comprehensive analysis undoubtedly stands as a benchmark and is now the first place to look to take Canadian demography's measure of this country.

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Sarah E. Newton — *Learning to Behave: A Guide to American Conduct Books Before 1900*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994. Pp. xiv, 216.

The propensity to tell other people how to live their lives may well be an inescapable human characteristic. Sarah E. Newton's careful study of conduct books circulating in the United States prior to 1900 demonstrates that generations of ministers, doctors, teachers, parents, and other interested onlookers have offered their advice and opinions in print as to what makes a well-rounded individual. Although authors of conduct manuals often gave the impression that their advice was timeless and universal, Newton's research in scores of archives and libraries reveals that in fact prescriptions for behaviour were deeply culture-bound. In this literature of character-formation and self-improvement, Americans from the seventeenth century onwards articulated prevailing expectations for the behaviour of children and of men and women. For this reason, they provide a window on the cultural milieu of each stage in the development of American society.

*Learning to Behave* consists of four thoughtful essays and an extensive, annotated bibliography of almost 600 conduct guides. Newton begins with a descriptive analysis of conduct literature as a genre. Although some readers will find her definition of the category rather narrow, Newton's careful exposition sheds light not just on her own field of interest, but also on the whole range of prescriptive literature. Works such as *How to Be a Man* (1851) and *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters* (1779) aimed to foster the internalization of positive behaviours in regard to key issues in childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood, behaviours likely to result in a successful life. These were almost invariably gendered except where very young children were addressed and were delivered in the voice of an interested and experienced friend or relative. The conduct book was not simply a guide to etiquette, but went beyond that to ''codify society's idealized expectations with regard to proper behavior in life, as opposed to behavior in society'' (p. 4).

In discussing prescriptive literature for children, Newton reminds us that virtually all children's literature during this period was didactic to some extent. Conduct guides for children often situated themselves in what modern educators would call ''teachable moments''. Thus the deathbed of a beloved parent or of a particularly saintly child became an opportunity to expound on right living and Christian morals. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries biographies of children functioned as models of virtue or cautionary tales in guides oriented more to the next world than to this. By the nineteenth century evangelicalism and the Enlightenment had combined to moderate ideas of infant depravity and by extension childrearing practices. In addition, advice on good behaviour was increasingly framed in secular terms:

secular, that is, in that the internalization of the desired behaviours was less likely to be fostered in explicitly religious language and also in the sense that good behaviour was coming to be seen as compatible with successful endeavour in this world, not just the next.

Newton's research reveals that, apart from admonitions directed to very young children, conduct literature was always gendered. Character formation for young men must necessarily differ from that for young women; thus conduct books constituted important tools for the social construction of gender. In these, biography played a particularly important role in providing exemplars for boys, none more so than that of Benjamin Franklin. In this literature, Franklin's career epitomized the self-discipline, thrift, and industriousness with which young American men were to make themselves into model citizens. In the rapidly changing world of the nineteenth century, Newton points out that Franklin functioned as ''a reassuring and useful symbol of both stability and change — or perhaps better, stability *in* change'' (p. 46). Newton shows how conduct literature attempted to fuse competing prescriptions for manly behaviour to create an ideal individual, one both Godly and yet fitted to function in the market economy. In the work of commentators from Rev. Henry Ward Beecher to temperance advocate T. S. Arthur, tales of young men whose idle habits set them inexorably on the road to ruin underscored some of the tensions in nineteenth-century America, while those of self-disciplined strivers indicated what might be achieved by determined self-mastery. Clearly this literature spoke to the anxieties of the emerging bourgeoisie: concerns about securing a place for themselves in the new economic order.

Not surprisingly, Newton's research discloses that early prescriptions for the behaviour of young women leaned heavily on biblical models; thus good conduct in women inevitably took on religious significance. However, by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, commentators invoked nature, too, to rationalize female subordination and deference. Whereas virtually every authority on male conduct seemed certain that if surrounding dangers could be avoided young men could achieve success by sticking to the straight and narrow, they were apparently less sanguine about women. Women's emotional natures, various commentators argued, might render them more susceptible to religion, but possibly also more vulnerable to temptation. In his *Letters to a Sister* (1850), noted reformer and educator William Alcott asserted that ''You, my sister, and every female besides you are but other Eves'' (p. 81). The feminine ideal required young women to choose correctly between submissive domesticity and wilful self-interest, between the sanctity of the home and either the perilous pleasures of coquetry or the sterile distractions of erudition. The only women's right that interested writers of nineteenth-century conduct books was the right of a good woman to do her duty to her family. Yet, this determined assertion of the domestic ideal reveals the extent to which ways of being female were being contested in nineteenth-century America.

The second half of *Learning to Behave* consists of a detailed list of the conduct books Newton has identified. The almost 600 entries are catalogued according to the intended audience: conduct books for children, men, women, and those addressed to adults of both sexes. Newton provides publication data, location, and a

precise description of the contents, including topics covered, rhetorical strategies, methods of exhortation, and religious or secular orientation. The combination of her perceptive analysis of the genre and the catalogue Newton has compiled means that *Learning to Behave* is sure to be a useful resource for any historian of gender, childhood, education, or American culture.

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William B. Taylor — *Magistrates of the Sacred: Priests and Parishioners in Eighteenth-Century Mexico*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996. Pp. xiv, 868.

For historians of colonial Mexico, William Taylor's name has long been a byword for quality and influential work. His two previous books challenged accepted notions of land tenure and showed how the use of criminal documents had potential to elucidate the patterns of daily life. His books are already classics in the field, required reading for many an undergraduate and any graduate student. This latest work does not disappoint: in fact, Taylor has surpassed his previous achievements with a book which surely will become a classic and standard reading for anyone with more than a passing interest in the field.

This book is centred around two main questions. First, Taylor wishes to assess the effects of the Bourbon reforms upon the parish priests of New Spain. These reforms — the result of the new administrative thrust following the replacement of the Hapsburgs by the Bourbon dynasty — had far-ranging consequences for the place of religion in colonial Latin America. Their aim was to limit the power of the church and to bring it more securely under the control of the state. One major element of these reforms which particularly affected parish priests was the secularization of parishes, that is, the transfer of many parishes from control by the regular clergy to the secular clergy. The second major question derives from the first: Taylor delves into the connection between these reforms and the participation of parish priests in the 1810 Hidalgo revolt which led to Mexican independence. The prominence of such revolt leaders as Miguel Hidalgo and José María Morelos — both parish priests — and many other less celebrated parish priests who were participants in the insurrection makes this a particularly important question.

Taylor chose to focus upon two major regions: the archdiocese of Mexico in the centre of the nation and the diocese of Guadalajara further to the north. He does, however, also include a great deal of information about jurisdictions within the diocese of Puebla. The choice of these two ecclesiastical units corresponds with his premise. It was in the archdiocese of Guadalajara — precisely in the town of Dolores — that the 1810 movement for independence began. This approach also allows Taylor to compare the impact of the Bourbon reforms upon both places as well as to measure the societal changes which resulted in a comparative manner.

The book is divided into three parts. The first section serves as an introduction,