

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.

Wendy Mitchinson
Department of History
University of Windsor

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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