

tion to recent developments in educational research, I think this volume can provide an impetus for expanded conversations in the future. Anyone consulting it will certainly walk away with a richer sense of the variety of approaches to environmental education practice and research in the world today.



Cobb, W.H. (2000). *Radical Education in the Rural South: Commonwealth College, 1922–1940*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University. Pages: 288. Price: \$34.95 USD (hardcover).

Reviewed by Samuel Mitchell, The University of Calgary.

The period between the two wars produced a series of radical alternatives in higher education. The folk school model led to the best known survivors: the Highlander Research and Education Center in Tennessee and the Antigonish movement in Nova Scotia. The Labor Singing School and its support for the civil rights movement made Highlander memorial, while Antigonish used traditional arts for survival and developed the cooperative movement. There were others in remote and romantic mountains of the South that did not follow the folk pattern and failed to survive including the experiential rural camp run by at New College, Teachers College Columbia, the original art and liberal arts program at Black Mountain College, and the radical attempt at social reconstruction at Commonwealth College.

Commonwealth tried to be a labor school in Ouachita Mountains, near the Ozarks of Arkansas. Its remoteness limited its appeal but it did develop an alliance with the Southern Tenant Farmers Union for several years. Beginning with a liberal education focus, it followed the Ruskin model from England and had a farm and shops where students and teachers worked for part of their day. Its most famous student, Orval Faubus, who later became governor of Arkansas, said he never experienced so many people with so many ideas and so little practical sense. Faubus attended but was not enrolled and was not typical of the many students drawn to Commonwealth from far away to realize their dreams.

The college began under an authoritarian president, William Zeuch, who was replaced by Lucien Koch, the youngest college president of the time who wanted students and faculty involved. This desire for involvement led to students trying to help miners who were on strike, getting themselves arrested, and never reaching the miners. The students did reach the Southern Tenant Farmers Union when my father, H.L. Mitchell, had his best organizer arrested and called for student help. He sent the students packing, but later learned to use student leaders more selectively.

Dr. Koch believed in using drama as a way of making social issues meaningful to workers. He tried through drama to go beyond the training in social economics that he received from John R. Commons at the University of Wisconsin. Before leaving for Wisconsin, he lived with his family at Commonwealth. The school was part of a way of life for him. He was forced to leave his community by Communist party members taking over the administration and becoming the most active students and teachers. One of the original plays by Lee Hays, *One Bread, One Body*, was enjoying success on tour when the school was being closed.

The author of this study relies on Lucien Koch and he should have made him the co-author of the book. The pictures reproduced, the written evidence, and one actual interview are from the former president of Commonwealth. The author does not mention Lucien Koch's later career: his withdrawal from both labor education and universities and his more technical work for the Airline Pilots Association. It is never clear what he learned from this experience. His brother and his wife, Raymond and Charlotte Koch, published *Educational Commune: The Story of Commonwealth College* in 1974 for a later generation of radicals, but they still believed in the "cause."

The problem of the Koch family about to understand the significance of Commonwealth College carries over to the author. In the end, he says it was "a flammable mixture of at least two incompatible views of life [social theory and the practice of the labour movement]. But wasn't it great while it lasted." This work began in the 1960s as an extension of the work by Donald Grubbs on the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, *Cry from Cotton*. The book by Grubbs led to the founding of a new parallel

action group, ACORN; the study by Cobb has trouble finding any reason for being to be published.

This new work fails to catch the connections among the ideals and people involved and contains factual errors. It mentions the visit by Koch and H. L. Mitchell to see the mechanical cotton picker invented by the Rust brothers and claims without support that Mitchell did not realize he was seeing the end of sharecropping (p. 236). The author is unaware of the plans to retrain workers, develop communal farmers and reap the profits of the invention that went on for over thirty years. He claims that Gardner Jackson, a publicist, became a "vindictive critic" of Mitchell which is absurd (p. 211). I was present in the home of the inventor of the mechanical cotton picker, John Rust in 1950 for an extended luncheon conversations and I was helped by Jackson, my father's closest friend, "Pat" Jackson, a number of times between 1950 and 1962.

Other errors are indicative of the lack of context for the author to place this study. There are a few related histories besides the book by Grubbs, such as a study of the American Fund for Public Service. Comparative studies on the Highlander Folk School, such as the dissertation by Aimee Horton, are ignored. Highlander was working with tenant farmers and their leaders at the same time as Commonwealth. The claim that Highlander was a "radical folk school rather a labor school" does not match the realities of the 1930s nor 1950s when Myles Horton, the leader of Highlander was employed as education director of the Packinghouse workers union in order for the school to survive. Horton was bitter than unions abandoned Highlander after they became more successful. The author has little idea of what labour education is or how it changes over time.

The major difference among the radical colleges of the 1930s is the extent to which they expressive or socially active. Conservatives called all of these colleges radical, but Commonwealth became the most political. Black Mountain was the most artistic but German immigrants were viewed with suspicion while students who were occasionally arrested. All of the new colleges were expressive in their early period. The survivors lose this quality, which is an important reason for studying the losers as well as the

winners. For example, Highlander pursued concern for the environment after the civil right movement no longer needed their assistance; but they do not dramatize their efforts. A study of survivors does not yield the renewal of creativity or the capacity to live with contradictions that past efforts suggest. I look forward to seeing the mural by Joe Jones from the walls of Commonwealth of the three industries of Arkansas: cotton, timber, and lynching. Like his book, Cobb presents a poor reproduction of this painting with no understanding of its plan or meaning.



Mitchell, S. (2001). *Partnerships in Creative Activities Among Schools, Artists and Professional Organizations*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen. Pages: 288. Price: \$ 89.95 USD (cloth).

Reviewed by Roberta Lamb, Queen's University.

This is a complex book addressing complex issues, and worth the reading time. As an experienced arts educator I found myself frustrated by it, occasionally offended, but also nodding in agreement, sighing at the problems documented and shouting with enthusiasm for the ideas presented.

Mitchell's book gathers together documentary and anecdotal evidence on numerous arts partnership education programmes, including the more well-known such as the Getty, Artsvision, and Lincoln Center and the more regional or local, such as Calgary Arts Partners in Education or the ABC in South Carolina. He presents the familiar problems arts educators and arts organizations face: the competition among arts organizations for funding; the divisions between arts educators in the schools and artists-in-residence; the adherence to particular artistic and/or pedagogical ideologies. He documents how various projects and programmes have met these challenges or have been diminished by not meeting them. His concluding chapter provides ten recommendations for successful partnerships.

Mitchell brings two novel ideas to his analysis of arts partnership education programmes: one comparison to sectarian religion and another