

**C. J. Taylor. *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Canada's National Historic Parks and Sites*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990. Pp. 288. \$32.95 (cloth)**

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sometimes even whole communities, despite vigorous opposition from white and black elites. In contrast to those who have described the migration as leaderless, Grossman argues that there were leaders (including many women), although it does not appear from his evidence that there was much co-ordination of effort above the local level.

When Grossman turns his attention to the black experience in Chicago, he enters upon well-trod ground, and so his contributions are less original. Still, he has mined a huge range of sources, and he provides a wealth of useful information about the black encounter with Chicago's industrial work environment, the various institutions that aided and oppressed black migrants, and the migrants' encounters with labor unions, local politics and the public schools. Particularly interesting is the discussion of the Wabash Avenue YMCA and the Chicago Urban League, both of which provided significant services to the black community but were compromised by their dependence on white support; Grossman reports that 90 percent of the Urban League's 1917 budget came from whites, and he argues that the YMCA rendered so much assistance to employers in their anti-unionization efforts that "more than any other institution, the YMCA deserved the abuse that union leaders later heaped on the black middle-class." Unlike Nash, Grossman says little about family life, other than to assert that "black family structure was not a victim of the Great Migration; rather, its flexibility and strength anchored the movement," and he tends to ignore negative social phenomena such as crime and violence.

These books reveal interesting parallels between black life in Philadelphia in the

early national period and in Chicago a century later. In both cities residential segregation by race was the norm; such segregation emerged rather suddenly in Philadelphia between 1800 and 1810 but was already pervasive in Chicago long before the great migration of World War I. In both settings black churches were key institutions. In both environments an established black elite tried to impose its standards of behaviour on newcomers; in Philadelphia Richard Allen and others organized a Society for the Suppression of Vice, while in Chicago the Defender and the Urban League issued elaborate instructions to newly-arrived migrants urging them to behave courteously and not wear head rags.

As might be expected, however, the differences loom even larger. Blacks in Philadelphia were disenfranchised by custom (although not in law), while in Chicago black voting was a political force to be reckoned with and the black community received a share of the spoils from the political machine headed by Mayor "Big Bill" Thompson; indeed, Grossman implies that the perception by immigrant whites that black votes had caused Thompson's electoral success in April 1919 was a major cause of the terrible race riot that occurred the following summer. In Philadelphia in 1815 adult blacks tended to be relatively uninterested in education, while in Chicago in 1921 night classes at Wendell Phillips High School enrolled an impressive 4,000 students in a range of courses that even included Afro-American literature and history. Above all, blacks in Nash's Philadelphia were totally excluded from industrial employment, while in Grossman's Chicago blacks poured by the tens of thousands into the packinghouses and steel mills.

Despite its stylistic deficiencies, Grossman's *Land of Hope* is a thoroughly researched and informative monograph. Nash's *Forging Freedom* is a lucid and fascinating work of mature scholarship. Both books are essential reading for urban historians.

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**C. J. Taylor. *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Canada's National Historic Parks and Sites*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990. Pp. 288. \$32.95 (cloth).**

C.J. Taylor's *Negotiating the Past* traces the history of one of Canada's largest federal cultural programs, that of national historic parks and sites. Despite their role in the commemoration and preservation of the nation's past, Canadian historic parks and sites have been little studied as a federal cultural program of national significance. Taylor's work, the core of which was written as a doctoral thesis at Carleton University, aims to provide the biography of a federal cultural agency, explaining its program development as well as documenting initiatives to commemorate and preserve the past: it analyses the functioning of a federal government agency, studies the history of heritage conservation in Canada, and considers Canadian cultural policy and the shaping of national identity. Beyond its merits as a well-researched and readable work, Taylor's book is an original and timely addition to the sparse scholarship on the history of heritage conservation in Canada.

The central theme in Taylor's interpretation of the development of Canada's historic parks and sites lies in a dynamic

process of negotiation termed "the politics of historic sites." The key players in Canada's heritage conservation movement, namely the national parks branch, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, the provinces, politicians and grassroots heritage advocates, have represented varied and frequently conflicting interests since the formal establishment of a federal heritage program in 1919. According to Taylor, the federal government mediated these diverging perspectives in the development of a national program of historic site selection, interpretation and preservation. Canada's historic parks and sites program has thus been the result of an ongoing process of negotiation.

Taylor describes the evolution of the heritage conservation movement in Canada from its beginnings in the 1880s, through its institutionalisation in the early 20th century, and the growth of conservation megaprojects beyond 1960. The formation of a national heritage movement in the late 19th century was spurred mainly by Ontario-based imperialist nationalists. Influenced primarily by the British heritage movement, the Royal Society of Canada launched a national heritage body in 1907, later replaced in 1919 by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, an honorary board created to advise the national parks branch on the administration of a federal heritage program.

The history of interaction between these two bodies dispels the idea that the board was central to the federal program. As Taylor depicts, the parks branch frequently played a more significant role than the board, whose members tended to assume a nationalizing mission as elitist custodians of culture. The primary concern of the Historic Sites

and Monuments Board remained a commemorative plaque program, while from the 1930s onward the branch increasingly shouldered responsibility for architectural preservation, site development and tourism promotion.

*Negotiating the Past* contends that the politics of historic sites carried regional perspectives into a national forum, and argues that "national historic sites reflect regional identities." At the same time, these political dynamics, combined with factors such as the fragmentation of government administration and the far-flung geographical location of Canada's historic parks and sites, limited the development of coherent, rational policy objectives for the federal heritage conservation program. Projects such as Fort Chambly, Quebec, and Louisbourg, Nova Scotia, illustrate how regional heritage activists shaped the interpretation and development of national historic sites. Throughout the book, there is a sensitive awareness to questions of regional representation. Future editions would benefit from the addition of a map indicating the regional distribution of parks and sites.

Taylor brings the history of federal involvement in historical heritage projects alongside that of the growth of the national park system and the movement to conserve natural environments. The conservation of built heritage in Canada contributed to the expansion of the idea of national parks. In this regard, Taylor brings further information to light about James Bernard Harkin, the innovative commissioner of national parks, 1911–36. As a result of Harkin's proposals, the Canadian national park idea was extended to encompass historical parks. Taylor's analysis imparts a welcome account of Harkin's instrumental role in

federal activities to conserve both natural and historical heritage.

Taylor's book brings discerning insight to the structure, operations and politics of a federal cultural agency over the course of its lifespan. The focus on a national agency is clearly directed, and reflects the influence of the federal state on heritage conservation in Canada. The study draws a close connection between the federal process and the articulation of Canada's cultural identity. In this respect, it strikes a chord with Bernard Ostry's work on Canadian cultural policy, *The Cultural Connection*. The cautious and noncommittal conclusion raises several unanswered questions about the future of federal heritage initiatives during an era of spending restraints and increased provincial involvement in site conservation. Nonetheless, it is apparent from Taylor's argument that the federal government has a central role to play in heritage conservation and the active interpretation of Canada's national history. *Negotiating the Past* is a significant analysis and a well-written book that contributes greatly to the history of heritage conservation and the Canadian cultural identity.

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**Loreto, Richard A., and Trevor Price, eds.**  
*Urban Policy Issues: Canadian Perspectives.* Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990. Pp. 246. \$22.95

This useful little book consists of ten essays on various local government programs in Canada, each written by someone who has carried out substantial research in the subject area. The topics are public finance, economic develop-