

Argentinean Cinema bibliography, he would probably have fallen in the film buff condition and the relevant attention given to the image analysis in its traditional books. Otherwise, the book examines in detail the protagonistic role of music (its diffusion through theatre culture but in radio) in the first spoken films, as well as the role played by singers such as Carlos Gardel or Azucena Maizani, and later, Libertad Lamarque or Tita Merello, just to cite some different but accomplished stars. We cannot forget how important tango music and dance were in the construction of Argentina's international image. Mass media helped it to serve as a representation of the community. Furthermore, tango enabled an international circulation of Argentinean culture. The book offers a wonderful journey from the origins of tango in the *conventillos* and popular feasts to the itinerant role in live performing. Its immortality will come with discs and films, although tango was already popular in France and Spain in the thirties, reaching an international audience who yearned for modernity.

To sum up, the meticulous use of newspapers and reviews, the combination of analysis between filmic genres and directors, the broad attention given to mass media producers, the neat historian procedure, make this book a wonderful insight into a crucial time in Argentinean cultural history.

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E.R. "Ernie" Forbes, *The Education of an Innocent: An Autobiography* by E.R. "Ernie" Forbes (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 2012).

Ernie Forbes' *The Education of an Innocent* contributes to a relatively small historical sub-discipline: historians' autobiographies. Its total length is 142 pages, which includes an index, a brief introduction by Stephen Dutcher, and an interview with Forbes conducted by current Acadiensis editor and well-known regional historian John Reid. Ernie Forbes is one of those historians who "needs no introduction." He is best known as a key figure in the broader rethinking of Atlantic Canadian history that began in the 1970s and continues, although in different forms, today. *The Education of an Innocent* is only peripherally about this significant historiographical change. Instead, as Dutcher notes, it is a "personal history, a close self-portrait" that looks back on the author's childhood, family, friends, and working life. In many ways, Forbes has retained his innocence. Indeed, one might argue that his education - if, by education we mean integration into the scholarly milieu of the last generation - remains incomplete. This is the great merit of this short book.

There is much that one can learn from *The Education of an Innocent*. One

of the most pressing lessons is that this book tells us what Forbes believes was important in his life. Here, church, family, friends, and education loom large as do the small towns in which the author spent his childhood. Read on this level, *The Education of an Innocent* is autobiographical social history that paints a very different portrait of small-town life in Maritime Canada than one might suppose. Recent writing in critical Canadian Studies, for instance, might look to the whiteness of Maritime life, religion, and education. Forbes is more interested in capturing the human dynamics: how people interacted with each other, how friendships were formed, how people coped with deaths in family, and how decisions about jobs and marriage were made. This is a touching social history that reminds us that we miss something important in people's lives in the past if we ignore touching moments. The people about whom Forbes writes are good people trying to do what is right. This is a side of history that can, too often, be lost and which is needed to understand what made home, community, and school the focus of so much nostalgia.

We also learn about career paths in the academy and, by implication, how these have changed over the years. At least from his description, Forbes "came of age" as an historian at a time when the academy was different than today. He pursued an undergraduate degree, then taught in the public schools, before deciding on an MA and ultimately a PhD. In other words, it never seems that Forbes decided to become a scholar. Instead, he was led from decision to decision by more pragmatic considerations (advancing to a better job, available funding). He was supported in his decisions by family and friends but also by his faculty mentors and fellow grad students. Programmes were smaller, faculty supportive but demanding, and grad students helped each other out by noting sources or serving as a sounding board. Throughout *The Education of an Innocent*, one never feels that Forbes is alone or battling other scholars to promote a new interpretation. Even when he reflects on controversies at his eventual permanent academic home, the University of New Brunswick, Forbes "stays on point": solutions to problems are possible if people work together with good intent. Historiographical debates - aired in journals and, with regard to aboriginal issues, the courtroom - are submerged before Forbes' implicit assertion that all members of his cohort were "on the same side." All were looking to both rethink and advance the history of Atlantic Canada.

To some, it might seem like this message is not simply the nostalgia of a senior academic but a tad naive. And, yet, there is something deeply appealing in Forbes' presentation of his past. I came of age in a different academic environment - although at some of the same institutions as Ernie Forbes - and, frankly, I find the idea of good-natured collaboration remarkably appealing. It is,

to my mind, preferable to the often-polemical exchanges and intensely politicized debate that passed for historical discussion in the grad seminars and conferences I attended. Indeed, I am not at all certain that the often-acrimonious exchanges in which other historians were engaged have done much to advance our understanding of the past or its potential uses today. This might be the most important lesson to learn from Forbes' memoir: historians can and should approach their craft in a different way, timely words, particularly for those of us on the left.

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John P. Spencer, *In the Crossfire: Marcus Foster and the Troubled History of American School Reform* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

If Marcus Foster is remembered at all today, it is as the Oakland, CA, school superintendent who was assassinated in 1973 by crackpot revolutionaries calling themselves the Symbionese Liberation Army, who later achieved even greater notoriety by kidnapping newspaper heiress Patty Hearst. They murdered Foster because they mistakenly believed he was planning to put police officers in the city's schools.

John P. Spencer, associate professor of education at Ursinus College, finds much more worth remembering in Foster's story:

Though Marcus Foster's murder in a crossfire of bullets was indeed extreme, it is, in some ways, symbolic of a larger political and ideological crossfire over how to effectively explain and respond to the 'urban crisis' and, in particular, the persistent problems of urban schools that serve African American students (4).

Foster's relatively brief career (he was only 50 when he died) represents to Spencer a road not taken in American school reform in the 1960s and ever since, "a kind of alternative" to the confrontational narrative that runs from the 1968 Ocean Hill-Brownsville standoff to the debates over No Child Left Behind. Spencer candidly states that he "draws on history to make an argument about school reform debates in the present" (8-9).

To his credit, Spencer does not merely paint the past as the present writ small, but displays commendable historical-mindedness. He situates Foster within what has come to be known as the "long civil rights movement," beginning well before the 1960s, and follows an interpretive trail blazed by Thomas Sugrue, Matthew Countryman, Robert Self, and others.

Born in Athens, GA, Foster grew up in South Philadelphia, the youngest of five children, whose parents separated when Marcus was very