today or which are likely to be needed in the future.

Finally, a few comments about the Epilogue. These few pages are intriguing since the authors present some very forthright personal opinions as compared to the cool historian's logic of the bulk of the manuscript: 1) "an optimistic vision of the future is impossible if higher levels of literacy do not become more widespread" (p. 291); 2) "We must not tolerate this kind of diversity [i.e., dramatic differences in literacy levels across race, ethnic lines, and income groups]" (p. 291); 3) "if people are to be empowered, they require critical reading and writing skills" (p. 292); 4) "higher level critical literacy abilities for all children must become a central goal of schools" (p. 292); 5 "We must fight discrimination, drugs, unemployment, and low wages" (p. 293); 6) "In the absence of imaginative policies that will protect and foster diverse access to print, corporate policies, corporate priorities, and corporate organization threaten important avenues of expression in our society" (p. 293); and 7) "If we can do this [mobilize schools, families, and other institutions in a new escalation of literacy abilities] while preserving the diversity and the broad participation that are essential to democratic life, we will have preserved and deepened the essential connection between literacy and the Republic" (p. 293). Strong words. A strong ending.

Literacy in the United States is a book I would recommend for educators and historians alike. The chapter on the great test-score decline alone makes it worth the price of the book, the rest is gravy—smooth and rich!

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Paul Litt. *The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992. Pp. 331, illus. $50.00 cloth, $19.95 paper.

During the course of her travels across Canada as commissioner for the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, Hilda Neatby felt obliged to tell a group of women in Victoria that "I'm a real farm woman at heart...I can milk a cow, take care of chickens and think I can even help with the plowing." As she was the sternest and most academically-minded of her four colleagues, this bid for folksiness rang false. Yet it was much needed.

In *The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission* Paul Litt offers a long-overdue account of the organization, operation, and recommendations of the Commission which was set up by the Louis St. Laurent government on 8 April 1949 in order to "counteract some of the private sector opposition to government policies in broadcasting and film," to bail the universities out of a post-war financial crisis, to assist existing public institutions in the arts and to establish new ones under the federal government's jurisdiction, and to clarify the government's relation-

ship to national voluntary bodies representing the arts. It was the need to address matters of education and broadcasting that initially prompted the government to consider taking more responsibility for the cultural life of the country. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation required more funds, revised regulations for advertising and private broadcasting stations, and a means of dealing with the new medium of television. The education sector needed more money, too, in order to accommodate the flood of veteran students and to provide national scholarships.

The conditions that allowed the government to contemplate entering such areas as education in which it had no jurisdiction at all was the renewed sense of Canadian nationalism following World War II, the Cold War with its "awareness of the need to define and protect the values of Western liberal democracy," the country's prominence in international affairs during the postwar era, and the presence of a cultural elite who were set on encouraging "a creative culture that would reflect a unique Canadian social culture" and thus thwart the influence of American mass culture.

By the time the Commissioners had reached Victoria in the autumn of 1949, they had listened to enough briefs from voluntary and professional arts and sciences organizations, from individuals and private broadcasters, and from business organizations and government institutions to realize "that most Canadians harboured egalitarian suspicions of high culture." In an effort to mask their own preference for high culture over low, British cultural imports over American ones, public over private radio stations, and the federal government's support of national cultural institutions and universities, they steered clear of the word culture and appealed to their fellow citizens' sense of patriotism. Yet they were not entirely successful. The experience alone of appearing before the Commission was agonizing. One well-seasoned lecturer from the University of Toronto joked about "the strain of 'examination' in the monumental surroundings of the Salle des pas perdus." In the chair sat Vincent Massey, with his ever-polished shoes, his elegant manners, and his sense of drama, which rivalled that of his famous actor-brother Raymond. When not holding court with the country's most prominent actors, poets, painters, and musicians at his estate in Port Hope, Massey was in England where he sat on the National Gallery's board of trustees, dined at his Oxford college, Balliol, and from 1935 to 1946 served as Canada's High Commissioner. Next to Canada's cultural Medici sat Neatby, the serious-minded University of Saskatchewan historian who had worked with women's associations in the West and had published articles on education. And next to her sat Arthur Surveyer, an engineer from Quebec City who was knowledgeable about matters relating to modern technology and had served on the National Research Council; George-Henri Lévesque, a Dominican priest and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the Université Laval, who was an opponent of the Duplessis regime; and, finally, a strong advocate of federal funding for universities, the

populist president of the University of British Columbia, Norman "Larry" MacKenzie.

After the travelling and the hearings—in twelve months the Commission travelled over ten thousand miles and held one hundred and fourteen public sessions in sixteen cities—after the writing of briefs relating to archives, to the technical side of broadcasting, and to the federal government's involvement in such areas as research, the arts, and education, the Commissioners wrote their Report. It came in two parts. First, issues and evidence made it clear that Canada's modest population, its geography, its linguistic divisions, its regional differences and, most important of all, domination by its neighbour to the south made it necessary for the government to take responsibility for the cultural life of the country. Second, the recommendations suggested the ways in which the government could increase the resources and the prestige of its cultural institutions by founding a Canada Council, conducting a review of existing cultural agencies under its control, and establishing new institutions such as a national library. The tone of the Report was pro-British, anti-American, and anti-materialist. Its recommendations reflected an elitist moral vision of culture which flowed, as Litt so well observes, "from the premises of liberal humanist nationalism." Yet the recommendations left little room for Canadians other than those who belonged to the British and French charter groups. Beyond espousing an orientation towards "high" culture and the professional cultural producer over the amateur, they offered no panacea for the ever-increasing infusion of American mass culture into Canada.

Within two years only 12 of the Commission's 146 recommendations had been implemented. Among them were the establishment of a national library, and the reorganization of federal cultural institutions such as the National Film Board, the National Gallery of Canada, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Other recommendations, such as a body to administer the arts, had to wait until 1957 when a windfall from the estates of two maritime businessmen, Isaac Walton Killam and Sir James Dunn, brought the Canada Council into being.

While many of the Commission's recommendations were never implemented, Litt takes care to note "the general impact it had upon the attitudes of the public and the policies of the government." "It helped," he concludes, "usher in a new age in which a conscious and coordinated government cultural policy came to be expected." This is only partly true. What happened *before* the Massey Commission came into being had already prepared the ground for government intervention in the cultural sector. Take the establishment in the early 1930s of the Canadian Committee, whose executive comprised none other than Vincent Massey. Though the Committee might have given Carnegie Corporation grants instead of public money to the Canadian arts community, it nevertheless functioned very much like an arts council. Equally noteworthy was the visit to Canada of the vice chairperson of British Arts

Council, Ifor Evans, in 1947. What made his trip so remarkable was not just the fact that he covered some 6,500 miles by boat, bus, and railway in thirty-nine days, and attended 109 meetings with arts groups, government cultural agencies, and arts administrators, but that he made a strong case for the federal government's involvement in the arts. The activities of both the Canadian Committee and the British Council executive alerted Canadians to the idea that government agencies and funds could play a solid and constructive role in the cultural field long before the Massey Commissioners first met in Ottawa in 1949.

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June Purvis. *A History of Women's Education in England.* Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991. Pp. 159.

A History of Women's Education in England concentrates on the period 1800 to 1914, a time of expansion of educational opportunities for girls and women, when increased options were marked by processes of gender differentiation and segregation. Although much of June Purvis' research has been published previously, this present book offers an accessible and attractive synthesis of nineteenth-century trends. Developments in the twentieth century are treated cursorily, a regrettable decision as the title suggests a larger and more comprehensive treatment.

The first chapter considers prescriptions of Victorian domestic ideology which required women to be located in the home as full-time wives and mothers. The next two chapters consider the education of working-class girls and women, the following two are concerned with middle-class females, and the last chapter identifies a couple of themes relevant both in Victorian times and the 1990s.

Purvis' primary sources are prescriptive treatises, autobiographies, government enquiries, and contemporary sociological analyses. She judiciously draws from the increasing bibliography of secondary material, from women's history as well as from studies in the history of education. It would be helpful to have more testimony from women themselves, and it would be useful to see statistics which could establish the numbers and proportions of students in the various schools and institutions. Purvis addresses both qualitative and quantitative questions, but in this short book can do little more than suggest the relationships among and between women schooled in diverse ways.

Her chapter on ideology is a swift encapsulation of received wisdom. Although, citing Deborah Gorham's work, Purvis notes that "for the majority of middle-class women, the ideal of the cultured lady of leisure with an array of servants never materialised" (p. 6), she does not explore what servantless middle-class women themselves thought of the ideology of the leisured lady and her appropriate education. Nor does she