

**Hurt, J.S. *Elementary Schooling and the Working Classes, 1860-1918*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul [Toronto: University of Toronto Press], 1979. Pp. x, 241**

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not significant in the lives of the five women. What formed and developed their characters, what gave them the will to persevere were strong inter-personal relationships. The most significant of these was the familial. Within the family each woman developed a strong identity, a sense of herself as an individual, nurtured by the support and encouragement given to her by family members. This instilled in the women confidence to experiment, to push themselves beyond accepted limits, and, as their efforts were met with success, to go further afield.

The second relationship important in their educational development was that of mentor/protégée. A mentor was usually an older woman who took an interest in the younger, instructed her, directed her efforts, encouraged her, and provided her with a role model. Since in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it was difficult for women to think that life offered them any fulfillment outside the home, it was crucial that the mentors of the five women studied revealed that role models other than the maternal one existed.

These mentors were all involved in the social service field, a sphere that was seen as an extension of woman's domestic world. The volunteer organizations which emerged from it needed new recruits, new workers with dedication, and those in charge were always on the lookout for such women. Nathan, Wald, Dodge, O'Reilly, and Schneiderman were fortunate - they were discovered. However, the reader cannot help but wonder about the many women who never received encouragement along the way. The success of the five

women seems fragile in so many respects, dependent on being surrounded by people who provided them with the emotional support necessary for the development of self-confidence.

By stressing the significance of personal relationships in the educational growth of these women, *A Generation of Women* raises the question of what the purpose of an institutional framework such as a school system is. It is simply to impart knowledge or is it to develop and mold character as so many in the nineteenth century hoped it would? If the latter, it failed, at least for these women. Was this because they were women and the system as such was not designed with them in mind or was the failure applicable to men as well? *A Generation of Women* does not answer these questions, but in raising them it forces educational history to assume an energetic dimension hitherto unrealized.

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Hurt, J.S. *Elementary Schooling and the Working Classes, 1860-1918*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul [Toronto: University of Toronto Press], 1979. Pp. x, 241.

Today education in England, like that in Canada, is based on two fundamental assumptions. The first of these is that equality of educational opportunity is a right. The individual in each country is presumed to be educable until proved otherwise. The second assumption is that the government has a greater right than do the child's parents to determine how a child is to be schooled. In both

countries a child may be trained only in state-provided or state-approved institutions. J.S. Hurt in his study of the impact of successive legislative enactments upon the English working class deals with a crucial transition period wherein the educational assumptions of a pre-industrial society were replaced by those of the industrial age.

The educational transformation in England was, of course, dependent upon a social and economic revolution. It is convenient, if overly simple, to think of English social and economic patterns of the nineteenth century as having occurred in a series of layers. The basic, and potentially most revolutionary layer, consisted of the rapid growth of population, from 8.9 million in England and Wales in 1801 to 32.5 million a century later. A second stratum of change was the nation's transformation from an agrarian to an industrial economy (fortunately, it is once again permissible to speak of the "Industrial Revolution" even if it is still impossible to define it). If one adds industrialization to population growth, the result is another layer of change: the growth of cities. Throughout the nineteenth century the proportion of the population living in urban areas steadily climbed, and somewhere between 1851 and 1871 the corner was turned, and more citizens of England and Wales were found in cities than in rural areas. In attempting to solve the problem an urban civilization created, the English turned to a variety of devices involving increasing state intervention in everyday affairs. These ranged from the creation of police forces to the evolution of schemes of social insurance. Education

inevitably became a matter of state concern.

Hurt's volume is unusual in the literature of English educational history in that it is literate, shrewd, and discursive, quite unlike the pedagogese that dominates the field. Hurt's observations are often wry and sometimes wise. He makes it clear, for example, that early efforts at state involvement (in particular those following in the train of the Forster Act of 1870) favoured the urban child and discriminated quite heavily against rural youths. He is very acute and sympathetic in explaining the resentment of many working class parents against the imposition of compulsory schooling, and he points out the way in which employers could exploit loopholes in the child labour and compulsory school attendance laws.

The price Hurt pays for his urbane and discursive approach is that one closes the volume with the sense of having read a number of very good paragraphs, but not a book. There is no single focus, or even set of foci, and too often he misses the chance to turn shrewd guesses into provable assertions. For instance, he introduces the idea that the compulsory education laws made the parent a forced consumer of education (on behalf of his children, who were taken out of profitable work to attend school). This is a useful concept, and there is a great body of economic literature that would bear upon it and provide testable hypotheses, but Hurt flits away. Similarly, he makes some interesting speculations about social class matters, but instead of using the wide array of modern studies of the history of social class in England, employs the unreliable Booth data of the turn of the century.

Nevertheless, the book is worth reading. And it is part of the series "Studies in Social History," which no respectable college or university library can be without.

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MacColl, E. Kimbark, *The Growth of a City - Power and Politics in Portland, Oregon, 1915-1950*. Portland, Oregon: The Georgian Press, 1979. Pp. 717. \$17.95.

This study of Portland, Oregon, from 1915 to 1950, is a sequel to MacColl's earlier volume examining the same city prior to World War I. As in his first book, the author focusses on the shaping of Portland by its profit-oriented political-economic elite, a process of development that he roundly condemns. The enormous potential of the "City of Roses," MacColl laments, was betrayed by a crass coalition of merchants, bankers, utility executives, and realtors - men so devoted to private enterprise and property rights that they lacked any commitment to a larger public interest.

MacColl argues that Portland's elite was unusually incompetent in its smug complacency, its fear of importing new competing industries, and its nearly total neglect of urban planning. Highways knifed through the city; cancerous commercial developments destroyed pleasant residential areas; cheap suburbs grew helter-skelter; much housing was below standard; the Willamette River was polluted; and zoning regulations were so ineffective that for many years the city's major landmark was

"America's largest neon sign," a 725 by 60 foot monolith advertising Richfield Oil. Portland's leaders, according to MacColl, were uncommitted to quality, unconcerned about human values, unenterprising, visionless, and even excruciatingly dull. "The Spinster City" drew a Seattle writer's poisonous comment: "It's a great place to live, but would you want to visit?"

So many opportunities for improvement were lost. Planning studies were ignored; New Deal money was wasted; and cheap Bonneville power was not sufficiently utilized to create a diversified, buoyant economy. Despite prosperous war years, Portland was back in the doldrums by the late 1940s, a period "marked by political and cultural dullness, by municipal insolvency and by social discrimination." The city's leadership was tired, "well beyond middle age in vigor and outlook."

MacColl's indictment thus marches on, but, long before the final chapter, the reader grows weary of moral thunderbolts and yearns for more fully developed explanation. Why were Portland's leaders so unusually cautious, especially compared to the movers and shakers of Seattle and San Francisco? What was the impact of absentee ownership on Portland's economic development? Why, if leadership was so poor, did not the city's voters throw the rascals out? Or were the intellectual presuppositions of leaders and led much the same? - a notion MacColl treats gingerly since it would, if true, make his pillorying of individuals somewhat beside the point.

*The Growth of a City* contains a wealth of information about Portland's development from