

Terrence McKenna)? Is there room for both schools of thought? These are fundamental questions at the heart of this debate. Sadly, most Canadians have little knowledge of the actual facts surrounding this critical period in Canadian history. The greatest aspect of this book is the opportunity provided for all interested parties (historians, journalists, film makers, ordinary Canadians) to look at a variety of historical interpretations, either traditional or revisionist, and determine for themselves the role of Canadian soldiers during the Second World War. Any mythology which may have surrounded the Canadian Armed Services during the war is quickly erased. Whether you agree or disagree with either the McKennas or Bercuson and Wise is irrelevant. What is relevant is that Canadians confront any preconceived notions they might have had about who has the right to historical interpretation. This is a question that will never be resolved because it is a collective right. This text is just one step in the process of addressing this challenge.

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Peter C. Emberley and Waller R. Newell, *Bankrupt Education: The Decline of Liberal Education in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1994).

*Bankrupt Education: The Decline of Liberal Education in Canada* is an angry book. Parents are angry because "the school system has abandoned its responsibilities." Teachers are angry because "the ministries of education ... do not

support the teachers, but rather contribute to the general abuse aimed at them." (5) The authors are angry because "instead of providing the foundations of intellectual and spiritual life, the new educational reforms are creating adaptable problem-solvers and socially integrated team-players fearful of giving offense [and] the schools, instead of being communities dedicated to the equality of opportunity and the freedom of the mind, have increasingly become ghettos or theme parks of 'identities' — race, colour, ancestry, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age — and promoters of 'sensitivity' to the totality of ecological existence." (4-5) The authors' "aim is to resist these reforms by restoring the classical ideals of liberal education," reemphasizing the "fair and challenging system of liberal education put in place by the architects of Canadian schooling, ... who understood the founders of Canadian Confederation and thus the distinctiveness of Canadian political culture." (5)

Peter C. Emberley and Waller R. Newell, political science professors at Carleton University, capture the distress and confusion felt by many over the New Democratic Party's (NDP) restructuring initiative of January 1992, particularly over the destreaming initiative. As they point out, the lack of consultation outraged parents and teachers as did the ideological assumptions behind destreaming. The previous system had been condemned by the NDP's 1992 Party Convention: "this system has grown into an institutionalized form of racism." Now, even those who might have had reservations about the existing structure and curriculum of Ontario's educational system might be offended to find it so harshly condemned. The arrogance of some of the reformers, who

implied that opponents were racist at worst, unfeeling reactionaries at best, intensified dismay. Whatever good in the reforms — and certainly the attempt to widen the Canadian mosaic, recognize contributions of Native culture, and address ecological questions should be applauded — was obscured by their dictatorial implementation and the lack of practical preparation. It is too early to judge the eventual outcome of the initiatives, but every high school teacher to whom I have spoken has described destreaming as chaotic and demanding — teachers conduct a series of mini-classes for which they lack resources. Neither were costs properly addressed. School boards were merely directed to “redirect existing funds.”

Although the authors are polemical, they address important points and levy legitimate criticisms of the NDP initiative. They are less convincing in proposing alternatives. They wish a return to liberal education, “freeing students from the opinions and fashions of the day by exposing them to the deepest and broadest human possibilities.” That, they claim, is impossible “if there is no agreement that education’s task is to shape and sublimate a student’s longings in the service of a thoughtful civic decency.”(27) But shaping students for civic decency implies an ideological purpose, merely one different from the one they condemn.

In a survey of philosophical thought from Plato to Hegel and Nietzsche, they applaud the Hegelian synthesis but decry post-Hegelian modernism and deconstruction. In the Hegelian attempts at synthesis, however, lay the anti-liberal collectivism of Marxism and fascism. Their historical sense is weak. I have no idea what is meant either historically or logically by “the bourgeoisie-to-be was

waiting for it [theories of contractual government].”(130) In the Canadian context, *Inventing Secondary Education: The Rise of the High School in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Montreal 1992) by Robert Gidney and Wyn Millar vividly demonstrates how the Ontario system evolved rather than was imposed by the enlightened leaders whom Emberley and Newell imagine. But Gidney and Millar emphasize a point with which Emberley and Newell might welcome. That is the cooperation of school boards, parents, teachers, and the provincial ministry in developing an effective system of schooling during the nineteenth century. More cooperation might be a worthy aim today, and a means to improve the system.

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Marilyn A. Levine, *The Found Generation: Chinese Communists in Europe during the Twenties* (Seattle: University of Washington Press 1993).

This book brings to light a significant yet little known feature of the early history of the Chinese communist movement. A striking number of the Chinese Communist Party’s most senior first-generation leaders trace their involvement in radical politics to their student experience in France during the early 1920s. They include Deng Xiaoping, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, Nie Rongzhen, Li Lisan, Chen Yi, Li Fuchun, Cai Hesen, Li Weihan and others. While historians have long noted this “French connec-