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English, John and Kenneth McLaughlin. *Kitchener: An Illustrated History*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1983. Pp. xv, 259. Tables, maps, illustrations. \$11.95 paper; \$19.95 cloth

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Book Reviews/Comptes rendus

Rowat, Donald C., ed. *Urban Politics in Ottawa-Carleton: Research Essays*. Ottawa: Department of Political Science, Carleton University, 1983. 2nd edition. Pp. 230.

This collection of nine graduate student essays was completed for Professor Donald Rowat at Carleton University's Political Science Department. Five of the essays were completed in the early 1970s and were published in a previous edition. The current edition includes four new essays completed in the early 1980s. Both editions were published with the aim of extending the stock of primary material available on Ottawa-Carleton and on urban politics in Canada.

The five early essays are all concerned with "demand side" problems. Kipp explores the congruence of certain citizen and aldermanic attitudes towards governmental structures (although the title mislabels these attitudes as ones about regional re-organization). Norman discusses the issues articulated by aldermen in the 1972 election with emphasis on whether they represented positions, style or personality. Thomas examines voter turnout for the 6 municipal elections between 1960 and 1972, the thrust being to explain variations by ward. Lawson examines the growth of neighbourhood associations in Ottawa in the context of public participation more generally. Goldberg offers a replication for Ottawa of James Lorimer's work on the property industry.

The newly added four essays are more eclectic in scope. Richardson examines the extent of citizen participation on advisory councils to four municipalities in the Region and describes the attitudes of aldermen to the role of citizens in municipal government. Waugh looks at municipal experience with the 1972 and 1983 Provincial legislation on aldermanic conflict of interest; she also looks at municipal experience with their own codes of conduct for employees. LeSage gives a "blow-by-blow" account of the establishment of the Ottawa Office of Equal Opportunity for Women in the context of organizational change and adaptation. Finally Cox examines the conflicts involved in the adoption (over a nine year period) of an Official Plan by the Regional Municipality.

Like many edited collections, the contributions vary considerably in quality. The better contributions, such as those by Lawson and Richardson, articulate a theoretical problem and then investigate the problem in the Ottawa-Carleton area within the limits of time and energy expected of graduate students. The worse contributions, like those of Thomas or Cox, display an uncritical concern with methodologies for data analysis or with the logic and scope of their theoretical propositions. Academic readers will recognize these symptoms at paper marking time.

What is distressing about the collection, however, is the lack of innovation displayed by these student contributions. The theory contained in most of the essays is derivative, and apart from perhaps LeSage's contribution, there is little demonstration of theory extension or modification. There is also no awareness of alternative theoretical arguments, of "crucial hypothesis" testing, and of the role of multiple levels of theoretical reasoning. Perhaps more distressing for many readers, the essays tell us little about the urban politics of Ottawa. The focus is almost entirely on municipal government, with little recognition of the strategic and interactive role of central agencies and special districts on municipal governance. And there is limited attention paid to the historical, economic, and social issues that bind and fragment a rather unique city.

In sum, the collection makes only a marginal contribution to our knowledge of Canadian urban politics. We can and should ask for more.

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English, John and Kenneth McLaughlin. *Kitchener: An Illustrated History*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1983. Pp. xv, 259. Tables, maps, illustrations. \$11.95 paper; \$19.95 cloth.

Kitchener: An Illustrated History has been awaited with anticipation. In particular, a switch in publishers delayed the issuing of this work; it was well worth the wait. Professors English and McLaughlin and Wilfrid Laurier University Press are truly deserving of congratulations.

As one reads through *Kitchener*, what becomes most clear is that we are dealing here with what is in more than one sense a unique urban community. Certainly the most obvious particular characteristic is the large Germanic population of Waterloo County. Within the city this population is that which molds Kitchener's character. In many ways Kitchener was up until the First World War a German city in Canada.

Kitchener is also unique in other senses. In the nineteenth century it is free from the sectarian strife which marks other Ontario centres. Not only Catholic and Protestant but sects such as the Evangelicals and Swedenborgians live together in peace. The city is also free from serious class conflict perhaps because in the early period employer and employee lived side by side near the businesses.

To the urban historian, what will perhaps be of greatest initial interest will be the unusual development of Berlin. Not only did the seemingly less qualified centre beat Guelph and Galt out as Waterloo county seat but without any of the usual natural advantages.

World War I changed Berlin. Not only did anti-German feeling force a name change, it also marked the advent of a more cosmopolitan centre: the end to industrial peace, and a more concerted effort at a carefully planned city initially utilizing the expertise of Thomas Adams. The final chapter is perhaps the least satisfying as one gets the impression that there is a rush to the end.

Throughout *Kitchener*, it is, as it should be, people that dominate. One gets a real sense of the links between the prominent industrial families such as the Schneiders, the Kings and the Rempels and the development of Berlin-Kitchener. A. R. Kaufman, planner, birth control advocate and industrialist is also a dominating figure.

Similarly, as one might expect, the national and provincial political figures such as Mackenzie King, W. D. Euler and members of the Breithampt family appear. Nonetheless, the most fascinating politicians are the "eccentrics" who appear to be yet another unique aspect of the city's history. Such characters as Allen Huber and Joe Meininger bring true life to this story; it is urban biography in its best sense.

This work will appeal equally to both the academic and the interested layman. Although it is quite obvious that two different hands were at work on this project, the styles are complementary and the result is a flowing, easy to read manuscript. Perhaps the ultimate compliment was delivered by a Kitchener student taking a university course in which this was the mandatory text who commented, "until I read this book, I didn't realize I lived in such an interesting place."

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Barrett, Paul. *The Automobile and Urban Transit: The Formation of Public Policy in Chicago, 1900-1930*. Technology and Urban Growth Series. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983. Pp. 295. Biographical note, index. \$34.95 U.S.

High on the list of misleading conceptions about the study of history must be the notion that the confusions of a given present become magically clear in the illuminating light of history. This may usually be correct, but magical clarity is not quite the same as truth. As often as not, the distance of history can blur detail and flatten perspective to the point of gross distortion, resulting in a two-dimensionality that stands

as a barrier to any useful understanding of the history involved. In such circumstances, the real task of serious historical study becomes recovery and restoration: to seek not distance but proximity, so that the processes of actual change, set once again in visible motion, can be reconstructed and studied on their own terms.

This proposition is at the core of Paul Barrett's exceptionally thorough and important study of auto and mass transit in Chicago in the early twentieth century. The triumph of the automobile is one of those obvious results that obscure less obvious causes, leaving us with simplistic images that seem validated by the world around us. Thus has it been conventionally assumed that the automobile destroyed mass transit in head-to-head combat, a battle decided by technological imperative, by the needs of modern cities and a new urban economy, and by the auto's closer fit to the values and preferences of the middle-class individualist ethos dominating American culture. Those rejecting this view have not necessarily rejected the conflict it assumes: they have argued that the fight, while decisive, was not fair. Urban mass transit in this view, was undone by a campaign, even a conspiracy, intent on removing all obstacles to the hegemony of the automobile and the interests crystallizing around it.

If his book is itself regarded as a head-to-head battle against such notions, Barrett wins by a decisive knockout, a victory built on relentless body blows of meticulous research, impressive right crosses of complex argument, and fancy footwork that traces to a fine sense of irony and paradox, enabling the author to seem to get at his opponent from several sides at once. When it is over, there is still no question as to the triumph of the automobile, but Barrett helps us see how it came about, and what this has to teach.

Public policy turns out to be the somewhat surprising heart of the story. The development of the modern city inevitably required decisions about public space, regulation, and spending; government functioned as a kind of switchbox for everything from developmental imperatives to particularistic economic and political pressures. Barrett wants to show that in shaping transportation policy, such inputs were not nearly as important as the mechanics within this switching mechanism itself — how issues were understood and engaged, which responses were accessible or not, and how responses at one point conditioned and limited possibilities later on.

The book demonstrates this powerfully by showing that there never was that head-to-head battle: rather than a struggle among different approaches to something that could be called urban transportation policy, we encounter two parallel and perhaps tragically separated histories: the regulated streetcar system collapsing of the weight of its own contradictions, while in the very different arena of street and traffic policy the groundwork was being laid for the accommodation of the automobile and all that it implied. What mattered