Dennis A. Bartels and Alice L. Bartels. *When the North Was Red: Aboriginal Education in Soviet Siberia* (McGill-Queen's Nature and Northern Series). Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995. Pp. xxviii, 126.

When we received a copy of *When the North Was Red: Aboriginal Education in Soviet Siberia* for review, we looked forward with excitement to reading the book. The title's double meaning was striking and promising. Canadians, especially Aboriginal Canadians, could at last compare the experience of northern native peoples in the former Soviet Union with our own experiences and perceptions.

The book's map was disappointing—rudimentary and reminiscent of maps in journals of early "explorers." The photographs, however, brought the story to life. The text is a limited (ninety-eight pages) case study claiming to "provoke useful comparison" and to analyze "whether Soviet northern policy represented an alternative" to Canadian policy. This claim alone might attract a wide audience and make for interesting reading. But without discussion of the Russian and Soviet school systems in general and without a study of the ideological differences between Czarist Russia and the Soviet Union, the aboriginal case makes little sense. Consider, for instance, that aboriginal experience of the Russian Revolutions differed massively from that of urban people; news often did not reach Siberia for up to a year. Besides, the authors argue that Russian studies are not trustworthy, yet make use of government documentation written by Soviet ethnographers on the government payroll.

Despite these problems, *When the North Was Red: Aboriginal Education in Soviet Siberia* has its value. It provides careful definitions of terms. The discussion concerning shamans who distrusted "education" was delightful. The comparative treatment of Canadian reserves and the multi-national Soviet *okrugs* also proved informative. However, if the reader is unfamiliar with the Canadian experience, the book loses much of its edge as the comparative aspect of the book appears only in Chapter 7.

The Canadian comparison should appear much earlier. For example, the study recognizes that the Russian intelligentsia were a crucial element of the culture, and that there were endeavours to create an Aboriginal intelligentsia. This same intentional cultural policy is only now being adopted in Canada. The Soviet insistence on retention of Aboriginal language and culture, too, is in complete contrast to the historically paternalistic Canadian policy. That these differences occurred due to the ideology of "consolidation" rather than assimilation is clear. By observing the generational changes the authors prove that Canada lacked insight and forethought in its Aboriginal policies, whereas the Soviet Union used pedagogically advanced ideas in promoting Aboriginal cultures.

According to the authors, many Aboriginals passed through the Soviet education system and entered white-collar professions rather than becoming the tradesmen and agricultural helpers as in the Canadian system. Unarguably, the

superior curriculum and retention of native language and culture later helped the Soviet Union, whereas in Canada the treatment of the Aboriginals has created social division.

Sovietization sounded rather like the Canadian policy on multiculturalism. Both national systems eagerly changed the cultures of the populations in question. On the other hand, Soviet policy allowed Aboriginal peoples to determine their own membership, whereas the Canadian system dictates to the Aboriginal peoples who have status. Another difference is that in the Soviet Republic, Europeans are Aboriginal to the land also and that is why this book uses the term *nationalities* rather than *Aboriginal.* In Canada, European descendants cannot be Aboriginal. The authors attempt to compare three features of the Soviet system—Sovietization, national consolidation, and northern consolidation—to analogous features of the Canadian system. In each case, the treatment of *When the North* stands in need of expansion.

The most striking of all comparisons, however, remains that of the degree of democracy in each system in the relationship between majority and minority populations. We agree with the text's implied message that this is the ultimate test of each system.

This study is a welcome addition to the literature on Aboriginals, for it provides information heretofore unavailable.

Stan Wilson and Annette Richardson
University of Alberta

W. E. Marsden. *An Anglo-Welsh Teaching Dynasty: The Adams Family from the 1840s to the 1930s.* London: The Woburn Press, 1997. Pp. 279.

This is the latest book by the prolific British educational historian and geographer Professor William Marsden of Liverpool University. Marsden is known to Canadian educational historians as a participant in CHEA/ACHE conferences and as a contributor to *Historical Studies in Education.* This book deserves notice if only for the originality of the theme—the tracing of the teaching careers of father, son, and grandson across nearly 100 years, from the 1840s to the 1930s. The only similar study I am aware of is that of James M. Fleming, a Newfoundlander living in the United States, whose unpublished study of three generations of the Mackey family of Carbonear, Newfoundland, covers much the same period. But whereas Fleming's work is rather brief, Marsden's study is a detailed narrative that places the careers of the family members firmly in their social, economic, and geographical setting.

A trans-generational work of this kind, covering a longer period than a single biographical study, enables the author to trace school organization, curricula,