

with European as well as North-American history. Such a seminar might review the field issue by issue, concluding that "X" is understood now but "Y" is not. Then the group might prepare an agenda for research, proposing projects that would fill the gaps in our knowledge. Not only would this approach help us to learn more quickly and avoid redundancy; it would help social science in a far more valuable way. Instead of insulating them from their fellow social scientists, such a symposium would display quantitative historians to their best advantage, as having some particular and very useful skills to offer. The rest of us, who are not quantitative historians, need to know about this. But the present book preaches to the already converted.

Lorne Tepperman
Department of Sociology
University of Toronto

* * *

Cook, Edward M., Jr. The Fathers of the Towns: Leadership and Community Structure in Eighteenth-Century New England. The Johns Hopkins Studies in Historical and Political Science, Ninety-fourth Series, no. 2. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976. Pp. xviii, 273. Map, tables, appendixes, notes, bibliography, and index. \$12.95.

Given the fine studies of individual New England towns which are already available, Professor Cook's Fathers of the Towns is both a logical development and a significant contribution. It is a logical scholarly step because Cook has gone beyond the anatomy of a single town to compare the patterns of leadership in seventy-four communities. It is significant because his research design, incorporating prosopographical methods and informed by central place theory, has enabled him to develop a convincing five-fold typology of towns.

This typology is defined by melding the results of a series of indices. As Cook points out, in the four colonies of New England, "the town was a territorial unit rather than a distinctly urban area." Reasoning that "property values would be highest in an urban area, and roughly proportional to the marketing of goods in rural areas" (pp. 78-79), Cook constructs a "commercialization index": a town's share of the colony's taxes divided by the area of the town. Two other indices measure the proportion of taxes paid by the wealthiest ten per cent and the proportion of prominent individuals in the town's population. Those individuals--members of famous families, college graduates, men who entered offices above the town level--reflected the "great tradition" as distinct from the "little tradition" internal to the towns. The latter was a milieu in which men progressed slowly to the office of selectmen, arriving there usually in their forties, after their "ability" had been thoroughly scrutinized by their fellow townsmen. The three