BOOKS

Tyack, David and Hansot, Elizabeth, *Managers of Virtue: Public School Leadership in America, 1820 - 1980.* New York: Basic Books, 1982. Pp. 312. $24.50(U.S.)

At first glance, *Managers of Virtue* looks familiar. Its cast includes Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, Ellwood P. Cubberley, Ella Flagg Young, John Dewey, and scores of similar household names. It tells of pietism, bureaucracy, common schools, and latter-day protest. And it invokes, cites, and occasionally fences with Sol Cohen, Michael Katz, Selwyn Troen, Carl Kaestle, Lawrence Cremin, Paul Mattingly, Jonathan Messerli, and dozens of no-less cogent writers so familiar to readers of educational history. Could this book be just another variation on a theme, the latest news maybe on education and social immobility?

The answer is no. *Managers of Virtue* comes as a bright new book about educational leadership and management in the public sector. As such, its focus is narrower than Cremin's far-reaching *American Education* trilogy. Conversely, as a study of sixteen decades of American education, emphasizing that unquantifiable thing, virtue, it enjoys freer range than Katz' tightly-analytical monographs — *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools* for instance. Yet simply to say that *Managers of Virtue* falls somewhere between the compelling scholarship of a Cremin and a Katz is to say too little, because historian Tyack and political scientist Hansot have produced in several respects an original, sustained, and at times flamboyant interpretation.

For a start, the authors move "beyond simple celebration or recrimination" in an attempt to see how educational leaders "made sense of their lives" and to discover "what sense we as historians... can make of their work." Rejecting both great person and deterministic explanations of these leaders' belief and activities, they conclude with Dewey that those elusive abstracts — education, democracy, social justice — "need to be recreated in each generation." Indeed, their book is timely precisely because current school closures and teacher dismissals force us to reassess those beliefs most likely to condition our educational priorities.

In support of these bold contentions, Tyack and Hansot lay out their evidence. Some sections, the ascendancy of the common school for example, combine historical narrative with guarded generalization. Other parts, like one tracing the impact of local superintendents, develop typologies consistent over time and portraying subjects as ex-teachers and principals, of rural background, married, male, white, Protestant, and conservative. Yet other portions constitute mini-biographies, of old standbys mentioned above as well as heretofore less-heralded though equally-spectacular characters such as Leonard Covello, Principal of East Harlem's Benjamin Franklin High School or Marcus Foster, Principal of Gratz High School in Oakland, California, amid racial tension assassinated at the peak of his career. Interspersed are uncomplicated, mood-setting vignettes, witness teacher and cultural pathfinder Oliver Cromwell Applegate in his one-room Ashland, Oregon schoolhouse over a hundred years ago. Likewise distributed appear micro-bibliographic essays contextually appraising others' findings or spelling out why Tyack and Hansot themselves adopted particular historiographic approaches. Lastly, throughout *Managers of Virtue*, the authors express their beliefs about histories of public schooling and public schooling itself, warning against the historian's "search for universal and eternal generalizations" and, in the realm of everyday practice, insisting that enhanced leadership in individual schools is the best means of "improving public education generally." The question is, do these particulars, articulated with such conviction, actually carry the argument? I think yes, on two of several counts.

Consider, to illustrate, the matter of style and form. There is no denying that despite its joint authorship, *Managers of Virtue* reads exceptionally well. Though it bulges with information offering now a biography, now an analysis, an opinion, an anecdote, or a subsidiary conclusion, one is compelled to follow along to see where everything leads. Probably on account of the authors' flair for figurative language in emulation of John Bunyan no less, their educational history assumes a romantic aura unusual amid the din of the fiercer sort of revisionism and the rancour with which it can sometimes be advanced. To a degree, in fact, the plausibility of the writers' arguments rest on one's willingness to accept at face value such notions as managers of virtue, curators of the museum of virtue, celestial cities, gospels of efficiency, or educational trusts, in much the same fashion as one's easy acceptance of the dramatic fact eases the play along. In this respect, non-North American readers of English may not quite follow folklorish metaphors like "Johnny Appleseeds of the common-school movement" or pioneers who feared that depressed educational standards could lead to "a possible slide into Dogpatch." These are not major obstacles, though. Otherwise, in a way at once persuasive and artistically satisfying, its imaginative expression and rich variety effectively allow *Managers of Virtue* to account for its emphasis upon the force for good of informed as well as inspired educational leadership.

Or take the authors' explanation of "counterfactual history," a device which shelters their rendering from mindless assumptions of historical inevitability, permitting instead some thought for what could have been, hence, what yet might come to pass. Such a contrivance not only precludes dull rehearsals of the common school triumphant or bitter ones of the dispossessed betrayed. It also makes for sensitive treatment of educational "dreams deferred" over the last thirty years, especially of the failure of public education substantially to reduce American economic inequalities. In short, through entertaining the idea of counterfactual history, Tyack and Hansot urge educators to help stem present disenchantment with public schools not merely by asking, for instance, why schools have thus far failed to equalize income but rather, in light of present retrenchment, what schools realistically can do now "to promote a more just society." One might contend that the latter is not a strictly historical question because it transcends reconstructing the past and explaining why things happened the way they did. Just the same, in *Managers of Virtue*, credos and challenges seem quite at home. For this and many other reasons, educators will want to read this book. And because they will return to it many times, they will probably want to own it too.

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Gibson, Frederick W. *Queen's University Volume II 1917-1961: To Serve and Yet Be Free.* Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983, XVII, 518 pp., $49.50.

To Serve and Yet Be Free! Professor Gibson manages adroitly to both *serve* Queen's University in this second volume of its history and at the same time to maintain his *freedom* as an historian to introduce material that is not always flattering to Queen's. The reader nevertheless should be cautioned that Professor Gibson's association with Queen's is a long one as undergraduate and graduate student, as professor and as vice-principal academic. He is first and foremost a Queensman (Queensperson?). And although he has produced a history which relates the development and growth at Queen's to the broader social and political changes in Canada, he still has produced an institutional history, concentrating on administrative detail, the office of the principal, and ongoing financial concerns.

The years of struggle to survive and grow, to attract enough students and find money for salaries and buildings are well documented. The influence of McNeill, the keeper of the purse, of World War II and the influx of war veterans, and of Ontario provincial support in the 1950s all leave their mark on the university. One sympathizes with an institution trying to maintain academic freedom and at the same time be a loyal, patriotic ally of the federal government in a time of crisis. Particularly striking in this regard was the increase in enrolments, draft deferments and research money for students and professors in the natural and applied science fields during and after World War II and a corresponding drop in the humanities and social sciences. Along with this change was a psychological one with the science students being told how important and useful they would be and the social and humanities students suffering from a loss of self-esteem. The fact that the university made little effort to counter this development with suggestions of how people with a broad understanding of the society could help solve social problems caused by the war tells us something about Queen's academic independence, its patriotic stance and the attitude of and dominance of the administration. It reminds us how difficult it is for all of us involved in education not to be unduly influenced by the latest fad or idea that catches the imagination of the public, and by the economic and political crises that occur from time to time.

Professor Gibson makes some effort to tell the Queen's story in its entirety and from the point of view of all parties — the principal and administrators, the Board of Trustees and benefactors, the alumni, the professors, and the students. He is much more successful with the first of these than he is with the latter. Although prominent members of the Queen's faculty do appear from time to time in these pages the students are much more fleeting. Individually, the students are nameless, and collectively we have not picture of who the students were, or where they came from, or how they effected the development of the institution, particularly after the second world war when the student population grew rapidly and graduate studies was emphasized. The attempt to identify the 'between the wars' students by occupation of parents shows an increasing trend to sons and daughters of professionals. It would be interesting to know if this trend changed in the hectic days of growth in the late forties and fifties.

The war veterans' impact on the university is quite detailed — particularly their influence on space, physical facilities, and the housing problem created by students with families. What Professor Gibson doesn't tell us is the effect these veterans had on student life. Older, more experienced, many with family responsibilities, they were