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ing for a sense of the growth and development of Dawson City. At the same time, the author's silence on these points allows us to see and hear the women in their own words and with little interference. We have to draw our own conclusions, of course, so the value of this work will depend on the ability of individual readers to make sense of the wealth of biographical information and to make their own connections.

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Each of these works should have something to interest a Toronto-phile, al-

though, with the exception of *Catholics at the Gathering Place*, these works are written for a general, non-academic audience. Insofar as there is a single theme common to these five books, it is that Toronto has always been composed of a number of different communities, each of which has shared its physical space, if not always its cultural space. Indeed, any attempt to conjure up a monocultural identity for the city and its inhabitants is only likely to succeed either at a very simplistic or abstract level, one far removed from the many perceptible communities and phenomena portrayed even in these works. For purposes of comparison, the best written history of Toronto appears in two books in the *History of Canadian Cities Series* sponsored by the History Division of the Canadian Museum of Civilization: *Toronto to 1918: An Illustrated History*, by J.M.S. Careless and *Toronto Since 1918* by James Lemon.<sup>1</sup> These two books are the standard against which other histories of Toronto produced for the general public can be evaluated. Critical to their success, Careless and Lemon relate the particular local history of Toronto to city's development in the Canadian urban network. It is the linking of a local and a general perspective that is the noticeable shortcoming in the selection of books to be reviewed here.

The focus in *Muddy York Mud: Scandal and Scurrility in Upper Canada* is on the cast of characters and events involved in the Types Riot of 1826 when William Lyon Mackenzie's printing press, on which he produced the *Colonial Advocate*, was vandalized by an angry mob of York citizens. Raible argues that the Types Riot was a manifestation of feelings of resentment and hostility held by prominent members of Upper Canadian society against William Lyon Mackenzie and his radical newspaper, and not a random act of mob violence. The events

and situations that occurred within the town of York are described in terms of the complexity of political and familial relationships in Upper Canada. We learn next to nothing about the way the town's development and its burgeoning political hegemony in Upper Canada shaped broader social developments. The assumption is that they did not. This book would be most useful for a view of elite political culture in Upper Canada in the mid to late 1820s, but it has very limited use for an urban historian, despite its engaging style with "...all the elements of a classic detective novel..." as York functions as merely the stage upon which the drama surrounding the Types Riot unfolds.<sup>2</sup> As urban history, it is the city as backdrop. That is, the general view is not linked to the local, however important the local view might have been.

Mike Filey and Victor Russell have pooled their talents to produce *From Horse Power to Horsepower – Toronto: 1890–1930*, an offering in the *Toronto and the Camera* series. This work traces the late-nineteenth century introduction of the automobile to Toronto's streets through to its firmly-established presence in the city in the 1930s using the photographs of William James, John H. Boyd, Arthur S. Goss and Frank W. Micklethwaite. The text accompanying the photographs in this work provides a brief general overview of the consequences of the introduction of the automobile into various aspects of the city's life. There are sections covering, for example, the T. Eaton Company store's conversion from horsedrawn delivery carts to a motorized fleet of delivery vehicles, the early growth of the city's taxi service and the evolution of public transportation in Toronto. The work introduces a number of major transportation themes, but for more depth, the student of Toronto would have to look elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> More problematic, the lack of an attempt to put Toronto's ex-

perience with the automobile into a larger context limits the usefulness of the work.<sup>4</sup>

*From Horse Power to Horsepower* provides a multitude of interesting black and white photographs of vintage Toronto. The photographs in this book are used as evidence for the narrative substituting for the more commonly used text notes. By themselves, the photographs do not tell a clear story, despite the old adage "a picture's worth a thousand words"; the photographs complement the narrative, yet cannot substitute for it. This shortcoming is most evident in the lack of a conclusion in the book; the authors fail to place the importance of the introduction of the automobile to Toronto's streets in a more general context. This shortcoming might not be as serious if there was something clearly distinctive about the city's encounter with the automobile; any large city could be substituted for Toronto with little appreciable effect beyond a different urban backdrop. *From Horse Power to Horsepower* is thus best suited to be enjoyed as a series of pictorial vignettes of the early days of horsepower in Toronto.

*Too Good To Be True: Toronto in the 1920s* is based on the premise that the city of the 1920s was in a transitional state of development as it attempted to cope with a large number of changes although the author admits in the prologue that this work "...is not intended to be a serious discourse on urban problems—in Toronto or anywhere else".<sup>5</sup> Because this book is aimed at a general audience, it is intended to introduce the reader to select aspects of city life in the 1920s, although attempts are made to place some developments within Toronto in a national framework of popular culture. White relies heavily on newspapers circulating in the city, such as the *Globe*, the *Daily Star*, and the *Mail and Empire* to give the reader a view of life in the city from a pop-

ular culture perspective. Although the book presents some interesting interpretations of life in Toronto, such as how it reflected the urban Canadian's growing fascination with the modern home-appliance conveniences, it does so in a superficial manner. The photographs and old newspaper advertisements scattered throughout the text, though, are well chosen to give the reader a feel for the mind set of the early-twentieth century urban Canadian. It does, in this sense, do what it is intended to do, but how do we know it is Toronto?

*A Taste of Toronto* does not belong in the same category as the three previous books. The rather short, but copiously illustrated, book contains both illustrations of well-known Toronto buildings, such as Robarts Library, the Old City Hall and St. Lawrence Hall and Market, as well as a number of recipes. There is also nothing distinctively Torontonion about the selection of dishes included in the work. It provides a "taste" of the culinary and architectural diversity that exists within the city, but as urban history it is lean fare.<sup>6</sup>

*Catholics at the "Gathering Place"* deliberately follows in the footsteps of the 1985 collection of essays *Gathering Place: Peoples and the Neighbourhoods of Toronto, 1834–1945*. It does specifically for the Roman Catholic community in the Archdiocese of Toronto what the *Gathering Place* did for a number of other communities within the city.<sup>7</sup> The essays contained in *Catholics at the "Gathering Place"* are drawn from the CATO–150 Historical Conference: "The Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto Over 150 Years" held in June 1990 at St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto. Two underlying themes in the essays in this collection can be seen: at the same time as Toronto was beginning to establish its political and economic he-

gemony in Upper Canada, the Archdiocese of Toronto was also developing its metropolitan influence, in time to become "...the unofficial primate Catholic See of Canada".<sup>8</sup> The second theme that emerges is the interplay between the Catholic community in Toronto and the rest of the city, predominantly from the British Isles, English speaking, and Protestant in origin and outlook. Yet what emerges from the papers is the sense that to treat the Catholic community as a community with a single homogeneous identity, whether metropolitan or local, is erroneous. Any synthetic history of the church in Toronto will clearly require a complex treatment.

Overall, this selection of books is of limited use for a scholarly reader, with the exception of *Catholics at the "Gathering Place"*. The other works contain some interesting material that might be of use in providing background information for discussions on Toronto in various time periods or, perhaps the starting point for a more thorough study. What does emerge from these books is the sense that Toronto cannot be described fully from a single perspective; it is simply too large a place and its cultural landscape too varied and complex to admit one label. Amid the diversity, however, what features of the city really are worthy of a single work? Clearly the possibilities are not yet exhausted. As for any re-examination of the themes posed here, a first order of business should be an attempt to place theme and the city within a larger context. This last point is perhaps the one most germane pertaining to the potential value of these books to the academic urbanist concerned with the applicability of concepts beyond a single specific location. It is here that these works fail to live up to the example set by Careless and Lemon. Merely declaring themselves as monothematic does not exempt them from demonstrating what is peculiarly

"Toronto" about them and in doing so to what extent they represent more general patterns. Put another way, would these books work as well if any other large city were substituted for Toronto in the titles and the events slightly changed? Does Toronto matter? Probably not if these volumes are any indication.

**Notes**

1. J.M.S. Careless, *Toronto to 1918: An Illustrated History*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1984).  
  
James Lemon, *Toronto Since 1918: An Illustrated History*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1985).

2. R. Scott James, foreword, *Muddy York Mud: Scandal and Scurrility in Upper Canada*, by Chris Raible (Creemore, Ontario: Curiosity House, 1992) ix.
3. See, for example, Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles "Suburban Street Railway Strategies in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver, 1896–1930," *Power and Place: Canadian Urban Development in the North American Context*, eds. Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F.J. Artibise (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986) 187–219.
4. It might be useful for providing visual material for lectures on how technological changes shape the urban environment.
5. Randall White. *Too Good To Be True: Toronto in the 1920s*. (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993) 4.
6. To be honest, though, the reviewer might be kindly described as culinarily challenged, al-

though it was a colleague who first questioned whether any of the recipes were distinctively Torontonians in flavour.

7. Robert F. Harney ed. *Gathering Place: Peoples and Neighbourhoods of Toronto, 1834–1945*. (Toronto: The Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1985).
8. Mark G. McGowan & Brian P. Clarke. *Catholics at the "Gathering Place": Historical Essays on the Archdiocese of Toronto 1841–1991*. (Toronto: The Canadian Catholic Historical Association (English Section), 1993) xviii.

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***Victoria Bloomfield: In Memory***

It is with deep regret that the *Urban History Review* reports the death of A. Victoria Bloomfield, daughter of Gerald and Elizabeth Bloomfield, in an automobile accident on February 11, 1996. Victoria was one of the most promising young scholars doing research on the history of Canadian cities. She had recently completed her doctoral dissertation, "Gender Perspectives on the Journey to Work in Toronto, 1901 to 1951", and already had several journal publications to her name. Her life was remembered and celebrated at a memorial service held at the University of Guelph on March 1. She will be sorely missed.