

***Arts & Science at Toronto A History, 1827-1990.* By Robert Craig Brown. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013. 352 p., notes, bibl. ISBN 978-1-44264-51-34, \$46.50**

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century was very different from doing it two centuries later, by which time there was such a thing as a professional scientist. Terminology is equally important: one should not really call the military officer Edward Sabine an “eminent geophysicist” (211) or use the term scientist before the mid-nineteenth century. How people described themselves and their practices—what they thought they were doing—is crucial for understanding the big picture.

Nevertheless, *Enlightened Zeal* is well written and enlightening. It will be a valuable source for academics and is comprehensively referenced and indexed, with some supporting images including useful maps. It could certainly serve as a model for thinking about how other chartered monopolies contributed to science. It could also inspire more detailed work on scientific practices within the HBC and its territories. There are clearly fascinating tales still to be told.

Richard Dunn, *Royal Museums Greenwich*

Arts & Science at Toronto A History, 1827-1990.

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The University of Toronto and its constituent elements have been the subject of several historical studies in recent years. The centrepiece is Martin Friedland’s *The University of Toronto: A History*, a splendid comprehensive history that both synthesised existing research and stimulated further research. But works also have appeared on the university’s individual colleges, faculties, and departments, including this reviewer’s history of its engineering faculty, *The Skule Story*, done on conjunction with Friedland’s book. There is no clear explanation for this new work. It has not been funded or promoted by any agent. Perhaps just the absence of histories about such an important public institution has spurred it along, though one suspects the growing number of retired university academics is a factor as well. In any case, here is another contribution.

“Craig” Brown, as he was always known, was among the earliest of the new generation of Canadian historians at the University of Toronto. An American, from western New York, who did his undergraduate degree at the University of Rochester, Brown came to the University of Toronto for graduate studies in the late 1950s and, studying under Donald Creighton, completed his

PhD in 1962 with a dissertation on Canada-US relations. He was appointed to the teaching staff of the History department a few years later, and there he remained, advancing through the ranks and serving in various administrative posts until his retirement. Essentially a liberal humanist, with an inclination for portraying the big picture, Brown is perhaps best known as co-author, with Ramsay Cook, of *Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed*, one of the better, and still quite useful, volumes in the Canadian centenary series, but his history of Robert Borden is also well regarded, and the *Illustrated History of Canada*, which he edited, remains a respected, and good-selling, popular history.

It is hard to say exactly what this book is about. At first glance one might call it a history of the university’s Faculty of Arts and Science, but on second glance one will see that the word “faculty” is absent from the title, probably because from 1853 to 1901 there was no Faculty, per se, as the teaching staff all belonged to individual colleges. So the book is actually about “Arts and Science” in the generic sense, rather than as a formal institution—although this leads to confusion since much of it is in fact about the Faculty as an institution. Also problematic in definitional terms is that since teaching and research in “arts and science” are the university’s fundamental purpose the history of those two words is essentially the history of the university. And sure enough for maybe its first two-thirds the book is little more than a retelling of the standard, chronological narrative of the University of Toronto’s history—founded as King’s College, reconstituted as University College, amalgamated with the religious colleges, reconstituted again with professional faculties, and on into the world wars, the influx of veterans, and the great postwar expansion. One reads about the 1890 fire, the 1911 overlooking of British historian Lewis Namier, the 1930s struggles with Frank Underhill, and many other such events, most of which are well covered in Friedland’s history—which is often cited as a source.

Yet this lack of originality is not a significant shortcoming, at least not to this reader. Brown writes clearly and insightfully, often connecting events at the university with events in the world around it, and in doing so tells the story in an engaging, readable manner. By no means is the book entirely devoid of original observations or comments; his frequent inclusion of professors’ salaries and student fees is intriguing, as is his critical portrayal of physicist J.C. McLennan in

the First World War (69). Stimulating, as well, are occasional insertions of his own voice, such as his assessment of the Infeld affair in the Cold War as “a shameful episode for the faculty” (127). In reading this book one is repeatedly reminded that it was written by someone who knows more than what they are writing here, and this gives the book a pleasing, humanistic depth that is so often lacking in specialized historical monographs.

The book evolves into something different in its final third. The university became a bigger, more complicated place after the Second World War, and the author himself experienced many of its affairs, and probably for both reasons the book becomes more detailed and often more original. The full explication of 1960s and 1970s reforms (and non-reforms) such as the decision to retain both arts and science within a single faculty (149), the recommendations of the Macpherson Committee that transformed the undergraduate curriculum (158-67), and the adoption of the “Kelly rules” that redefined the role of the colleges (210-12)—the retention of which as separate entities is one of the university’s more curious strategies—are all most welcome. At times the book drifts into memoir mode, not necessarily a good thing when the details get too heavy. Do we need to know the details of so many budgets or the names of the faculty secretary and director of student records in 1982 (226)? But all in all the insider’s view provides valuable insights.

Readers looking for the history of science at the university will not find much. This is an institutional, not an intellectual, history; it says little about what academics at the university thought, taught, or wrote, in either arts or science. The role of science and engineering in the world wars is covered, but this ground has been well-tilled by others. The material on McLennan helium research, cited above, struck this reviewer as new and original—Brown is drawing from his own earlier writing on McLennan—but those who know the field could speak more definitively about this.
Richard White, University of Toronto

Science, on coupe ! Chercheurs museles et aveuglement volontaire : bienvenue au Canada de Stephen Harper. Par Chris Turner. Montréal: Boréal, 2014. 226 p., notes, index. ISBN 978-2-76462-3-213, 22.95 \$.

Dans cet ouvrage critique, Chris Turner veut montrer comment les politiques scientifiques des gouvernements successifs de Stephen Harper

s’inscrivent dans une véritable guerre à la science. « Science on coupe! » est un témoignage historique de la censure de la recherche gouvernementale, de la compression de programmes scientifiques, de la fermeture de laboratoires, de la suppression de contrôles environnementaux et du mépris des consensus scientifiques orchestrés par le Parti conservateur du Canada. Ce livre est aussi un cri d’alarme qui expose ce que Turner voit comme un assaut direct à notre capacité collective d’envisager les conséquences de nos actions. Selon lui, les conservateurs s’attaquent à une tradition vieille des Lumières où la saine gestion de nos sociétés était assurée par la raison et la preuve.

Le premier chapitre décrit le ton et les préoccupations qui animent les centaines de scientifiques et citoyens ayant manifesté lors de la « Marche funèbre pour la preuve » sur la colline du Parlement le 10 juillet 2012. Il relate l’histoire des protagonistes importants, la nature de leur engagement et les événements ayant conduit à leur indignation. Selon Turner, ces réactions de tailles — qui mobilisent une classe d’individus habituellement plus intéressés par le contenu de leurs éprouvettes que par la politique — et leurs échos dans les médias montrent à quel point les conservateurs s’attaquent à une tradition fondamentale. Le gouvernement de Stephen Harper, nous dit-il, commet un outrage sans précédent. Il ne fait pas qu’ignorer les preuves, il détruit les moyens mêmes pour de les générer et de les communiquer.

Au cours des mandats minoritaires des conservateurs, l’élimination de la version longue obligatoire du recensement, le contrôle excessif du discours des scientifiques gouvernementaux, les compressions et les restructurations touchant les organismes scientifiques fédéraux et le mépris des experts dans l’élaboration des politiques publiques constituaient déjà, selon Turner, un leitmotiv familier. Or, pour lui c’est l’obtention de la majorité aux élections de 2011 qui marque le véritable déclenchement du plan Harper. Il s’agit d’un « aveuglement volontaire » qui vise à « affranchir les industries d’extraction des ressources naturelles nationales de toute supervision ou réglementation au nom d’une expansion accélérée » (57).

En 2012, le gouvernement conservateur avance deux projets de loi omnibus (C-38 et C-45) qui répondent presque mot par mot aux désirs formulés par le lobby de l’industrie pétrolière et gazière. Turner avance que ces lois appauvrissent la capacité du gouvernement canadien en matière de recherche environnementale et climatique. Il