

Canada and the United States” in part 4 of the Rury and Tamura book, addresses comparative aspects of these histories very well, but readers looking for a discussion of the Canadian historiography should turn elsewhere for that.

Historians and university librarians should add this handbook to their collections. They will be giving themselves and graduate students a handy and comprehensive reference that all of us can use to further the scholarship in the history of education field.

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Shawn F. Peters and James G. Dwyer

Homeschooling: The History and Philosophy of a Controversial Practice

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019. 256 pp.

James G. Dwyer, Arthur B. Hanson Professor of Law at William and Mary, and Shawn F. Peters, Lecturer in Integrated Liberal Studies at the University of Wisconsin, here join forces to pen a book that is one part historical description and one part normative argument. The first three chapters, written by Peters, provide the history. Chapter 1 describes the pervasive use of the home to educate children in early North America, as well as the gradual eclipse of that tendency as formal schools were established. Chapter 2 describes how after World War II many Americans grew distrustful of government entities, including public schools. Conservative Protestants, historically strong backers of public education, began turning away from the increasingly secular public schools to private religious schools and, eventually, to homeschooling. At the same time, radicals on the philosophical left grew critical of the bureaucracy of public education, advocating for private schools and, eventually, homeschooling. Peters attends to the legal history, showing that American courts have always maintained that state governments have the right to regulate independent educational ventures, though most states have chosen not to. Chapter 3 describes the growth and diversification of homeschooling and covers some of the controversies that have emerged as the movement has matured.

The final three chapters, written by Dwyer, make the normative case for rigorous regulation of homeschooling in the name of children’s rights. The state has always, claims Dwyer, regulated the family. Dwyer seeks to provide a theory of why and how this regulation should take place, providing six normative principles. First, children are persons, not property. Second, all persons possess rights to self-determination. Children, being persons, have this right as well. Children are not yet able to exercise this right, but that does not give parents or the state the *right* to control them. Parents and the state do have *interests* in the outcome of a child’s education. Third, children have the *greatest interest* in their educations. Fourth, the State must determine what the child’s interests are. The state should base its calculus on scientific consensus.

Fifth, the state cannot use religion as the basis for determining what a child's interests are. Sixth, the state has two functions when serving its custodial role for children: the state can limit children's rights in its *police powers* function when those rights might threaten society (for example, not permitting young children to drive because they would endanger public safety); and the state maintains a *parens patriae* role for the child, trying to secure the child's interests. Education is a *parens patriae*, not a *police powers* domain.

In chapters 6 and 7 Dwyer takes these six principles and applies them to home-schooling regulation. Chapter 6 lays out the six basic goods education should secure for children: Cognitive and intellectual development; Knowledge acquisition; Interpersonal development; Identity formation; Family connection; and Physical, psychological, and emotional security. The state, according to the authors, should require an education that maximizes a child's potential to realize these six goods.

In chapter 7 Dwyer draws out the policy implications. He begins by claiming, based on the sixth principle of safety, that children have a right to stay at home that is so strong that the state must show that requiring schooling serves children's compelling interest. Obviously, a home that does not provide safety would require state intervention; but beyond that Dwyer cannot construct an argument that would abolish homeschooling. However, it should be regulated, because of the state's requirement to require equal opportunity to all children. How? In three ways, according to the author. First, to be legally empowered to homeschool, a parent should demonstrate before doing so that she is capable. Dwyer thinks a high school diploma or GED signifies academic capacity, but he also wants evidence that a parent can do the job. For a child who has never been to school before, normal healthy development in the preschool years is a good indication of parental competence. For a student being pulled from school, a trial run during the summer subject to evaluation by the school would suffice. A criminal background check should also be performed on all household members to help guard against potential abuse. Second, periodic review of homeschooled children should be conducted by a school district employee (ideally someone who has homeschooled successfully in the past), based on a portfolio, not a standardized test, so as to preserve homeschooling pedagogical freedom. Alternately, requiring partial enrollment in some formal institution might serve as equivalent to periodic review. Third, if a review finds that a child's homeschooling is not adequate, a sliding scale of interventions should be put in place so that the state's role can be as minimal as possible and tailored to need.

In a final concluding chapter, the authors acknowledge that their recommendations are not likely to be heeded given the political power of homeschooling advocacy groups. They also slip in two other possible state policies that might help reduce the potential for abusers to hide behind "homeschooling." First, states might offer financial assistance to families who are willing to comply with the sorts of regulations suggested in chapter 7. Second, lawsuits could be filed that, if successful, could force legislatures to do what they heretofore have been unwilling to do: to ensure that all children receive equal protection under the law.

I have two brief comments to make about this book. First, unlike many coauthored

ventures (including some of the other titles in the University of Chicago Press' History and Philosophy of Education Series, of which this book is a part), this book coheres. Its historical and normative components blend seamlessly. An unfortunate side-effect of this, however, is that the history, especially in the first chapter, tends to reduce the complexity of the past into a tidy narrative that fits the book's larger argument. Peters' own background is in legal history, and it shows in his tendency to turn history into a sort of *amicus curiae* backstory for Dwyer's argument. Second, I agree with the authors' admission that their proposals are likely to go nowhere. Dwyer's arguments are more subtle and powerful than those of many other legal scholars often dubbed "critics" of homeschooling, but it does not matter. There is simply not a constituency that cares enough about regulating homeschoolers to advocate for these recommendations. There is, however, a large, well-organized, and motivated constituency committed to ensuring that recommendations like these never get a legislative hearing.

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Eric McGeer

Varsity's Soldiers: The University of Toronto Contingent of the Canadian Officers' Training Corps, 1914–1968

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019. 384 pp.

Eric McGeer's *Varsity's Soldiers* is a welcome addition to the field of higher education history in Canada. The text covers roughly one hundred years of military education at the University of Toronto, 1860s–1968, and focusses on the fifty-four years of the Canadian Officers' Training Corps (COTC) program, 1914–68. The main purpose of the book is to provide a narrative/descriptive history of the COTC program (4). McGeer's work offers no overarching thesis but does provide several reasonable conclusions about the COTC program: it provided significant numbers of competent infantry officers for active service during the First World War (96); it maintained an officer reserve that provided a valuable resource of trainers and instructors for a country preparing for war in 1939 (123); and it established a vital link between universities and the armed forces and between citizens and soldiers throughout its history (249). The text is divided into five logical chapters: 1860–1914, the First World War, the interwar period, the Second World War, and 1945–68. The most significant chapter concerns the Second World War, where McGeer describes in detail how the University of Toronto ran one of the largest training centres in all of Canada and became an important cog in the national war machine (6).

Varsity's Soldiers delves into several important historical topics and will delight readers interested in Canadian armed forces history, especially the tensions between the regular permanent forces and the part-time militia; military education, notably