

“was never able to comprehend the motives of politicians or their need to be evasive and tread delicately when confronting controversial issues that had political ramifications” (p. 319).

While examining Taché within a broad historical context, Huel identifies characteristics that are extremely difficult to historicize. He notes, for instance, that Taché displayed a natural gift for managing material affairs. The Archbishop resolved complex logistical problems associated with delivering supplies to far-flung missions or acquiring vast tracts of land for settlement. Unfortunately, Taché had no knack for human resources. He was incapable of delegating authority and was excessively critical of his clergy. His domineering style generated tension within the Catholic community and exacerbated difficulties with the Oblate General Administration. Taché was not a born leader, but rather “a manager who used power to bargain with, threaten or coerce subordinates” (p. 328).

Despite the sophistication of his analysis and the extensiveness of his research, Huel glosses over certain topics in the interests of maintaining clarity and focus. It is regrettable that he devotes little attention to relations between the Archbishop and non-francophone Catholics. For instance, Indian missions fade into the background of Huel’s account after 1859, and Taché’s role in the development of industrial schools receives only a cursory mention. Moreover, Huel does not acknowledge Irish discontent with the French-dominated Church until the second-last page. This last-minute reference to the Irish contains an editorial error: the first Bishop of Calgary was John Thomas McNally, not James Thomas McNally as indicated on page 342. Such oversights are surprising considering that Huel has published seminal works on ethno-linguistic relations in the western Church — notably *Proclaiming the Gospel to the Indians and the Métis* (1996) and “The Irish French Conflict in Catholic Episcopal Nominations” (1975).

Nonetheless, *Archbishop A.-A. Taché of St. Boniface* is an outstanding study combining “new directions” in social history with three decades of research on the western Church. Huel has made a worthy contribution both to Prairie historiography and to the rehabilitation of scholarly biography.

Timothy Foran  
University of Ottawa

KESHEN, Jeffrey A. — *Saints, Sinners and Soldiers: Canada’s Second World War*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004. Pp. x, 389.

As Jeff Keshen tells us in the introduction to his *Saints, Sinners and Soldiers*, the Second World War has had a good press in Canada. Public and academic histories have positioned it as a golden period in Canada’s past during which the nation and its citizens accepted sacrifices for an indisputably humanitarian goal. His book explores the validity of this national myth. Was it, indeed, “a good war” (p. 11)? Individual morality, altruism, and generosity are the key signposts by which Keshen judges the virtue of Canada’s war.

This book is an exceptional synthesis of a wide range of scholarship, focusing on material and moral tensions during wartime Canada. It will be invaluable for teachers and students who want to get a feel for the period and its scholarship. It considers the family, gender and generational roles, associational and military life, and the economy from the perspectives of labour and capital. The text is consistently clear and a pleasure to read. While secondary sources form the basis of the synthesis, Keshen has found his own voice throughout. I suspect that his primary research is what allowed him independently to reconsider issues posed by the secondary literature. Notably, he reviewed wartime newspapers and magazines, read memoirs and fiction, generated oral histories, and consulted taped interviews in several archives. One theme that runs throughout the book is the consistently distinct perspective that francophone Quebec adopted towards the social and political pressures that the conflict engendered. In light of that, it is disappointing that there are almost no French-language sources listed in the footnotes. Also, while he identifies the subjects of his interviews as representative of all of Canada's regions, the voice that comes through sounds anglophone, white, heterosexual, and middle-class.

The country's economy was catapulted out of the Depression and moved from resource extraction towards the manufacture of war materiel; Canadians benefited in the form of increased employment and material goods. Mobilization for war disrupted social structures such as the family; couples entered marriages hastily and the number of divorces increased. Individuals in and out of marriage were more promiscuous, and rates of illegitimacy, prostitution, and venereal disease increased. Soldiers undid their disciplined training when on leave with new levels of profanity, drunkenness, gambling, and aggressive behaviour. Meanwhile, women took on unprecedented roles in both civilian and military spheres, ultimately altering the gendered order of Canadian society. The effect of the war on children and youth concerned judicial, religious, and medical authorities. Finally, Keshen considers the effect of the war on servicemen in all branches of the military and the governmental legislation overseeing their re-establishment on demobilization. In each section, he presents individual responses to national, military necessity, usually ranging from altruistic and patriotic to selfish and self-interested. The state is always present with a range of tactics designed to coerce those who are not otherwise inclined to sacrifice for the war effort and to ensure that the mistakes of the Great War are not repeated.

The strongest and most historiographically significant sections of the book deal with the effect of the war on women and children. Keshen effectively challenges the interpretation embodied in the title of Ruth Roach Pierson's 1986 study of Canadian womanhood, "*They're Still Women After All*". While the propaganda generated by the government and media indeed attempted to minimize the challenges to the gendered order posed by the incursion of women into previously male-dominated careers and spheres, many individual women did not accept the proposition that the end of the war would signal a return to the status quo *ante bellum*. In reviewing the wartime propaganda, Keshen effectively shows that the images of determined and solid-looking women performing men's work belied the message that gender roles were essential and naturally complementary. His female interviewees assert that wartime experiences transformed their sense of their entitlements and capabilities as

women. He also offers compelling analysis to account for the apparent increase in juvenile delinquency that caused much anxiety during the war years. Since the segment of the population most prone towards criminal activity — young men — was largely absent from Canada, civilian police forces were more likely to target youths than they had before the war.

Keshen's thoughtful insights help enliven his study and caution historians against relying too heavily on any one source. The propagandist use of certain groups could mask the reality of their experiences. For instance, the British children who were evacuated to Canada during the blitz "emerged as inspiring symbols of the United Kingdom's resolve to resist the Nazis and Canada's determination to stand by the mother country to an extent that resulted in an almost exclusive focus on heartwarming and successful experiences, with virtually no attention paid of significant failings in the program and much suffering" (p. 226). Such insights are a direct result of Keshen's approach that balances personal accounts with contemporary media portrayals and government propaganda. Fortunately, Keshen does not allow the numerous wartime surveys, facts, and figures that he cites to overwhelm the voices of individuals.

By including soldiers and civilians in the same social history, Keshen moves towards a more comprehensive analysis of the Second World War in Canadian history. The war is present in this book, but male and female service members are part of the continuum of Canadian society, rather than relegated to a separate "military history".

In his conclusion, Keshen argues reservedly that the conflict left "a legacy of progressive, bold, and often ground-breaking initiatives that provided millions with the means to achieve greater personal growth, social mobility, financial security — and even, it might be said, good reason to speak of a 'good war' " (p. 286). *Saints, Sinners and Soldiers* thus answers its original question from a liberal perspective. However, the evidence he presents that the war was responsible for raising the consciousness of women sits uneasily with the socially conservative nature of the Veteran's Charter and the family allowance. Likewise, orders-in-council that ultimately consolidated capital's control of labour are not worked out in his analysis. Nevertheless, it is a testament to the breadth of his research that there is ample material in the text to support alternative judgements on the legacy of Canada's Second World War.

Paul Jackson  
McGill University

KOWALSKY, Daniel — *La Unión Soviética y la Guerra Civil Española. Una revisión crítica*. Barcelona: Crítica, 2003. Pp. 504.

Courage, good intentions, and reason win far more easily and frequently in fiction than in reality, and this is particularly true for Europe in the 1930s and early 1940s. Most sensible students of the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) have always felt frustrated by the incapacity of the Republican army to win decisive victories. History