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Book Reviews / Comptes rendus

Driedger, Leo. *The Urban Factor: Sociology of Canadian Cities*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1991. Pp. xvi, 319. Maps and figures. \$19.95 (paper).

Leo Driedger's book entitled *The Urban Factor* will find much favour and be very useful as an introduction to the study of the sociology of Canadian urban life. The book covers an extremely wide range of urban material, from the origin and development of cities to contemporary problems of urban planning. It contains useful summaries of the contemporary sociological literature on Canadian urban demography, urban ecology, ethnic mosaics in Canadian cities and their distinctive patterns, the character of work and leisure, patterns of power and municipal politics, and the nature of family networks in urban communities. All this is done with an insistence upon being thorough and fair while at the same time hesitating to draw creative interpretations from the diversity of findings. This insistence on presenting a wide range of findings sometimes limits the depth with which material can be presented. As a result, in some cases, I would have personally preferred to see some of the discussions presented in more depth than the somewhat superficial treatment given them in the text. But this concern is really a personal preference, one which the author and editors obviously have considered and decided against.

Urban historians, I'm afraid, will be impatient with the book. It fits too much the traditional sociological pattern of opening a discussion of a subject with a "historical throat-clearing," and then never referring back or informing the later discussion with the historical material. This book begins with a very informed discussion of the origin of pre-industrial cities, but then never gets around to informing us as to how these patterns of settlement constrained or facilitated the growth of Canadian cities during the nineteenth and twentieth

centuries. While it deals with the "fertile crescent" patterns of origin, it never informs us as to whether the development of agriculture is a necessary prerequisite to urban development, or whether the development of commerce is sufficient. Historians, I should think, would find it important to participate in this debate, and as I read the literature, are increasingly coming down on the side of those who argue that the development of commercial trading cities existed prior to the development of cities based upon irrigation agriculture.

The book then introduces, in Chapter Two, a very informative comparative discussion on contemporary metropolitan development, but fails to order the findings in terms of a clear analytical use of a global dependency framework which, I would suggest, might have helped order the findings. In some ways, because of this weakness in this Chapter, the discussion fails to distinguish between the different types of industrialization or the lack of it that now very much determine the patterns of urbanization in the "developing nations" of the world. In short, what I'm arguing for is a discussion that enables the student to see very clearly how theoretical models inform conclusions, rather than presenting a range of empirical studies and then requesting that the students more or less draw their own conclusions. The latter approach, rather than the former, appears to inform many of the discussions in this book.

But make no mistake. This is a useful book. It replaces a number of more dated texts in the field. It usefully structures the domain in a number of ways instructors will find useful. And in this sense, many historians, geographers, political scientists and sociologists will find it an extremely useful book to assign either as a text or a supplementary text in

courses that attempt to understand contemporary Canadian urban life.

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Quesnel, Louise, and Belley, Serge (with the collaboration of Jacques Lévillé). *Partis politiques municipaux: Une étude de sociologie électorale*. Montreal: Editions Agence d'Arc, 1991. Pp. 285. Illustrations. \$36.00 (paper).

For good or ill, Paul Peterson's *City Limits* has been the most influential book published in urban politics in the last decade. In it he states: "In short, local politics is limited politics. Its issues are not great enough to generate its own partisan political life. As a result, national political parties easily eliminate any ratepayers' associations, good government leagues, or other independent groups seeking only local power."

When *City Limits* was published in 1981, Jean Drapeau's Civic Party had controlled Montreal's municipal council for twenty-one years; in Quebec City, the *Progrès civique de Québec* had been equally dominant for sixteen. By the late 1970s, viable opposition parties had emerged in both cities; elections were clearly local partisan events; and the Quebec National Assembly had provided for government recognition and funding of local political parties. Unfortunately, Peterson makes no reference to either city in any of his pronouncements about limited city politics.

Just as unfortunately, *Partis politiques municipaux*, a valuable new book about Quebec City, makes no reference to Peterson's claims that such parties have little, if any, chance of surviving. This well-researched, thoughtful study places these parties, and the fascinating election they fought in 1989, in the theoretical

context of parties and elections, not urban politics. Reference is made to the American debates about urban machines and reformers and to the vibrant English-Canadian literature of the late 1960s and early 1970s concerning the apparent need for local parties, but the link between this material and the Quebec experience is not fully developed.

There is lots of evidence that the authors are quite right in treating the 1989 Quebec City municipal election as a battle between two established local political parties. Each had its own high-profile leader, elaborate advertising campaign, and sophisticated capacity for public-opinion polling. Interesting as the authors' analysis of these matters may be, however, there is always a nagging question: Why, in the absence of strong local political parties elsewhere in North America, have they become so deeply embedded in the political life of Montreal, Quebec City, and, to a lesser extent, some other major cities in the province? The authors attempt a brief explanation in their "Introduction," but it is short and unconvincing. If local political parties were caused by rapid urbanization, immigration, and reformist zeal, then they should be just as strong elsewhere in North America. What makes Quebec special?

As the authors of *Partis politiques municipaux* themselves acknowledge, Montreal's local party system came first. Perhaps developments elsewhere in the province are the result of a kind of "demonstration effect," leaving us then to ponder the origins of municipal political parties in Montreal. In any event, Quesnel and Belley (and Lévillé) do not provide a satisfactory answer.

But there is much that they do provide. Never has a particular municipal election in Canada been better documented and

analyzed. Any future studies of such elections will be seriously flawed if they ignore this trail-breaking book. It will no doubt be widely used in French-language university courses on urban politics. If it were translated, it would be of great value in English-language Canadian university courses as well.

There is much in the book for non-Québécois to think about. For example, there is a thorough description of how Quebec's progressive municipal-election financing system actually works. Parties and candidates face strict expenditure limits and developers (and all corporate bodies) cannot contribute a cent.

Elsewhere in Canada, has there ever been a municipal election in which two former provincial cabinet ministers from opposing parties (Jean-François Bertrand, *Parti québécois*, and Jean-Paul L'Allier, *Parti libéral du Québec*) contested the mayoralty and in which the winner (L'Allier) appointed a former minister from his opponent's party (Denis de Belleval) as the new city manager? In fact, is there anywhere outside Quebec where it makes sense to use the English equivalent of the authors' "le gouvernement L'Allier?" Did anyone ever hear of "the Eggleton government" in Toronto? Of course not. It was never there.

Experience in Montreal and Quebec City demonstrates that, under certain conditions, municipal political parties can thrive and play a crucial role in city government. In both cities, the dominant pro-development party has eventually given way to a party whose political base is in neighbourhood organizations. Whether the pendulum will again swing back, whether the same parties will still be involved in the battles to come, and whether they will remain independent of national political parties are the significant questions about the future. If the answers to these ques-

tions are affirmative, Paul Peterson should start paying attention.

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McLean, Marianne. *The People of Glengarry: Highlanders in Transition, 1745-1820*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991. Pp. xiii, 285. Illustrations. \$34.95 (hard).

Urban historians who lead busy lives may wish to know that they don't *have* to read this book. It is 99.9 percent urban history free. On the other hand, historians, of any stripe, who don't read *The People of Glengarry* will have missed quite a lot, for this is an original and valuable piece of work.

Marianne McLean has set out to study the remarkable series of group migrations that brought Scottish Highlanders from western Inverness to Glengarry County in Upper Canada between 1784 and 1815. Adhering to a view she shares with other current scholars of immigration and settlement that it is possible to make sense of the development of settlement in the new world only if the nature of the old world society that provided the settlers is first understood she has adopted a three part approach. The early chapters examine in detail the changing society and economy of western Inverness between 1745 and 1800, a middle section deals with the emigrants themselves, including those who followed a more conventional chain migration pattern after 1815, and the final chapters describe the actual settlement of Glengarry County in which succeeding emigrant groups and kin groups "created a new Highland community."

Any discussion of emigration from the Highlands must confront the contentious question of whether those who left were