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Book Reviews/Comptes rendus

Hodge, Gerald. *Planning Canadian Communities*. Toronto: Methuen, 1986. Pp. ix, 386. Illustrations, bibliography, index. \$20.50.

After nearly 75 years of planning in Canada here at last is a book that answers the question "What is planning in a Canadian context?". Gerald Hodge's *Planning Canadian Communities* will be warmly welcomed in many quarters because the style and content make it useful to newcomers to planning who are in academic planning schools as well as programs with a planning component, community organizations, elected office or the generally interested public. He presents a full-scale overview of Canadian planning as opposed to a more intensive study of a spatial, functional or historical subset. From the point of view of an academic in a planning school, Hodge's book is indispensable because it covers the basics of planning in a single text so that students and faculty no longer need to piece together the story from an amalgam of British, American and Canadian sources with the inevitable gaps, overlaps and potential copyright infringements. Importantly, since students now have access to a coherent outline, instructors are freed to move on to extend the debates around any number of issues that Hodge raises but does not elaborate.

The book is divided into three main sections: principles and purposes; practice; and participating and decision-making in community planning. The first section, while beginning with a historical synopsis of origins of cities and the forms of early Canadian cities, moves generally toward justifying the need for community planning. Hodge's outline in the Prologue of the two reasons why community planning may arise sets the context for the first section. Singly or in combination these reasons are that a community may wish to achieve some ideal form of development that is different, and presumably better, than it now has; or a community may wish to solve some problems associated with its development that it assumes will lead away from the future condition that it prefers (p. 6). Thus, separate chapters in the first section describe the physical, social and institutional conditions that evolved in Canadian communities, and demonstrate how need arises and changes over time.

The second section devoted to practice comprises more than half the book. Descriptions are given of types of plans, planning controls and guidelines, the process for implementing plans, as well as chapters on special types of planning, including regional and metropolitan planning and small town planning. In this he succeeds in treating planning from a Canadian perspective despite its provincial specificity by focussing on general procedures and purposes without a tedious review of every province's particular approach to planning legislation and practice. It is left to interested read-

ers to supplement this by seeking out for themselves the current details for a given province or municipality. And this seems an appropriate treatment. On the other hand, I feel it would have been useful to have had references to the analytical literature that gives perspective to the implications of these tools where time and regional particularities are less critical. For example, the discussion of density might have directed the reader to specific studies that elaborate the socio-cultural implications, or the discussion of relations among land uses to the literature on class and gender. There are almost no references of this ilk.

The final section includes two chapters dealing with deciding on the community's plan and with participation in planning, and are a good introduction for those starting to grapple with these rather difficult areas.

As will be evident from the foregoing, this book is descriptive and moderate, and apparently written from the stance of one who feels positive about the development of planning in Canada. It provides little if any explicit analysis of events and practices, and does not engage in discussions about theory at all. A clear advantage of this matter-of-factness is that it leaves the entire field of analysis and interpretation open to its users. For this reason it will serve excellently as a text to be read in conjunction with works of theory and analysis. One hopes that the correlative disadvantage — that a reader using the book alone could conclude that planning is largely technical and neutral — is adequately guarded against by Hodge's explicitness that planning is a political activity.

With distinction, Gerald Hodge has filled a yawning gap in the bookshelf of Canadian planners, and someone has seen to it that this handy book is particularly well edited, illustrated, designed and priced.

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Hauch, Christopher. *Coping Strategies and Street Life: The Ethnography of Winnipeg's Skid Row*. Winnipeg: Institute of Urban Studies, 1985. Pp. vii, 101. Figures, illustrations. \$12.00.

For most of us Skid Row is a place that we know of only through its portrayal in books and films or as the result of an apprehensive and accidental march through its confines. We view Skid Row and its inhabitants as both foreign and