

**Pressman, N.E.P., editor. *New Communities in Canada: Exploring Planned Environments*. Waterloo: Faculty of Environmental Studies, University of Waterloo, 1976, [a special issue of *Contact: Journal of Urban and Environmental Affairs*]**

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implementing the recommendations of the Report in its bridge construction and boulevard plans in 1914. It was the tremendous financial burden which fell on Calgary after 1914 which effectively shelved any planning scheme, particularly one as costly and ambitious as Mawson's. Finally, it could be argued that Morrow was too uncritical of Mawson. While his qualifications were undeniable he was also a persuasive self-advertiser, higher on visionary ideas than on practicalities. In this sense Morrow is a little misleading when she refers to Mawson's inclusion of financial considerations in his Report. At best these were sketchy and paid no attention to the relationship between bonded debt, assessment strictures and taxation revenues. Certainly Calgary City Council by 1913 was beginning to learn of these intricacies rather painfully through the clearly enunciated statistics prepared by its Controller.

These above points aside, this is a good book. Mrs. Morrow's frame of reference was to place the Mawson Report in perspective by explaining its nature and implications, and to suggest that it may have some relevance for modern planners. In fact it is possible that future historical studies of Calgary may show that Mawson's Report was never really abandoned by those who directed Calgary's growth after 1914.

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Pressman, N.E.P., editor. New Communities in Canada: Exploring Planned Environments. Waterloo: Faculty of Environmental Studies, University of Waterloo, 1976. [a special issue of Contact: Journal of Urban and Environmental Affairs].

This book, an in-house publication of the Faculty of Environmental Studies, University of Waterloo, offers a variety of materials interesting to anyone concerned with urban studies. The articles included in the volume, some of them drawn from a conference on new communities, deal with the problems of "new towns," both near existing urban communities and in remote areas. Unfortunately, the book--in common, it seems with a growing number of publications like it--is carelessly put together and falls seriously short of reasonable scholarly standards. It is a great pity, because much potential valuable scholarship, in this volume and in others, is being lost through slipshod editing and writing. I shall return to that point.

New Communities in Canada is marred by unprofessional, inattentive editing, indifferent research, and inadequate documentation. Various of the articles are difficult to read, uncritical, and/or poorly documented. The articles are not planned so that they complement each other, with the result that the book is incessantly repetitive.

The most serious single problem--one which offers dramatic testimony to slipshod production--shows up in the final section of the

volume. There, substantial parts of one article are identical--word for word--with parts of the article immediately preceding it. The first of the two articles, "Two New Northern Communities," by Dave Clunie, offers brief descriptions of Fermont, Quebec, and Leaf Rapids, Manitoba. The second one, "Fermont: A New Version of the Company Town," by Norbert Schoenauer, contains an introductory paragraph which is almost identical with the first article's introduction and then goes on to repeat large parts of the first article's section on Fermont. Following are the two introductory paragraphs:

The development of natural resources in isolated regions, such as the arctic and sub-arctic regions of Canada, entails inevitably the establishment of human settlements. One important objective of these new human settlements is to provide the physical setting of family and community life for the workers and managers engaged in the development of natural resource industries. The problems associated with the establishment of new human settlements are indeed complex. Some are physical in nature, such as the aim of ameliorating the impact of harsh climatic forces and the provision of both optimum size dwellings and community facilities. Others are psychological or social in character. Thus, for example, new human settlements must complement primary psychological needs and must foster harmonious social interaction.<sup>1</sup>

The development of natural resources in isolated regions such as the sub-Arctic regions of Canada entail inevitably the establishment of entirely new settlements, to provide the physical setting of family and community life for the imported workers and managers so engaged. The problems associated with such an undertaking are indeed complex. Some problems are physical in nature, such as ameliorating the impact of harsh climatic forces and the provision of optimum size dwellings or community facilities. Other problems are psychological or social in character; thus, for example, new settlements must respond to primary psychological needs and must foster harmonious social interaction.<sup>2</sup>

The similarities between these two paragraphs are a fair example of the kinds of similarities which characterize the relevant parts of the two articles in question. What we have here--to put the matter plainly--is the inclusion in an academic publication of passages which would have rendered an undergraduate essay unacceptable and might well have exposed its writer to disciplinary action. (This is true of at least one of the two articles, regardless of where the material originated.) For a faculty of a recognized university to fob this sort of thing off as scholarly writing and editing is inexcusable.

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<sup>1</sup>David Clunie, "Two Northern Communities," p. 309.

<sup>2</sup>Norbert Schoenauer, "Fermont: A New Version of the Company Town," p. 316.

What is more, there are many squandered possibilities in the book. In dealing with a volume which contains 369 pages and includes 35 articles, it is not possible to consider every contribution. But a look at some samples will indicate both the potential and how much of it was lost through neglect. In the first place, several articles fully deserved to be included in a scholarly collection. For example, "New Communities for Canada: Economic Aspects," by Albert J. Robinson, argues persuasively that new communities at the urban periphery are most likely to benefit upper-income people. In another article, Jean-Marc Choukroun and Andrew L. Jacob examine the problems of financing new communities. They conclude that self-sufficient, free-standing new communities on the urban periphery pose serious financial problems to governments and proceed to suggest some alternatives which offer better financial prospects. Another solid, useful article, entitled "Incorporating the Natural and Historical Environment into Town Planning," by R. S. Dorney, offers a straightforward assessment of the costs and benefits of environmental management planning, concluding that its benefits are substantial. These articles, and a few others of similar calibre, will be denied the attention they deserve because they have been included in a collection which is difficult to take seriously.

In addition to articles which meet scholarly standards just as they are, the book also contains a substantial amount of material which could have been brought to a scholarly standard with the help of professional-quality editing and rewriting. For example, an article by David Freeman, "Participation in New Communities," offers an exceptionally thoughtful, well-informed opinion on the need for changes in citizen participation procedures. However, the article lacks the necessary illustrative material to make fully clear what the proposed changes would mean in practice and is, therefore, somewhat inconclusive. A rewrite would not only have brought the article up to scholarly standards; it would very likely have rendered it a particularly valuable piece.

Similarly, "Office Space Utilization and Urban Decentralization," by D. Barrows, J. Bookbinder and A. L. Jacob does not say anything new about communities. Rather, it deals with the economics of office space decentralization from the urban core to the suburbs. As it stands, therefore, it does not belong in the book. There is much in the article, however, which is relevant to new communities and it would not have been a difficult task to rewrite it so as to draw out that relevance. One suspects that the article was originally written for some other purpose and that the editor could not be bothered to ask that it be rewritten to suit the requirements of the present volume.

The phenomenon of publications without standards is becoming more common, or so it seems. It appears to be particularly a problem of in-house publications of faculties and institutes. The reasons are fairly obvious. Such institutions, financed often by grants or contracts, operate under heavy deadline pressures; and the people working there face the usual career pressures. At the same time, however, they are often relatively free from the demands, either of academic referees or of the

commercial publishing market. Sometimes, therefore, the only pressure may be simply to finish the job as soon as possible.

As standards decline in the scramble for publication, valuable research and thought is lost because it is not presented in an accessible and authoritative manner. At the same time, the credibility of the academic community as a whole is diminished. Just as journalists everywhere are tarred with the brush of sensationalism, whether they write sensational articles or not, so the reputation of all academics suffers by the distribution of poor quality scholarship. Perhaps it is time for the academic community as a whole--or various institutions within the community--to address seriously the question of how our standards should evolve and how they can be maintained in the face of changing conditions. The difficulties of such an undertaking would be more than justified by the salvaging of the potential which is lost in a volume like New Communities in Canada.

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Brennan, J. William, ed. Regina Before Yesterday: A Visual History, 1882 to 1945. Regina: The City of Regina, 1978. Pp. vii, 228. Illustrations. \$15.00 Paper.

Regina Before Yesterday is not an interpretative visual history. It is a memorial which includes visual images and contemporary quotations related to a great many events prior to 1945. Professor Brennan has attempted to provide some interpretative outline in a brief historical introduction to the volume. Brennan claims that Regina typifies perhaps better than any other Canadian city the process of transformation of an area of barren plain with few natural advantages as a townsite to a large urban centre. According to Brennan, this growth in the face of natural and economic obstacles produced a city character distinct from all others on the prairie--that of a city aspiring only to become "a pleasant city on a boundless plain." Such an interpretation may be suitable for local sales of the book, which in this instance surpassed an amazing 5,000 copies, but it is hardly a basis for comparison with the development history of other similar urban centres.

The book was a committee effort carried out within a limited budget and within a brief time span. Under these limitations perhaps the book is better than one might expect, but it is not a history. The photographs which constitute the main element in the book are generally interesting, but as Saskatchewan Archivist Ian Wilson points out in the 'Forward' they reflect a biased view of the city, stressing the new and the different and emphasizing the downtown core. As with other urban centres, professional and amateur photographers did not generally