Compte rendu

Gilbert A. Stelter

Numéro 3-76, February 1977

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1019472ar
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7202/1019472ar

Citer cet article
https://doi.org/10.7202/1019472ar

The publishers claim this is "one of the most comprehensive bibliographies relating to urban studies in the English language". Over 1,500 books and about 900 audio-visual items are listed and most of these are annotated. Unfortunately, the list is far from comprehensive and the annotations are something less than reliable. The work is designed for the general reader, whether adult or student, but the compiler appears to assume that the general reader is not very sophisticated. Books are rated on a scale of one to four; most of the works academics read and use are assessed as "very heavy going". In organization, fourteen headings include urban history, planning, demography, and morphology. The section on urban history might be summed up in one of the compiler's own cryptic comments--"superior works exist". At best, the annotations provide some amusing reading.

Canadian users will be interested to know that Masters, Rise of Toronto, is "not urban history", and that Lucas, Minetown, Milltown, Railtown, is "not urban studies". In American urban history, Mandelbaum, Boss Tweed's New York, is "primarily a journalistic/literary approach" and the major works of Warner and Thernstrom are not listed at all. Of the few British books listed, Dyos, The Study of Urban History, is written off with "superior works exist", but in an unusual flash of good judgement, Dyos and Wolff, The Victorian City, is said to be "usable as a general reference or for reading curled up in front of a month-long fire". In attempting to use this bibliography, the reader soon discovers that it really amounts to two editions bound in one cover, for a lengthy addenda repeats most of the original headings. By almost any standard, this reference work is not worth the price. [Gilbert A. Stelter, University of Guelph].

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