

## Urban History Review Revue d'histoire urbaine

URBAN HISTORY REVIEW  
REVUE D'HISTOIRE URBAINE

Lorimer, James, Ross, Evelyn, *et al.* *The City Book: The Politics and Planning of Canada's Cities*. Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1976. Pp. 223. Maps, tables, illustrations. \$6.95 paper. \$12.00 cloth

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Numéro 1-77, june 1977

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1019593ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1019593ar>

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### Éditeur(s)

Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine

### ISSN

0703-0428 (imprimé)

1918-5138 (numérique)

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### Citer ce compte rendu

Jenson, J. (1977). Compte rendu de [Lorimer, James, Ross, Evelyn, *et al.* *The City Book: The Politics and Planning of Canada's Cities*. Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1976. Pp. 223. Maps, tables, illustrations. \$6.95 paper. \$12.00 cloth]. *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine*, (1-77), 94–96.  
<https://doi.org/10.7202/1019593ar>

from the book is the persistent tale of a subordinate economic structure vis à vis the national economic mainstream elsewhere. This Core:Periphery situation is a matter of great concern for all Canadians and issues of city and regional development are ultimately dependent upon how we come to terms with it. For the present, further understanding of the heartland:hinterland relationship is urgently required and this calls for the talents of historians as well as other social scientists.

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Lorimer, James, Ross, Evelyn, et al. The City Book: The Politics and Planning of Canada's Cities. Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1976. Pp. 223. Maps, tables, illustrations. \$6.95 paper. \$12.00 cloth.

This book is another in the recent outpouring of reports on urban politics and issues from as the editors describe it, an "empirical, reform-oriented" perspective. In essence it is a series of case studies of the manner in which urban policies, urban programmes, and city politicians develop in opposition to the interests and needs of home-owners and tenants wishing to live the "good life" in the largest Canadian cities. The original source of the chapters is City Magazine, a new periodical which appeared in 1974. The magazine, in this selection from its articles, quite successfully fills a gap which had existed of information about urban affairs across the country. Much was previously known about Toronto. Now City Magazine and this book provide information about other municipalities. For this reason it is a useful book.

It is useful, as well, because it provides, in contrast to most journalistic accounts, a good deal of background material on the

issues. This is seen in treatment of the case studies of particular land and development policies. For example, the takeover of valuable farm land around St. Catharines and specific developments, like Milton-Park in Montreal and Quinpool Road in Halifax are explored and described. This is background material not easily available elsewhere to non-residents who do not have easy access to the local press. It also provides new and critical analyses of some favourite institutions, the articles on the Ontario Municipal Board and the Saskatoon Land Bank being of particular note.

Almost all the articles are written from a similar perspective, the now-familiar and critical citizen-oriented approach. Thus, the emphasis is on what is wrong in cities, how the private land developer almost always wins, how the politician, despite the best of intentions and rhetoric, acts to maintain the position and profit of the private developer, and how, sometimes, the politician is corrupt. This is all descriptive. It describes how things are, what the decisions were, whose interests were maximized. It does not, and I think it cannot, explain why the situation is as it is.

Admittedly, the editors and the authors do not claim they can explain the basic forces at work. Lorimer, in his introduction, advises the reader to turn to other work, in particular his own, A Citizen's Guide to City Politics (1972), and that of Donald Gutstein, Vancouver Ltd. (1975), for analysis and explanation. Both these books describe the interlocking connections between the property industry and city politicians and politics. However, it seems that these other books, as well as The City Book, lack a real explanation of city politics, one that would provide a basis for political change. Lorimer claims this is possible. He argues that books such as these provide for "the citizen opposition" an analysis "of urban Canada which made sense of their circumstances and experience". In other words, by seeing the connections between the property industry and municipal government, it is possible to do what? To elect reform candidates, for example David Crombie in

Toronto, who are not really interested in reform, as Caulfield's article illustrates. To elect reform parties, for example, TEAM in Vancouver, which are equally captured by the property industry, as Gutstein's article points out? In other words, this type of analysis does not sufficiently explicate the structural conditions under which municipal governments operate. Rather it provides a description of the tip of the iceberg. One is left with the impression that *if only* Crombie were not mayor, *if only* TEAM had been purer, *if only* Joe Kennedy were still Chairman of the O.M.B., things would be fine. However, urban politics is not as it is because politicians are corrupt, because citizens groups are not vigilant, because planners are insufficiently socially conscious. It is as it is because of very particular economic and social conditions which are not specific to city governments but are equally important at the federal and provincial levels. These structural conditions have not yet been laid bare by analyses such as these, which continue to treat city politics as aberrations requiring reform to make them more responsive to their citizens.

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Stelter, Gilbert A. and Alan F. J. Artibise, eds. The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited in Association with The Institute of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, 1977. Pp. 437. Maps, tables, illustrations. \$5.95.

Although the study of Canadian urban history is still in its infancy, interest in the field has grown substantially in recent years. Much of the published material, unfortunately, remains buried in specialized journals which are relatively inaccessible to all but the more ardent scholars.