

Selwyn K. Troen. *The Public and the Schools: Shaping the St. Louis System, 1838-1920*. Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1975. pp. xi, 248. \$11.50.

Selwyn Troen, who teaches history at the University of Missouri, is a University of Chicago Ph.D. and was a Fellow at the Davis Center for Historical Studies. In this study in the history of urban education, he explores the reasons why the St. Louis public schools attracted national interest from the mid-1800s to World War I and why it served as a model for other cities. One reason was William Torrey Harris, superintendent of schools (1868-1880), later U.S. Commissioner of education, an able administrator whose educational philosophy was Idealism. Another reason was Susan Blow, early leader of the kindergarten movement in North America and one who, under Harris, inaugurated the first publicly supported kindergarten as part of the municipal public schools. There was also Calvin Woodward who, at Washington University in St. Louis, became a national leader in forwarding the manual training movement.

St. Louis was a boom town in the nineteenth century, the center of more than 5,000 miles of navigable waters, an open door to the west and the settlement of the Mississippi Valley. In St. Louis mingled Virginians, Kentuckians, New Englanders, Irishmen, Germans, and black people moving up from the South. In serving these different constituents, the St. Louis public schools faced the challenge of reconciling contending class, ethnic, sectarian, and racial interests. After becoming the prime agency for mass instruction, the school system faced new problems of urban dropouts, bureaucracy, and political pressures. By 1920, when the study ends, the St. Louis schools were largely apolitical, highly organized and efficient, and broadly concerned with the welfare of urban youth.

Troen's sources included the *Annual Reports* of the St. Louis public schools (published in English and German editions) and newspapers of the period. He used the correspondence and other papers of W. T. Harris, Susan Blow, and Calvin Woodward. He also used available dissertations on education in that city.

Troen's work joins a growing library of recent histories of urban school systems, including: Carl F. Kaestle, *The Evolution of an Urban School System: New York City, 1750-1850* (Harvard University Press, 1968); Michael B. Katz, *The Irony of Early School Reform: Educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts* (Harvard University Press, 1968) and *Class, Bureaucracy and Schools: The Illusion of Educational Change in America* (Praeger, 1972); Stanley K. Schultz, *The Culture Factory: Boston Public Schools, 1789-1860* (Oxford University Press, 1973); and Marvin Lazerson, *Origins of the Urban School: Public Education in Massachusetts, 1870 - 1915* (Harvard University Press, 1971). Two larger views include Joel H. Spring, *Education and the Rise of the Corporate State* (Beacon Press, 1972) and David B. Tyack, *The One Best System* (Harvard University Press, 1974).

The result of this new historiography on urban schools is a more realistic view of the political and economic forces operating in North America and a lessening of the hold on us of a romantic view of the public school movement. The book has two appendices, a bibliographical note, an index, and is footnoted.

While not a popularly written work, the book offers much to educational historians, urbanologists, and those interested in the origins of the kindergarten and manual training in North America. It is readable and a worthwhile addition for libraries.

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Hewitt, John P. *Self and Society, A Symbolic Interactionist Social Psychology*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1976. Pp. 248. \$10.95 (Cloth), \$5.95 (Paper).

Martin, Wilfred B. W. *The Negotiated Order of the School*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1976. p.p. 191. \$12.50

One can alternately conceptualize sociology as collection of social facts summarizing what our world is like or a way of seeing that world. These alternative ways of employing sociology are not, of course, mutually exclusive. Ways of seeing must be validated by the systematic collection of data, and social facts make little sense unless put into the perspectives of one of another of our ways of seeing. The two books under review here not only emphasize sociology as a way of seeing our world but also from the perspective of symbolic interactionism. Those who want to gain a basic insight into the nature of symbolic interaction as an attempt to understand social life in general and school life in particular will be well rewarded by studying these two books.