critique of Dewey and liberal reform. It is a detailed, sophisticated book worthy of careful study and wide readership.

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Axelrod, P. (1990). *Making a middle class: Student life in English Canada during the thirties*. Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 269 pp., $34.95 (hardcover).

In this book the author examines what is ironically a new phenomenon in the historiography of universities — students. How have practitioners in the field managed for so long without half their baggage? Part of the answer lies in the fact that the history of higher education has been written from the top down and the further one moves from the spiritual center, the classroom, the more marginal and unreal it seems.

Axelrod redresses this imbalance to a great extent in his discussions about who went to university, the academic culture, the professional culture, the student movement, and extracurricular life.

The author tempers many extreme notions of the period. Universities were not "loafing places for rich men's sons"; most students came from the middle echelons and many were women. Academic performance of Canadian students was neither "universally outstanding" nor "entirely wretched" (p. 49). And their sex life (to the extent that this secret has been discovered) was "neither as loose as critics feared nor as pristine as officials pretended" (p. 49).

Axelrod underscores the trials of Jews and women. Enrollments of the former in arts, medicine, and law were sometimes systematically curtailed. Male lawyers, doctors, dentists, and engineers earned considerably more than their female counterparts. And so we have more sad evidence of a society that took so long to see itself.

The book possesses all the strengths of academic history — control of sources, mastery of a body of literature, impartiality, and rigor, both analytical and methodological. It also manifests to some degree a weakness which within the next generation will prove fatal to the entire field of scholarly history — the failure to adequately, honestly, and intimately engage the reader.

It is no easy problem to solve — making quantification interesting. At least part of the solution rests in a reformation of the *language of academicism* which is so muted, so neutral, so reserved, and so subdued that it reveals almost nothing of the researcher's natural delight and enthusiasm. That is, the language

that has been employed by academic historians over the past 40-odd years shuns figurative use, drains energy and color from words, and hides the affection and obscures the passion of its authors. At its worst, it becomes an extraordinary repression, an exercise in unnatural constraint, of holding back, of corsetting mind and emotion. One almost cries out to writers — be yourself, fill your paragraphs with life, jettison this procrustean bed of stifled expression. You will not prostitute yourself by confiding in us your love of your characters or your subject. We can still discern truth from falsity when you speak with conviction and feeling.

Sensing some of these problems, Axelrod tries hard, and sometimes succeeds, in breathing energy into his tale by exploiting the anecdotal and biographical record. But the full resolution of this issue will not come until the language of academic historians is released from the bondage of an outmoded and unemotive convention.

Axelrod shows that students valued "approachable," "interesting," and "dedicated" teachers and devalued those who "lacked empathy" or "lectured prosaically" (p. 95). Much more needs to be said about this central relationship in universities (in fact, whole chapters should be written on it), but I strongly suspect that in the analogous writer-reader relationship readers cherish the same qualities.

With fully 100 pages devoted to appendices, notes, and index, this book lacks little regarding sources and methodology. The volume simultaneously enhances our understanding of several related histories — of youth, women, class, and the depression. It is a worthy *substantive* beginning to the history of students in higher education.

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Burtch, B. (1992). *The sociology of law: Critical approaches to social control.* Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 223 pp., $24.95 (softcover).

In this book Burtch has created a unique publication which is appropriately delimited in scope and, as the subtitle "Critical Approaches to Social Control" suggests, deals in a critical way with important issues with regard to the sociology of law. The book is a recent and welcome addition to the slowly growing library related to the sociology of law-related publications in Canada.

A quick glance at the table of contents of the book will reveal much diversity in the book's 10 chapters. However, this is not a problem since there are unifying themes which tie the different sections together. For instance, there is