

agree, however, that with the availability today of gene testing, prenatal screening, selective abortion, and surrogacy an understanding of eugenics is more necessary than ever.

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BÉLANGER, Damien-Claude – *Prejudice and Pride: Canadian Intellectuals Confront the United States, 1891-1945*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011. Pp. 322.

George Parkin Grant, author of *Lament for a Nation* (1965), once observed that “to think of the U.S. is to think of ourselves – almost” (p. 14). Damien-Claude Bélanger, a historian at the University of Ottawa, largely agrees with that insight. In his review of the debate among Canadian intellectuals over the meaning and significance of thought, life, and culture in the United States, Bélanger asserts that the relationship between the United States and Canada is “existential” for Canadians: “it is bound up with issues related to Canadian identity and distinctiveness and to Canada’s place in the world” (p. 217). Other scholars, like J. A. Granatstein (1996) have examined Canadian attitudes toward the United States, emphasizing its strong anti-American tone. Scholars like Granatstein saw anti-Americanism both as an integral part of Canadian nationalism and as a ploy by English-speaking Canadian elites to uphold their political and cultural dominance. Whereas Bélanger accepts the prevailing historiography on anti-Americanism in Canadian thought, he also believes that scholars have taken a restricted approach to the issue. In this comprehensive study, he examines the intellectual discourse of both English and French Canadian thinkers. Bélanger does not limit himself to analyzing the thought of nationalists and non-nationalists. Rather he explores debate across the Canadian political spectrum—left, right, and center. Most important, he argues that Canadian analyses of U.S. life and U.S. foreign and commercial policy revealed more than just attitudes about Canadian nationalism. When they thought and wrote about the United States, Canadian intellectuals were expressing their hopes and fears about change, progress, and “modernity.”

In defending his thesis, Bélanger studied a corpus of over 500 texts, both fiction and non-fiction. In a useful appendix, he lists the works in chronological order. The author chose to start his analysis in 1891, because he believed the federal election of that year revolved around anti-Americanism. In a pattern that would be often repeated, Conservatives used anti-American rhetoric to attack their Liberal opponents. In 1891, also, Godwin Smith published his seminal *Canada and the Canadian Question*, challenging the very being of the nation. The military and diplomatic alliances that developed between the United States and Canada during the world wars inevitably led Canadian intellectuals to reassess their attitudes toward their southern neighbor. Bélanger stops in 1945, because he reasons that in the postwar period increasingly self-confident Canadian intellectuals no longer saw the imperial United States as a modern, progressive nation. In any case, Canada had become urban, industrial, and materialistic, and, through immigration, it had developed a growing, multi-cultural population. The similarities between Canadian and U.S. life and culture easily outstripped their differences.

For Canadians, the United States epitomized the modern ethos, which in Bélanger's terms, signified democracy, equality, urbanity, mass culture, industrialism, and an unswerving faith in science, technology, and progress. For thinkers on the left—liberals, socialists, and other Marxists—the United States represented an appropriate model. Bélanger dubs such thinkers as “continentalists,” or people who believed that nation-building would involve learning from the American experiment. Canadian leftists largely abandoned in the early twentieth century aspirations for annexation, as Canada recovered from the political and economic malaise of the late nineteenth century. Drawing on the Enlightenment faith, continentalists predicted the triumph of humanity and reason and the inevitable march of progress. On a practical level, continentalists favored the ratification of the Reciprocity Treaty of 1911, predicting that closer commercial ties with the United States would hasten the transformation of Canada's stodgy, privileged, and hidebound society.

“Traditionalism” was at the core of the conservative critique of U.S. society. As they looked south, Canadian conservatives saw a morally degenerate society ripe for collapse. The secularism and materialism that characterized U.S. society guaranteed the breakdown of the family, the loss of rural values, racial and ethnic strife, and class conflict. In the view of English-speaking Canadians, closer commercial association with the United States would undermine historic ties with Great Britain and the concomitant order and stability that flowed from the imperial relationship. Conservatives posited the “Laurentian thesis,” suggesting that the unity and coherence of Canada was based on the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes system and the provision of economic staples to the European market. But if Canada relied solely on trading fur, timber, wheat, and livestock for its economic solvency and spurned scientific and technological development, the nation would remain in a dependent, semi-colonial status. From the perspective of continentalists, economic dependency would stifle change and bolster elite rule.

Conservative French Canadian intellectuals worried less about political and economic issues and more about the social and cultural threat posed by the United States. Radio broadcasts and U.S. movies presented lifestyles that allegedly encouraged violence and sensuality. Conservatives, including the French Catholic clergy, judged mass culture as an “American poison” that would, among other things, change traditional conceptions of masculinity and femininity. French Canadian intellectuals also lamented the population drain to the United States. Between 1890 and 1930, 1.5 million Canadians migrated to the United States, with one-third of the emigrants being French Canadians. Intellectual leaders in Quebec viewed emigration to the United States as a natural disaster. French Canadians also presumably faced a cultural and moral death sentence, as they struggled to preserve their faith and culture in the licentious, secular United States.

As a scholar who focuses on U.S. relations with Latin America, I had not studied the intense debate among Canadian intellectuals about the nature and character of U.S. society. I am now in the author's intellectual debt. Professor Bélanger has written an informative, remarkably organized study that teaches everyone about both Canada and the United States.

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