

Gertler, Leonard O. *Urban Issues* ("Making Man's Environment" Series). Toronto: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1976. Pp. 204

J. Donald Wilson

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outgrew their traditional fears of police officers as a threat to political liberty and personal freedom; how the city of Boston created a professional police force; and how political and social strife developed over police issues between city reformers and city leaders and later between state and city.

The American experience described in this study is particularly pertinent to the study of the same phenomenon in Canada since many of the issues recurred in the Canadian setting, especially in the Maritimes, later in the century. [D. A. Muise, National Museum of Man].

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Considering the widespread interest in urban problems, it is a pity this book is so badly conceived and written. Many urban issues are indeed discussed, but so little context is given that one is obliged to search for meaning beneath the vagueness and verbiage. It is true there is reference to such questions as land costs, public versus private development, control of land for public benefit, and protection of recreational corridors. But, for example, at the beginning of Chapter IV, three "new communities within metropolitan areas" are discussed in the space of only three paragraphs, one per community. In the same chapter, Helsinki's Tajnola is cited with approval and Stockholm's approach to an integrated region is praised, but the description of each is so sketchy and incomplete that one is obliged to take the author's word for it that these are innovative solutions to contemporary urban problems.

Chapter V is the most cohesive chapter. Here a case study (regional planning in Alberta) is developed, and consequently the issues posed are better understood. Unfortunately the depth and clarity of

this chapter are not repeated elsewhere in the book.

Chapter I is supposed to treat the historical background to current urban questions. However, at least one-third of the chapter is not historical at all, and the historical section is so disjointed and lacking in continuity as to be almost useless. The few historical illustrations are well chosen, but there are too few of them.

In brief, this book cannot be considered recommended reading. [J. Donald Wilson, University of British Columbia].

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Collier, Robert W. Contemporary Cathedrals: Large-Scale Development in Canadian cities. Montreal: Harvest House, 1974. Pp. XIV, 274.

The author has chosen seven major Canadian cities - Montreal, Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, and Halifax - and for each sets forth a case study of a representative, large-scale, "superblock" development. For example, Place Ville Marie has been chosen for Montreal, and Place de Ville for Ottawa. The facts surrounding each development are laid out including the jockeying for position between developers on the one hand and interest groups and city government on the other. It is part of the author's technique to raise probing questions as part of his narrative, and thus the book might well serve as a senior high school text in urban geography.

One might easily criticize Collier's choice of developments for his case studies, but clearly in a book of this length he had to be selective. In general his cases are well chosen with a view to representing various types of confrontations between developers and city governments. The style is clear and straightforward, the approach consistent allowing for easy comparison, and various themes are followed through in each of the seven studies. The book is well illustrated, but more street maps should have been included. Street names and intersections