

modèle américain, son livre ne tente finalement que de dégager deux profils : un profil *radical* et un profil *tory*. Il y manque un profil *réformiste* : mais qui étaient les réformistes ? de qui descendaient-ils ? À preuve que, ultimement, pour C. Read, les fidélités politiques expliquent tout, à condition qu'on y mêle un peu d'ethnicité et de religion !

Nous croyons que Read a raison de présenter le mouvement radical haut-canadien et celui de l'Ouest en particulier comme l'œuvre de groupes marginaux. Ce caractère marginal apparaît davantage, au-delà des rhétoriques, si l'on compare ces soulèvements à ceux du Bas-Canada. Cela dit, il faut quand même trouver une explication raisonnable à la conduite de ces éléments *marginaux*. S'il est vrai qu'ils étaient tels que les décrit Read, comment des chefs comme Duncombe et ses lieutenants ont-ils pu un bon matin, en affirmant qu'il fallait renverser le gouvernement, mobiliser trois cents hommes armés, des gens mariés pour la plupart, âgés d'une trentaine d'années en moyenne, bien établis et menant une existence prospère, et les faire marcher ? C'est le sérieux de ces hommes, et de leurs gestes qui nous incite à croire que l'analyse de Read n'est pas tout à fait au point, notamment en ce qui concerne l'image qu'il donne des chefs rebelles, de leur degré de préméditation, des rapports qu'ils entretiennent entre eux (cela inclut les rapports avec Mackenzie), et en ce qui a trait aux motivations socio-économiques des milieux populaires. Que ces personnages n'aient pas été représentatifs de la masse n'exclut pas le fait que leurs motifs aient pu être authentiques et sérieux.

Au total, *The Duncombe Revolt* est un livre stimulant qui, en dépit de ses faiblesses, incite à une réflexion sur les méthodes et sur les problèmes qui en constituent la substance.

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PAUL RUTHERFORD. — *A Victorian Authority: The Daily Press in Late Nineteenth-Century Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982. Pp. 292.

The newspaper was an important and interesting element of nineteenth-century Canadian society, yet historical researchers have neglected its growth and impact. In *A Victorian Authority* Rutherford has attempted to fill a rather large gap in Canadian historical writing. Whereas others, for example, Kesterton, have described elements of the history of journalism in the Victorian era, Rutherford has presented the most wide-ranging and detailed study and in so doing has provided a welcome addition to the meagre literature on Canadian press history.

Rutherford has attempted to chart the forces that gave rise to this first mass media, the technology of the industry, its business aspect, the changing form and structure of the newspaper, the myths that the press promoted and the influence of the public and other social institutions on the press. The book is sweeping in its intent, impressive in the amount of material it deals with and challenging in the ideas it raises.

The book is not without shortcomings, however. Most problematic is the theme of modernization which pervades the book. According to Rutherford, something called "modernization ... generated new social needs" (p. 9) that the daily press satisfied. There is an unresolved ambiguity in the term that leaves one

uncertain as to whether the market, that is, the readers, or the capitalist class structured and ultimately controlled the form and content of the news. At one moment the book subscribes to one view and at another it takes the other view. There is, then, a need for theoretical clarity.

Theoretical fuzziness is apparent in other places as well. For example, what is a "quality" newspaper? The *Toronto Mail* is portrayed as one, as is the *Montreal Gazette*, whereas *La Presse* and the *Toronto Star* are seen as popular, "lowbrow" journals. One senses that Rutherford feels this because they were highly illustrated (pp. 152-53). This is somewhat bothersome because illustrations often convey as much or more information than printed texts. Both *La Presse* and the *Star* had many informative illustrations, particularly cartographic representations, in the period studied. In any case definitions such as "quality" remain ambiguous.

Beyond these questions, although in large measure stemming from them, are questions of substance. Why are some matters not discussed in the book? For example, there is no discussion of the use of political cartoons which appeared in the press especially towards the end of the period. Another example is the use or non-use of letters to the editor. Did papers publish them and was there any bias to their use of them? Another example would be the use of telegraphic services. In what way, if any, did they influence the structuring of the news? One wonders why some subjects concerning the press were excluded.

Regarding methodology, it is curious that on the one hand Rutherford uses simple quantitative analysis to depict the content and circulation of papers in his section on the making of the daily press, while on the other hand he utilizes an impressionistic survey in describing the myths portrayed in the daily press. This is curious because one is left uncertain in the latter case as to why he felt that certain myths were being promoted. For example, does the author feel that the idea of progress is a significant myth because it appeared in two hundred editorials of the *Gazette*? This is not to downplay myths such as the need for progress, harmony and order that he does deal with, but rather to wonder why he decided that they were important. In the former case the technique is also problematic since one is left to ponder the meaning of line counts of information about an event. There may be more information about an event in one article in one paper than two in another, and the same argument could be raised respecting the lines of information.

Further, regarding methodology, several of the tables need fuller explanation or clarification. For example, in Tables 23 and 24 which deal with newspaper content, it is unclear why Rutherford chose the time periods he did. A marked seasonality in the news could skew the results of Table 24 and be missed altogether by Table 23. Clarifying the meaning of each table and some of the problems in compiling and interpreting them would have been useful.

In closing it should be said that despite theoretical and methodological problems the author has made an important contribution to the history of mass communication in Canada. He has brought to the fore much new information and has aroused interest in a significant Victorian institution, the daily press.

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