

bits and pieces among the chapters. Conciseness requires that the text be organized effectively and that unnecessary repetition be avoided.

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### **ADULT EDUCATION IN MANITOBA: HISTORICAL ASPECTS**

Deo Poonwassie and Anne Poonwassie (Eds.) (1997). Mississauga, ON: Canadian Educators' Press.

Every Canadian province needs a book like this one. Not just because education is a jealously guarded provincial responsibility, but because these provincial boundaries reflect more than arbitrary geography. They reflect culture, and the history of culture. Adult education arises from culture and, perhaps more than any other organized human phenomenon, reflects it. A history of adult education is a history of culture, and few books reflect that more than this one does. With the rapid growth of adult education in the past twenty years, and the appearance of legions of new practitioners emerging from the characteristic variety of supporting agencies, the need for regional reflections of our history, as well as for the Selman and Dampier's, *The Foundations of Adult Education in Canada*, (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, Inc., 1991), has become imperative. In addition, the structure of the book itself, a series of case studies, reinforces the true image of the enterprise that is adult education. It is an enterprise emerging variously from the demands of a developing complex society, the timing, the conjunction and interaction of many various agencies, and the impulse for a better life for all.

One of the things that regional writing allows, indeed demands, is the presence of the individuals and groups actually involved in the activities described, and their impact on other people. Tweedie, Hayward, Lagasse, Roeder, Lorimer, and Ferguson are only some of the people revealed who had energy and imagination at the right time and in the right place. Many of them were national figures as well, which testifies to the fact that while being true to its own roots, Manitoba spoke to the whole country in terms of imaginative adult education.

All of the traditional areas of Canadian adult education are reflected in Manitoba's history: literacy, citizenship, health, vocational education, and a special emphasis on Aboriginal adult education which, in this context, does not mean education for Aboriginals sponsored by the majority culture. There are also valuable case studies of the major providing agencies: the university, the school board, the YW and YMCA, and the Women's Institutes. The history of the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, a project of the Winnipeg School Board, demonstrates its courage and independence (like that of other provincial school boards) with respect to supporting education for the entire community, in this case adults. This was achieved with little support—support almost bordering on opposition—from the provincial government. One wonders if fewer and bigger boards (the present fixation of an increasing number of provincial governments) will manifest such courage and imagination. The dominance of Winnipeg in these histories, as in the

province, is partially offset by the story of "The Pas" experiment and the account of the "Women's Institutes."

Missing are accounts of the Royal Commission on Adult Education, and the educational programs of the Wheat Pools. Since Manitoba is the only province ever to have its own Royal Commission on Adult Education, one hopes that the gap will be remedied in the future. An account of the Wheat Pools, while not confined to Manitoba, might tell us a good deal about early adventures in corporate adult education, as would a more specific consideration of the railways whose shadowy presence is felt in a number of the studies.

Tantalizing themes, worthy of further investigation, are made possible by these works. Themes such as: (a) the steady movement towards greater and greater learner participation in the determination of subject and goals; (b) the interaction of community initiative and organizations, and government; (c) the constant discourse between learning as seen in the participation of officers and members in the organizations; and (d) instruction as manifest in the equally great variety of courses, subjects, and programs provided over a century to meet the needs of a great northern new-world city, and its province.

We frequently underestimate the capabilities of students of adult education in understanding the milieus from which they come, and their ability to write clearly and cogently about them. The grasp of that potential is one of the triumphs of this book. The price paid, and it is one that hopefully can be easily rectified in the future, is that students write about what they care about, rather than conforming to some predetermined patterns of what others think is important. While the result may be uneven, it is unquestionably worth it.

Morrish, in her article about *The Citizenship Council* reports that "the work of these subcommittees was delayed because of the Winnipeg flood in the spring of 1950." As this is being written, Winnipeg is again being threatened by flood. The energy and imagination reflected in these pages suggest it takes more than floods to daunt Manitobans and their urge to learn how to provide better lives for all.

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### **LA RÉCIPROCITÉ ÉDUCATIVE**

Jean-Marie Labelle (1996). Paris, P.U.F.: Pédagogie d'aujourd'hui.

Cette publication représente une contribution importante tant pour le domaine de la recherche que pour celui de la pratique en éducation des adultes. Il se dégage de l'ensemble de l'ouvrage une grande maturité aux niveaux académique et professionnel de même qu'un bon équilibre entre les aspects théoriques d'une part et les implications pratiques, d'autre part. Dès les premières pages du livre, il est clair que tout sera mis en oeuvre pour rendre accessibles les nombreuses idées qui y seront présentées et longuement discutées. La rhétorique de ce livre est particulièrement élégante, parfois incisive et toujours efficace. La facilité avec