterson and L.J. Wilson's paper on the educational contributions of the United Farm Women of Alberta; and, Wilson's subsequent investigation of the same theme.[36] Child lays bare the arbitrary, and coercive, efforts of the British Columbia government supported by the British Columbia Teachers' Federation in imposing larger administrative units on the school districts of the province in the 1930s. He clearly establishes the rise of local resistance to governmental plans and its subsequent capitulation. Child concludes his paper with the question: was it public indifference rather than public conviction in the superiority of the larger administrative units that resulted in the end of local resistance?

Patterson and Wilson's papers detail the political influence the United Farm Women of Alberta had on government educational policy. Wilson's paper in particular reveals the influential connections which existed among the United Farm Women, the U.F.A. government, and the U.F.A. cabinet. They tend toward revisionism in that they begin to show the relationship between political control and the ever-present influences of the electorate. Yet they also succumb to the conventional whig assumption that the government and its department in shaping and directing the school system achieved educational progress. These papers might be described as transitional in that while they are characteristic, in part, of traditional interpretation they also take a wider view of their topics which is characteristic of revisionist interpretations.

A somewhat more marked departure from the conventional whig approach is Manoly Lupul's study of the portrayal of ethnic groups in senior high school social studies texts.[37] Excluding the French and Anglo-Celtics, Lupul analyses texts approved for Alberta schools and finds that while the "Amerinds" are now well portrayed and there is a detectable change in the presentation of the Metis, the remaining cultural groups who have contributed so much to Canadian society are virtually ignored. Lupul's prognosis for Canada's chances of becoming a multicultural society are bleak since his conclusions suggest that unilingualism and uniculturalism are assured. There are two further examples of text book analysis: one on the texts used to train Alberta's teachers in the first two decades of this century; and, the other, an examination of the portrayal of character training and culture in the elementary readers used in the schools of Western Canada.[38] These three works may be classed as moderate revision since they move away from the traditional study of government legislation, departmental regulation, and educational personalities in attempting to understand the function of the school. Nevertheless, they open the way to a rich area of evidence that can be used to help us develop and improve our understanding of the function of the school in the past.

The best examples of moderate revisionism in the field flow from the pen of David C. Jones. His work demonstrates sound scholarship and an exciting new approach to the subject. In a detailed examination of the introduction of agriculture to the school curriculum Jones outlines the problems perceived by governments and educators of the time and their attempts to use the schools as a solution.[39] He traces the implementation, shaky progress and subsequent demise of the program. Even more significant and worthy of considerable attention is his study of the role played by schools in the social disintegration of the communities in Alberta's dry belt during the twenties. He skillfully establishes that the schools in the area became a source of conflict, anxiety, and discord in the communities in which they were so prominent. Public concern and confusion over the role of the schools in their respective communities plus the government's determination to keep them open proved to be a major and destructive force in the disintegration of the communities themselves. Here, at last, is a clear, factual account of the function of the school in the strife torn years preceding the depression. Gone are the nostalgic and idealistic trappings of the conventional whig view of the school. In this one article Jones gives cause for a thorough re-examination of the role of the school in the history of Western Canada.

IV

There remains the new and interesting developments of video-tapes for use in the teaching of the history of education in Alberta. In 1977 the Alberta Educational Communications Corporation with a team of educational consultants headed by Dr. R.S. Patterson, Associate Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta developed a series of sixteen short documentary films entitled, "Schooling: Faces of Yesterday."[40] These programs, each of fifteen minutes duration, attempt to present schooling as it was in Alberta's past. While they provide ideal material for questioning and debate they also bring to life the past. For students, especially, and for scholars, perhaps, they provide excellent illustrative material some of which is taken from old movie film. What may prove a little distracting, at least in the historical sense, is the use of cuts from the currently popular Canadian film, "Why Shoot the Teacher?" These video-tapes are ideal for introducing students to schooling in the early years of the province.

Writing in 1974 on the educational contributions of D.J. Goggin, J.W. Chalmers wrote that Canadian education was the result of "the forces of environmental circumstances, or the actions - and the compromises - of politicians, or the work and commitment of a handful of educators." In the light of Butterfield's writing and the work of contemporary moderate revisionists such an interpretation is very questionable. If educational historians are concerned to further our knowledge and understanding of the development of education in Western Canada then work remains to be undertaken. While considerable attention has been given to schooling, little if any consideration has been given to the education of those children who never attended schools and yet contributed so much to the development of Western Canada. Much of the research that has already been published could well be synthesized and, if Butterfield is correct, needs also to be revised. The areas of adult education, the history of childhood, the transmission of agricultural knowledge and skills outside formal educational settings, church school activities, to name but a few, and the part they played in the educational history of Western Canada, have yet to be systematically researched. The history of education in Western Canada, it would appear, is in its infancy. The opportunities for research abound and the need for new interpretations are, it would seem, readily apparent.

Footnotes

[1]Patricia T. Rooke, "From Pollyanna to Jeremiah - Recent Interpretations of American Educational History," *Journal of Educational Thought,* 9 (April, 1975): 15-28; J. Donald Wilson, "Historiographical Perspectives on Canadian Educational History: A Review Essay," *Journal of Educational Thought,* 11 (April 1977): 49-63; and, David C. Jones, "The Maleficent Obsession: Social Control and the Schools," *Journal of Educational Thought,* 12 (April 1978): 48-55.

[2]Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History,* (London: Bell, 1931).

[3]Neil Sutherland, "Introduction: Towards a History of English Canadian Youngsters," in Paul H. Mattingly and Michael B. Katz, eds., *Education and Social Change: Themes from Ontario's Past* (New York: New York University Press, 1975), pp. xi-xxxi.

[4]Neil Sutherland, "Introduction," pp. xiv-xxii.

[5]An excellent example of the application of a moderate revisionist interpretation in the history of education in Western Canada is the work of David C. Jones.

[6]Two examples of this form of interpretation are: Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life* (New York: Basic Books, 1976); and, Martin Carnoy, *Education as Cultural Imperialism* (New York: David McKay, 1974).

[7]Bernard Bailyn, *Education in the Forming of American Society: Needs and Opportunities for Study* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960); Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The Colonial Experience, 1607-1783* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970); and Brian Simon, *Studies in the History of Education, 1780-1870* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1960).

[8]No claim is made that all the published articles have been examined. As yet there is no comprehensive bibliographic list dealing with the history of education in Western Canada.

[9]Keven James Carr, "A Historical Survey of Education in Early Blackfoot Indian Culture and Its Implications for Indian Schools," unpublished M.Ed. thesis, University of Alberta, 1968.

[10]R.J. Carney, "Making Indian Children Stand Erect," The *A.T.A. Magazine,* 58 (March 1978): 6-12. This issue of the magazine commemorates the 60th Anniversary of the A.T.A. and is a collection of articles on the history of schooling in Alberta.

[11]Jacqueline Gresko, "White 'Rites' and Indian 'Rites': Indian Education and Native Responses in the West," in *Shaping The Schools of the Canadian West,* David C. Jones, Nancy M. Sheehan, and Robert M. Stamp, (eds.), (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1979),pp. 84-106. This publication is a very useful collection of new and previously published articles on the history of education in Western Canada. See also E. Palmer Patterson II, *The Canadian Indian: A History since 1500* (Don Mills, Ontario: Collier Macmillan Canada, 1972). Readers might also wish to consult D. Bruce Sealey, "Race, Culture and Education," *Manitoba Journal of Education,* 10 (No. 2 1975): 3-9. While not historical this article is germane to the issues surrounding multiculturalism and is of interest since it demonstrates a strong faith in the power of the school to promote understanding.

[12]E. Brass, "The File Hills Ex-Pupil Colony," *Saskatchewan History,* 6 (1953): 66-69.

[13]See also M.H. Lewis, "The Anglican Church and its Mission Schools Dispute," *Alberta Historical Review,* 14 (Autumn 1966): 7-13.

[14]M.P. Toombs, "Educational Policy of the Hudson's Bay Company," *Saskatchewan History,* 4 (1951): 1-10. John W. Chalmers, "Education and the Honourable Company," *Alberta History* 13 (1964): 25-28.

[15]Martin Carnoy, *Education as Cultural Imperialism* (New York: David McKay Company, Ltd., 1974).

[16]C.J. Jaenen, "Foundations of Dual Education at Red River 1811-1834," *Transactions of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba Series III,* (No. 21, 1965): 34-68.

[17]For an extended treatment of educational developments in this Crown Colony and in the later Crown Colony of British Columbia see F. Henry Johnson, *A History of Public Education in British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Publications Centre, 1964).

[18]F. Henry Johnson, *Public Education in British Columbia.* George Woodcock, *Amor De Cosmos: Journalist and Reformer* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975). See also Roland Wild, *Amor De Cosmos* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1958).

[19]J.W. Chalmers, "David J. Goggin, Prototype Pedagogue," *Saskatchewan History,* 27 (Spring, 1974):

66-72. Neil McDonald, "David J. Goggin - Promoter of National Schools," in Robert S. Patterson, John W. Chalmers and John W. Friesen, (eds.) *Profiles of Canadian Educators* (Toronto: D.C. Heath Canada, Ltd., 1974), pp. 167-185. A.D. Selinger, "The Contributions of D.J. Goggin to the Development of Education in the North West Territories, 1893-1902," *Alberta Journal of Educational Research,* 3 (Mar. 1961): 3-11. R. S. Patterson, "F. W. Haultain: Educational Statesman of the Canadian West," *Alberta Journal of Educational Research,* 8 (June 1972): 85-93.

[20]Manoly R. Lupul, "Educational Crises in the New Dominion to 1917," in J. Donald Wilson, Robert M. Stamp and Louis-Philippe Audet, *Canadian Education: A History* (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall of Canada Ltd., 1970), pp. 266-289 and *The Roman Catholic Church and the North West School Question: A Study in Church-State Relations in Western Canada,* 1875-1905 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974).

[21]J.R. Miller, "D'Alton McCarthy, Equal Rights, and the Origins of the Manitoba School Question," *Canadian Historical Review,* 54 (No. 4, 1973): 369-392 and *Equal Rights: The Jesuit Estates Act Controversy* (Toronto: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1979).

[22]See Manoly R. Lupul, *The Roman Catholic Church and the North-West.*

[23]K.H.Thomson, "The School and Religion - Alberta," *The Journal of Education,* 19 (Spring, 1973): 83-90.

[24]Raymond J. Huel, "The French Canadians and the Language Question, 1918," *Saskatchewan History,* 23 (1970): 1-5, "Pastor Vs. Politician: The Reverend Murdoch MacKinnon and Premier Walter Scott's Amendment ot the School Act," *Saskatchewan History,* 32 (Spring, 1970): 61-73, and "The Teaching of French in Saskatchewan Public Schools," *Saskatchewan History,* 24 (1971): 13-24.

[25]F. Henry Johnson, "The Doukhobors of British Columbia," *Queen's Quarterly,* 70 (Winter, 1963-64): 528-541.

[26]John Lyons, "The (Almost) Quiet Evolution: Doukhobor Schooling in Saskatchewan," *Canadian Ethnic Studies,* 8 (No. 1, 1976): 23-37.

[27]Robert J. MacDonald, "Hutterite Education in Alberta: A Test Case in Assimilation, 1920-70," *Canadian Ethnic Studies,* 8 (No. 1, 1976): 9-22.

[28]E.K. Francis, "The Mennonite School Problem in Manitoba, 1874-1919," *The Mennonite Quarterly Review,* 27 (July, 1953): 204-237.

[29]Cornelius Jaenen, "Ruthenian Schools in Western Canada, 1897-1919," *Paedogogica Historica,* 10 (No. 3, 1970): 517-541.

[30]M.P. Toombs, "A Saskatchewan Experiment in Teacher Education, 1909-1917," *Saskatchewan History* 17 (Winter, 1964): 1-11.

[31]Jorgen Dahlie, "The Japanese in B.C." Lost Opportunity?" *B.C. Studies,* 8 (Winter 1970-71): 3-16.

[32]L.J. (Roy) Wilson, "Perren Baker and Alberta's School District Reorganization," *Canadian Journal of Education,* 2 (No. 3, 1977): 25-36.

[33]G. Loken, "Perspectives on Change in Educational Structures in Alberta," *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research,* 15 (Dec., 1969): 207-223.

[34]A few are: Ruth Matheson Buck, "Little Pine: An Indian Day School," *Saskatchewan History,* 18 (1965): 55-62; Theresa Goodwin, "An English School Marm in Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History,* 27 (Autumn, 1974): 103-107; L.L. Dobbin, "Mrs. Catherine Gillespie Motherwell, Pioneer Teacher and Missionary," *Saskatchewan History,* 14 (1961): 17-26; Ian MacPherson, "George Chipman, Educator," *Alberta History,* 26 (Autumn 1976): 31-40; Irene A. Poelzer, "Local Problems of Early Saskatchewan Education," *Saskatchewan History,* 32 (Winter 1970): 1-15; and, Earl L. Schultz, "Education in the Bruderheim Area," *Alberta History,* 20 (Autumn 1972): 21-27.

[35]John C. Charyk, *The Little White Schoolhouse* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1968), *Pulse of the Community* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1970) and *Those Bittersweet Schooldays* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1977).

[36]Alan H. Child, "A Little Tempest: Public Reaction to the Formation of a Large Educational Unit in the Peace River District of British Columbia," *B.C. Studies,* 16 (Winter 1972-73): 57-70. R.S. Patterson and LeRoy Wilson, "The Influence of the Danish Folk High School in Canada," *Paedagogica Historica,* 14 (No. 1, 1974): 64-79. L.J. Wilson, "Educational Role of the United Farm Women of Alberta," *Alberta History,* 25 (Spring 1977): 28-36.

[37]M.R. Lupul, "The Portrayal of Canada's 'Other' Peoples in Senior High School History and Social Studies Textbooks in Alberta, 1905 to the Present," *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research,* 22 (March 1976): 1-33.

[38]J. Stewart Hardy, "It's in the Book," *The A.T.A. Magazine,* 58 (March 1978): 36-38. Nancy Sheehan, "Character Training and the Cultural Heritage: An Historical Comparison of Canadian Elementary Readers," *Canadian Society for the Study of Education 1979 Yearbook,* 6 (May 1979): 77-84.

[39]David C. Jones, " 'The Little Mound of Earth' - The Fate of School Agriculture," *Canadian Society for the Study of Education 1979 Yearbook,* 6 (May 1979): 95-110, and "Schools and Social Disintegration in the Alberta Dry Belt of the Twenties," *Prairie Forum,* 3 (Spring, 1978): 1-19.

[40]Further information on these video-tapes is available from Alberta Educational Communications Corporation, 16930 - 114 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T5M 3S2.