

Defining morality was long considered an exclusively male prerogative, and doctors were able to enhance their authority only by protecting it against the assault.

Abortion and contraception symbolized a threat to patriarchal authority on a familial level as well. Unfortunately, one finds little evidence of Canadian women's own agenda for contraceptive technology in the McLarens' analysis of letters written by Stopes and Sanger. Here, they stress women's expressed desire to use birth control to enhance their role as wives and mothers. Evidence contrary to this generalization can be found in the letters themselves, however. One writer speaks approvingly of a woman who used birth control to thwart the ambitions of a "mean, jealous husband" who sought to ensure his wife's fidelity by having a new baby every year (30).

Attributing reproductive decisions largely to couples rather than to women, as the McLarens seem to do, and assuming that such decisions were made in response to socio-economic factors alone, leaves little room for a discussion of gender divisions within the family. One must question whether there is enough evidence to conclude that Canadian couples were unanimous in their reproductive decision-making, or that women's lip service to conventional sex roles is sufficient evidence of acquiescence to male authority within the family.

Dianne Dodd
University of Ottawa

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Desmond Morton and Glenn Wright — *Winning the Second Battle: Canadian Veterans and the Return to Civilian Life, 1915-1930*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987. Pp. xiv, 328.

Veterans have never been a fashionable topic for historians. With respect to the First World War, much more has been written about how and why men joined the armed services than about their departure. What work has been done on returning servicemen has tended to focus on their organizations and the role these played in political movements and social protest. Most books on the period can manage little more than a reference in passing to veterans as victims of economic depression and government callousness. What governments actually did is hardly mentioned.

Desmond Morton and Glenn Wright have set out to fill this gap. Government activity forms the very heart of their book, along with an examination of its relationship to the veterans' organizations across the country. This is essentially a study of bureaucratic anticipation and adaptation. Insofar as there are heroes, they are the officials or "outsiders" brought into central administration who had the drive, vision and acumen to devise "effective institutions and policies" for problems never before faced: "a small number of imaginative and clear-sighted Canadians, virtually unknown to their contemporaries and wholly unknown to posterity" (xi). The authors demonstrate that the main lines of policy were set before veterans' organizations had sufficient muscle to force a response from government. Policies on pensions, treatment of the disabled, training, land settlement and "re-establishment" generally were not without their shortcomings. Veterans' groups in the 1920s spent much time reminding politicians of just where the deficiencies lay. However, Morton and Wright

do make a strong case for locating most of key initiatives that led to constructive achievement within the machinery of government itself. Historians studying this question only "from below" would miss much that was of central importance in understanding the origins of policy.

The pattern was set during the war by the Military Hospitals Commission which, under the careful guidance of its secretary Ernest Scammell, came to assume an increasingly powerful role in the rehabilitation and retraining of wounded returning members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Men like Scammell found few useful precedents in other countries. "Canada's innovation was administrative: no other belligerent was as prompt in creating a single government agency to cope with the problems of re-establishing disabled soldiers" (44). Among others who made important contributions during the pioneering phase were Walter Segsworth, the mining engineer who took responsibility for vocational training, and Major John Todd, the well-travelled parasitologist who became the driving force behind the creation of the Board of Pension Commissioners. Their purpose was to stake out a role for the federal government in the resettlement process which would ward off the "pension evil" of the United States and promote the rapid return of Canada's soldiers to self-sufficiency.

The task of such planners was not easy, faced as they were with the competing claims of voluntary agencies, military authorities and the provinces. By the latter part of the war, they also had to contend with a powerful "sense of entitlement" from veterans themselves. The desire to keep such questions from becoming partisan issues did not prevent party politics from affecting the implementation of their proposals. Yet for all these obstacles, policies were introduced to manage demobilization, to sponsor land settlement and (under the direction of the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment) to look after retraining, job placement and long-term medical care.

How successful were these efforts? The authors argue that Canada was ahead of its allies in framing plans for demobilization, training the disabled, and in the generosity of its pension scales. The full measure of Canada's achievement will only be known when studies of this type have also been done for other countries. However, the comment that "since governments not infrequently fail, their triumphs should be recorded" (115) is justified by the evidence presented. There is no attempt to gloss over the setbacks experienced by all programs in the postwar years. Land settlement was undermined by the fall in farm prices; retraining could amount to little without economic expansion. The authors are careful not to fall into the trap of judging government policy solely in the light of the complaints and criticisms made by veterans' organizations. The latter could be every bit as short-sighted and petty-minded as civil servants and politicians. Morton and Wright play no favorites. Attacks on government frequently had merit. Pensions administration, always the leading issue, left a good deal to be desired, particularly under the penny-pinching direction of Col. John Thompson. The numerous enquiries of the 1920s into this and other veterans questions are given full scope, as is the gadfly role played veterans' leaders, particularly the remarkable Grant MacNeil of the Great War Veterans' Association (GWVA).

The book is successful in showing how awkward and far-reaching were the difficulties faced by governments in dealing with the problems of returning soldiers. They were complicated still further by the rivalry among veterans' organizations. While the government cultivated links with bodies such as the GWVA, the merger movement was much less rapid in Canada than in the United States or Britain. The

tortuous process by which the Canadian Legion emerged is given detailed treatment: only with the discrediting of MacNeil was the way open for senior officers to bring about amalgamation.

However, for all its strengths, there is a dimension missing from *Winning the Second Battle* — the outlook and position of the individual veteran himself. Only occasionally, amidst the blow-by-blow accounts of organizational infighting, bureaucratic intrigue and committee work do we catch sight of the subject of all this sound and fury. There is a good, if brief, section dealing with the attitudes of and towards veterans during the demobilization phase but for the most part, one must be satisfied with tales of “hard cases” cited as examples of governmental neglect. The explosion of discontent leading to the Bonus campaign of 1919 is described in terms of its general mood, its divisive effects on the GWVA and the nativist, anti-profiteer rhetoric that accompanied it. However, since we are assured that “hunger and unemployment were simply not factors at this point” (121), it is important to know more than we are told about what had happened to the actual economic and social status of individual veterans on their return to Canada.

Morton and Wright claim that civil resettlement established fundamental new principles in Canadian social policy which laid the foundation for the welfare state. This argument needs to be fully developed, since it is not clear by the end how far principles such as universality and entitlement had come to replace the stress on self-sufficiency, even with the adoption of War Veterans’ Allowances. The confusion is due in part to the book’s fragmented structure which makes it hard to see the larger patterns at work. As a result, some of the conclusions do not appear self-evident. For example, the statement that “deliberate government policy made soldiers poor” (223), because pensions were linked to low army pay, seems out keeping with the constant emphasis given earlier to high pension rates.

This volume is well produced and mercifully free from minor errors: I would note only that Lloyd George’s health insurance scheme was enacted in 1911, not 1908 (x); and that 1920 on page 209 is a misprint. As an added bonus, we are provided with twelve pages of excellent photographs and a useful statistical appendix. *Winning the Second Battle* marks an important first step in giving veterans the place they deserve in Canada’s social and political history. For this the authors deserve considerable credit. One hopes that others, in Canada and beyond, will follow their lead.

Martin Petter
McGill University

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Dian H. Murray — *Pirates of the South China Coast, 1790-1810*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987. Pp. xii, 243.

As Western historiography of China has evolved from broad studies of Chinese institutions and national movements or Sino-Western relations to more intensive examinations of Chinese society, regional and local history has come into focus. Dian Murray’s study of piracy follows this trend. Piracy along the China coast was an endemic problem since at least the sixteenth century, when Japanese pirates linked up with elements of the Chinese maritime population to ravage the coastal regions during