Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) in 1984 would be a major contribution to Canadian historiography. This book does not make much progress toward that goal.

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Nathan Johnstone’s The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England begins with the fear expressed by early modern Protestants that the devil would somehow manage to convince mankind that he did not exist, and it proceeds from this dizzying paradox to explore Protestant demonology’s focus on the temptations of the imagination — to unbelief, hypocrisy, rebellion, and despair.

Johnstone, thinking almost “New Historically,” sums up these temptations as subversive, both of the Christian individual and the godly nation. This is no easy simplification, however, and indeed one of the book’s great strengths is its ability to address both the headline trends of culture and history and the minute and sometimes conflicting detail that is often glossed over in less able critical writing. This history book is at home with both the factual minutiae of the past and the broader intellectual context of the scholarship of Renaissance cultural history, including that of Stephen Greenblatt, Catherine Belsey, Lyndal Roper, Diane Purkiss, and the most inventive recent historians of the period such as Peter Lake. Offering a broad but detailed history of the Reformation and its debates about the devil, Johnstone thus describes how the discourse of temptation of the body politic evolved with, and was part of, the discourse of demonic threat to the human body, surveying the historiography of the devil and theodicy, languages of temptation and narratives of crime, and the politics of representing demonized opponents in a sharply divided society.

It is refreshing to find that such a good and solid historian is not afraid to engage with literature, the linguistic turn, and interdisciplinary thinking in general. The book’s obvious connections with the work of Stuart Clark, such as Thinking with Demons (Oxford, 1997) and “Protestant Demonology” (in Ankarloo and Henningsen, eds., Early Modern European Witchcraft [Oxford, 1990]), are thus those of affinity but judicious questioning. Johnstone suggests that a focus in recent scholarship on witchcraft can be misleading in thinking about the devil, over-emphasizing the significance of certain kinds of demonology at the expense of demonism. Demonism, argues Johnstone, is more nebulous than the academic demonology of witchcraft and is focused more evidently upon temptation. Freeing Satan from his witches gives a truer picture of his omnipresence in early modern culture, allowing a range of subtle readings to emerge. While other key contexts and precursors for The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England are clearly the works of historians of witchcraft such as Jim
Sharpe and Keith Thomas and works on demonic possession such as Michael Macdonald’s _Witchcraft and Hysteria in Elizabethan London_ (London, 1991) and D. P. Walker’s _Unclean Spirits_ (London, 1981), this book sets out to do something sharply different.

Perhaps its nearest neighbours are Jeffrey Burton Russell’s books on the devil as Satan, Lucifer, and Mephistopheles and Darren Oldridge’s _The Devil in Early Modern England_ (Stroud, 2000). Johnstone engages most directly with Oldridge’s analysis, which he argues is an over-simplification of early modern demonism. The variety of early modern people’s stories about their experiences with the devil need to be freed, he suggests, from a functionalist paradigm — one that either connects the devil back to witchcraft or discusses his influence solely in terms of the guilt and angst of individual Christians, especially puritans. Incisively, Johnstone points out the dangers of regarding the devil as merely a mechanism for coping with the strains of the Protestant conscience. To avoid this trap, Johnstone is keen to stress the individuality of his subjects, most often the writers of spiritual autobiographies and godly lives, diaries, and commonplace books.

The book’s conclusions are indeed interesting, thoughtful, and subtly nuanced. Johnstone concludes that the devil was not a relic of medievalism in an otherwise early modern world, but nor was the complex of beliefs surrounding him a kind of proto-rationalism. Demonism was driven by a sense of the reality of the devil as a presence in individual lives, which was more important to those experiencing it than any abstract theory of demonology. Interestingly, Protestants who felt themselves challenged by Satan did not take refuge in theodicy and metaphysical speculation, but rather in earthly concerns about specific temptations as experienced through the senses and the mind. Protestantism strove to make temptation manageable, especially by offering a convincing reading of the ubiquity of the devil in apparently commonplace events and practices. Johnstone challenges the simple reading of the devil as subversion incarnate in witches or devil-worshippers, arguing that it was not a sense of _difference_ from those in the devil’s thrall, but a sense of similarity with them, that preoccupied Protestant minds. The agency of Satan was not simply mediated through the idea of the other, but could be present, though hidden, even in oneself and in one’s most ordinary thoughts and actions — an important, though subtle, refinement of debates about self-fashioning, interiority, and subjectivity. The relevance of this insight to discussions of political controversy is also important — subversion could come from within, without the need for binary oppositions between Protestant and Catholic, Royalist and Parliamentarian. This raises old, but also new, questions about the decline of belief in the devil and its lack of inevitability. The book does not answer these, but its sound and full discussion of the devil in early modern England should provoke careful reflection.

Johnstone’s book is impeccably researched, ranging in its scope from parliamentary debates, through puritan demonology, to “popular” pamphlets, plays, and political tracts from the Elizabethan period to the aftermath of the Civil War. Helpfully, the copious references are expressed as footnotes rather than endnotes, making the dense scholarship transparent and easily readable. This is a valuable

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contribution to early modern history and should be read by all those concerned with the culture of the period.

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When Henry G. Barnby published The Prisoners of Algiers in 1966, he referred to the first American-Algerian conflict of 1785–1797 as a “forgotten war.” There is today a striking regain of interest for the drawn-out conflict (1776–1815) commonly known as the Barbary Wars, between the young American republic and the Ottoman regencies of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli. Prompted by the emergence of political Islam in Middle Eastern and international politics and by the terrorist attacks of 9/11 particularly, a spate of new books about the old conflict has appeared recently, many of them showing a presentist inclination to draw links between America’s first contact with the Islamic world two centuries ago and her “War on Terror” today. Frederick C. Leiner’s book, which focuses on the concluding phase of the Barbary Wars, is one example of this literature.

As in 1776, Britain emboldened Algiers to attack American ships again during the War of 1812, resulting in the capture of the brig Edwin with a crew of eleven. President Madison instructed Consul Mordecai Noah to redeem the captives, but, since the Dey of Algiers proved inflexible about the ransom, Madison declared war and dispatched a naval squadron to the Mediterranean under the command of Stephen Decatur, hero of the US-Tripolitan War of 1801–1805. A splendid little war it was for the United States. The showdown with Algiers, the strongest Barbary power, was practically a no-show, at best a military promenade. The Algiers navy was, in the words of one American sailor, “a mere burlesque” (p. 113). Quickly smothered by the American squadron, Algiers’s unique battleship Meshuda surrendered in 25 minutes. The high-sounding Barbary War of 1815 claimed only one American loss to enemy fire, while a couple more sailors died from the bursting of their cannon; in his log, Decatur “spent more ink on the bursting of the cannon than he did on the battle itself” (p. 101). Decatur inaugurated “American gunboat diplomacy” (p. 129) by dictating the terms of peace with Algiers and proceeding (in what Leiner calls “unfinished business”) to wrest similar treaties with Tunis and Tripoli, although no state of war existed between the latter regencies and the United States.

Leiner builds a vivid narrative of those events, complete with the classic Barbary literature opening that dramatizes a chase and capture on the high seas. No account of the actual capture of the Edwin exists, but Leiner imagines it on the basis of analogy with similar events. Leiner then presents “the four Barbary regencies . . . nominally subject to the rule of the Ottoman sultan at