time, age, gender, and occupation, both volumes not only provide the reader with an interesting read, but are also in themselves an invaluable source for future research.

E. J. Errington
Royal Military College of Canada

David G. Burley — *A Particular Condition in Life: Self-Employment and Social Mobility in Mid-Victorian Brantford, Ontario*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994. Pp. xii, 309.

This is a study of the bourgeoisie (the word is used twice on the dust jacket, though cautiously in the text) or the entrepreneurial class in Brantford from 1830 to 1881. Many of the studies from which it takes its origin concentrate so strongly and so sympathetically (it appears) on the formation of the working class that they do not readily yield the proper intellectual structures to deal with the working class's economic superiors. The problem is: what criteria ''best describe those who are left over in society once the working class has been extracted''? (p. 8). The code-word self-employment, as used in David G. Burley's study, defines an essentially coherent group, though with some uncomfortably ragged edges, as it includes a number of day labourers who worked for themselves while excluding lawyers.

Within these limits Burley follows the fortunes of some 1,100 individuals using sources such as the census, the R. G. Dun & Co. records, assessment rolls, wills, and Brantford's rich heritage of nineteenth-century local history, including the five-volume biographical dictionary *The Canadian Album* (Brantford, 1891–1896). While Brantford's population grew from a few hundred over the half century of study to more than 10,500, and its economic base changed from servicing the local farm community to metal fabricating, flour milling, and the manufacture of carriages and farm machinery, the self-employed increased markedly in relative numbers but declined as a percentage of the whole population. ''If Brantford, Ontario, was in any way representative of broader social and economic developments, then in the 1860s and 1870s business became a more restricted and elitist activity, and class relations and class structure became more clearly defined'' (p. 6). Success in business was becoming more difficult as improvements to transportation destroyed the isolation that had once protected small, locally oriented businesses; success, even in small-town Brantford, was becoming more and more a matter of ''national'' success. Increasingly, too, the potential risers found their way blocked by an entrenched older generation who, if we may judge by their representatives, attributed their own success to character while ignoring the advantages they had gained from setting deep roots in the community before their competitors arrived.

The quantitative method as used in these pages is essentially welcoming and friendly, although a few among the many graphs throw out spirited challenges to the mathematically ill-prepared. So far as one can glimpse the self-employed as people, they seem predominantly a pinched and joyless lot — or is this solely

because we see them so exclusively through statistics and observations on their class affiliations? Most certainly the point is made repeatedly that their security and success were always precarious — ruin, shame before neighbours and family, and an impoverished old age stood as spectres before everyone. Bankrupts and other failures tended to slink out of town, to continue their unfortunate lives in the congenial and sheltering company of strangers. (What about the later small-town tendency simply to sell out a business respectably and without fuss when it approached non-viability?) The more human face that literary sources could put on the self-employed class is missing, but these probably do not exist in the necessary quantities. There were few women in business, and those tended to enter it through some accident such as widowhood or separation and evidently survived (when they did survive) at a humble level, occasionally tolerated out of charity as intruders. Burley attempts with limited success to explain the outlook of his businessmen by connecting it with the growing scholarly literature on the nineteenth-century ideal of manliness. All this achieves is the discovery that they held rather commonplace views (familiar enough today) about the relationship of masculinity and independence. Once again we simply seem not to know enough about the private lives of these people to appreciate what (if anything much) they really meant by the easy rhetoric about ''manliness''.

A Particular Condition in Life draws principally the conclusions already noted here and indeed offers no real surprises among its findings, but its author tirelessly connects and compares them point by point with those of other scholars, including Michael Katz and David P. Gagan, his principal influences, but not slighting H. C. Pentland, E. P. Thompson, Eric Hobsbawm, and many others. This nervous recitation of names is one of the features showing that the study has failed to make the transition from thesis to book. Probably it would have been a good idea to have revised the material further before attempting publication. In any case, the book will be valued by all who are interested in the history of Ontario industry or the formation of classes in Canada and elsewhere — and of course by the historians of Brantford.

Who will identify least with *A Particular Condition in Life*? Most certainly those who remain sceptical of the quantitative method. There is perhaps, after all, no good reason to believe (as some people do) that quantitative history puts a greater strain on our credulity than other forms of history. (How much opportunity do we have, for example, to recheck the evidence in the kinds of archival holdings documentary researchers such as diplomatic historians use?) There is reason to note that such histories rarely rise above the arid transmission of data. We might also ask how many more volumes of this sort (each of them full of statistics and long chains of references to other people's research findings) we would need before we were prepared to draw well-founded conclusions about the rise of the Ontario entrepreneurial class. The book must also frustrate historians of Ontario agriculture, who will wonder about the relationship of Brantford to the farming regions around it. Can the Brantford business community be treated effectively in isolation (apart from a few brief references) from an economic interest as important as agriculture in the society of its time? Business people of today, and a wide range of Ontarians, will

see the book's interpretations of class as essentially foreign to the way most people (and above all most North Americans — there is a strong transatlantic flavour in many of these speculations) outside the lecture room actually think about economic and social relationships. Traditionalists who value the human element in history, including some who undervalue quantitative history, will be inclined to suggest that the energy and knowledge put into this volume would have been better applied to a good biographical dictionary of some of these 1,100 Brantford entrepreneurs with similar historical sketches of the enterprises to which they belonged. To this might have been added a short but valuable introduction summarizing the conclusions reached in the present quantitative study.

Royce MacGillivray
University of Waterloo

Dianne Dodd and Deborah Gorham, eds. — *Caring and Curing: Historical Perspectives on Women and Healing in Canada*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1994. Pp. xi, 218.

Caring and Curing is an ambitious attempt to redress the imbalance in current work in the history of medicine and healing. All of the authors in this collection are intent on demonstrating that, in contrast to the Whig interpretation generally favoured by those who have dominated the medical history field in the past, the truly interesting history of health care resides in uncovering the ambiguities and differences between theoretical constructs and historical evidence. The result is a more complex, sophisticated, and challenging interpretation of the role of specific women and women's groups in the history of care and curing. The editors are to be commended for ensuring that each author commented on other articles in the collection which relate to the same topic. This is a feature rarely found in essay collections, but surprisingly the generally informative introduction does not tell the reader to whom this work is directed. Is the audience intended to be students in women's studies programmes? Health science students? History or sociology students? Contemporary women's health collectives? Some clarification of this issue would have been useful since the needs and expectations of these groups differ.

The central theme is an analysis of the process of professionalization of medicine, midwifery, and nursing from the 1880s to the present. The seven articles are grouped into these three categories and generally show how women of all social classes mediated between their roles and the male medical mindset that was attempting to foist its prescriptive values on their activities. This valiant attempt to combine women's perceived social roles as caregivers in their own homes and society with the male definition of professionalization as a science-dominated and credentialed occupation informs the various articles. Their chronological range demonstrates how certain values endure and others are modified before they are incorporated into the activities of individual women practitioners and the women's groups that support them.