

tegrated with surveys of the position of Victorian women generally, and as a result the essay fails to explain why England — unlike the United States — failed to produce a powerful female temperance movement.

Overall, however, this is a most successful anthology and a welcome addition to the shelves of those interested in women's history, religious history, or Victoriana generally.

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Robert A. J. McDonald and Jean Barman, (eds.) — *Vancouver Past: Essays in Social History*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986. Pp. 327. (Also issued as BC Studies, no. 69-70.)

Vancouver Past is a centennial volume of essays by historians with a variety of vocations and academic specialties. They deal with a number of topics central to social history: class structure, the position of women and ethnic minorities, the quality of everyday life; also with topics shared with other historical domains: economic cycles, voting behaviour, and political activism. The volume includes a bibliographic essay by Patricia Roy, which together with the footnotes of the other essays provides an up-to-date guide to the secondary historical literature on Vancouver. The individual essays are for the most part carefully argued and well written. The breadth of perspective they show naturally varies with the professional experience of their authors, but many make good use of relevant work done for other localities and include comparisons of Vancouver with other North American or European cities. Even those essays which focus exclusively on Vancouver data avoid parochialism by using it to test the validity of general hypotheses.

In their own essays, both editors examine the implications of class in Vancouver and reach conclusions which, while not denying social conflict, emphasize the presence of consensus. For the period 1886-1914, McDonald discusses with great clarity the city's economic structure, work force, strike record, and working-class politics and the interrelations among these. He notes how Vancouver differed from its own non-urban hinterland and compares it with other Canadian cities. He concludes that the city's economy created a far-from-radical working class, similar to that of other Canadian cities, and suggests that this should serve to remind labour historians that it is imprudent to base generalizations about British Columbia solely on the experience of its mining and smelting towns. Barman deals with the interwar years and focuses more exclusively on Vancouver, but the conclusion of her essay examining the socio-economic character of its neighborhoods in connection with voting behaviour also encourages revision. While she confirms the fundamental geographical division into a working-class East Side and an upper-and middle-class West Side and indicates that the two sections often voted differently, she points out that virtual city-wide consensus was also frequent — a conclusion which reinforces McDonald's picture of earlier commitment by both working and upper classes to the capitalist system.

The essays by Irene Howard, Jill Wade, and Paul Yee reinforce the theme of social consensus. Howard tells the familiar story of political agitation for fair treatment of unemployed single men in Vancouver during the latter years of the Great Depression but with a significant difference: in her account, women emerge as aggressive, politically savvy instigators of action. Although her primary focus is the left-oriented Mothers' Council, overlapping membership and the Council's cooperation with other women's groups lead to a useful picture of a women's network in action. There was strikingly close cooperation across social and ideological lines, as when women from such disparate groups as the W.C.T.U. and the Women's Labour League organized demonstrations and fed the sit-down strikers together. Wade's case study in the connection between political protest and reform describes the forms of pressure for more and better housing in Vancouver which were placed on all

three levels of government between 1944 and 1946 by groups ranging from veterans to left-wing political parties. She demonstrates that, despite antipathies and differing agendas for reform, the several groups together rallied sufficient public support to achieve significant short-term relief. Yee provides an important corrective to the usual view that racism in turn-of-the-century British Columbia doomed all Chinese people there to economic marginality. He describes the pre-1916 economic empire of the Vancouver-based Sam Kee Company, portraying the market place as an arena where economic self-interest was stronger than racial antipathy, and where white society could allow Chinese businessmen to achieve considerable power and wealth.

Neil Sutherland, in an essay sure to provoke nostalgia for anyone over forty years of age, reconstructs the Vancouver elementary-school experience from the recollections of people who attended school there between the end of World War I and 1960. He finds that, although the provincial curriculum was revised according to the tenets of progressive education in the 1930s, children's classroom experience continued to be shaped by traditional educational theory with its emphasis on drill, memorization, and strict discipline. This common educational experience, which Sutherland describes as characteristic of schooling across Canada and as supported by parents regardless of socio-economic status, helps explain the extent of consensus noted by other contributors.

In contrast, the essays by James Huzel and by Veronica Strong-Boag and Kathryn McPherson are more concerned with conflict than with consensus. Like McDonald's essay, they both make a point of comparing Vancouver with other cities. Huzel's essay contributes to an ongoing debate among historians and criminologists about the effect of economic conditions on crime. On the basis of a computerized analysis of Vancouver crime statistics, he concludes — with caution appropriate for inferring actual from reported crime — that although crime in general decreased there in the 1930s, crimes against property (a crucial category for correlating crime and economic fluctuations) increased. He also finds that rates of crime against property are strongly correlated with downswings in the economy within the Depression years. Strong-Boag and McPherson focus on the conflict between the interests of pregnant women and physicians in Vancouver during the interwar years and find that urban transience and promotional campaigns by health authorities weakened traditional provisions for childbirth at home and encouraged its removal to hospitals, where physicians' interests fostered unnecessary medical intervention. The authors conclude, in harmony with studies of Ontario during the same period, that there is no necessary connection between the drop in Vancouver's maternal mortality rate from a comparatively high level and the simultaneous increase in the rate of hospitalization for childbirth there.

The only thoroughly disappointing essay is Deryck Holdsworth's on the nature of Vancouver's early housing, which sadly lacks clarity in both conception and execution. The period covered is nowhere specified; data all seem to refer to 1929 and before, but the concluding sentence implies as setting "the city's first half-century of growth" (therefore to 1936; p. 32). The term "Vancouver" frequently (but not consistently) seems to encompass the municipalities of Point Grey and South Vancouver, both proudly distinct up to 1929. A map appearing to show population distribution is included, but without indication of its sources, of the date to which it refers, or of the meaning of the symbols used. More serious is the lack of a clear thesis. For example, Holdsworth describes the Vancouver urban landscape as "unique ... by the standards of the day in the British Isles and eastern North America" (p. 12), but also observes that Vancouver may have been "merely replicating what Cleveland's Shaker Heights, Philadelphia's Main Line or developments in other eastern cities had already achieved" (p. 28). There is a similar lack of thoughtfulness at the rhetorical level: "Workers' cottages nestled among the castles, just as castles occasionally protruded above the cottages" (p. 16). The editors should have insisted on a further draft.

A valuable sampler of current research, *Vancouver Past* also affords a broad, scholarly introduction to the city's history in a single volume, thus doubling the number of books that do so (the other being Roy's *Vancouver: An Illustrated History*). It usefully suggests and to some extent outlines needed further research for a city and region which has been neglected in comparison with more easterly parts of Canada. Finally, like the recent Toronto sesquicentennial volume *Forging a Consensus* (Victor L. Russell, ed., 1984), it clearly reflects a new generation's emphasis on the theme

of consensus in its rewriting of urban history. However much it may be a reflection of current styles and political climate, this reaction to the emphasis on conflict which is particularly visible in earlier studies of Montreal and Winnipeg has the lasting merit of suggesting that Canadian cities may come in both conflict-dominated and consensus-dominated models.

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A.K. McDougall — *John F. Robarts: His Life and Government*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986. Pp. xiii. 320.

Professor McDougall's biography of John Robarts, Premier of Ontario from 1961 to 1971, is a volume in the Ontario Historical Studies Series, which is publishing biographies of all the premiers of the province. The trustees of the series indicate at the beginning that "we are deeply indebted to Professor Michael Bliss for his assistance in giving this volume its final form" (x), and the author himself in his preface explains that "the entire text was recast by Michael Bliss", giving it "a more historical and biographical orientation than was envisaged at the outset" (xii). These somewhat mysterious signals about authorship are not the only oddities about the book.

Robarts was a successful leader in a singularly successful Conservative dynasty (1943-1985). During the years of his premiership, Ontario was the economically expansive heartland of Canada and the stable anchor of federalism amid the storms of the Quiet Revolution and separatism issuing from Quebec. One might expect a biography of Robarts to be much like his province and his party: solid, grey, affluent, businesslike, and more than a little dull. This book is at times all of these things, yet there are darker, disquieting notes under the blandly conservative surface.

McDougall touches on all the expected bases. We see the younger Robarts skillfully wending his way into the Ontario legislature through the local Tory business network in his native London, and into the leadership of the party through a wider network of cronies and party notables. All the major areas of public policy of his premiership are examined, although with varying degrees of objectivity. The battles with Ottawa over fiscal federalism are viewed entirely from the official provincial perspective; the author does not explore the deeper layers of economic interest which underlay Ontario's public stance. On the other hand, Conservative interventions in the operations of finance capital ("Tending the Golden Goose", as the author has it in his chapter title) offer a textbook illustration of why capitalism requires a relatively autonomous state to manage the inherent contradictions of the unchecked market.

The Robarts era was one of transition, as McDougall makes clear. The old Ontario which survived into the early 1960s was not only conservative in the social, economic, political and cultural senses, it was also smaller and more local, more provincial, than the bureaucratized, corporate and cosmopolitan Ontario which was to emerge by the 1970s. Robarts arose out of the small-town old-boy network but he found himself governing a province increasingly intractable to the old style of politics and administration. During the 1960s the Ontario government grew into a major bureaucratic actor on the Canadian stage, and its internal reorganizations, its interventions and its attempts at planning faced Robarts with unsettling new perspectives and problems. Rationalization of local government, school boards and property taxation roused strong community opposition, yet they were unavoidable aspects of regional development policy. Much attention had to be paid to controlling the administrative state. When bureaucrats had to be appointed to control bureaucrats, Robarts was getting beyond his depth. "Robarts himself was increasingly concerned that organizational reform in pursuit of efficiency hampered his ability to maintain personal contact with the affairs of government" (p. 231).