Canadian experience. We are left with the assertion that "the crucial measures of adaptation and community-building — the acts deserving the term 'historic' — are those undertaken by ordinary citizens" (p. 224).

Nor am I convinced that this testimony to "the genius of common people" (p. 229) will serve a nationalist purpose. It is hard to imagine that his people's drama will play well in Quebec, because the separate struggles and achievements of French Canada are muted and absorbed into the larger Canadian narrative. It is also hard to imagine that the emphasis on the ordinary, on Grandmother Andre (the Dene), on the Knight family (his workers), on Frank and Roseanne (the contemporaries) will satisfy that taste for heroes and villains which so often characterizes the mythologies of patriotism. That is especially because the trials and tribulations of these interesting souls do not appear particularly Canadian. Although Friesen is careful to emphasize the importance of place, notably in a finely crafted conclusion, their stories of adaptation seem responses to broader, transnational phenomena like orality and literacy, the workings of the marketplace, and the advance and retreat of the state which could well occur in a variety of different locations.

Admittedly, this postmodern cannot be counted a friend of the notion that history ought to have a public purpose. Constructing narratives that endorse hegemony or justify resistance or celebrate identity might best be left to the popular historians. Other kinds of readers will presumably give the patriotic message a more sympathetic hearing. In any case, the book deserves a wide audience: *Citizens and Nation* is an excellent work of synthesis, both original and interesting, that should foster new debate within the profession of Canadian history, if not the wider Canadian community.

Paul Rutherford
University of Toronto

Peter Gossage — *Families in Transition: Industry and Population in Nineteenth-Century Saint-Hyacinthe*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999. Pp. xviii, 299.

In the preface to *Families in Transition*, Peter Gossage comments upon "an unfashionable emphasis in this book on quantitative analysis", which might not have been his choice were he beginning this study today (p. xvi). We should be grateful that this work did not fall victim to the hemlines of historical fashion, for he follows with a monograph that showcases the strengths of quantitative research in his examination of the dynamic relationship between economic change and demographic patterns. The role families played in this relationship between industrial capitalism and demographic change has attracted much attention from demographic historians. Gossage joins this vast literature with a study that traces this complex interaction during the late nineteenth century in the small industrial centre of Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec.

Gossage proceeds with a logical and well-defined study, beginning by placing

Sainte-Hyacinthe-le-confesseur into its physical and historical contexts. Originally a small village centred in an agricultural region, Saint-Hyacinthe served as a regional entrepôt providing goods and services to the surrounding countryside and sending local goods to Montreal following the arrival of the railroad in 1848. The development of light industrial manufacturing, knitwear, and shoe manufacturing after 1860 also prompted significant economic change. Saint-Hyacinthe advanced from its regional entrepôt status to that of an industrial centre, which attracted a growing population of wage-labourers, tripling its population while the provincial population doubled. The social effects were significant. Gossage argues that "the consequences of industrial capitalism in Saint-Hyacinthe extended even to the most intimate areas of human relations, as individuals strove to create and to maintain viable and meaningful familial relationships, in material circumstances that had been altered forever" (p. 78).

Into this setting, Gossage introduces the focus of his study — family transition. Using family reconstitution analysis, based on parish records and the manuscript census returns, he traces the impact of industrialization on age at first marriage, household composition, and family size. To trace changes over time, he selected three marriage cohorts. The 1854–1861 cohort of 295 couples and the 277 couples from the 1864–1871 cohort include all marriages celebrated in those periods. The 340 marriages included in the 1884–1891 cohort, representing a comparable size, is a sample of 75 per cent. Couples who moved outside the parish were not traced; thus the study focuses upon the non-transient families. Clearly, this decision has an impact on the analysis, for of the 912 marriages included in the study only 42 per cent were included in the analysis of household structure. However, Gossage's argument that this sedentary sample permits a better examination of familial response to "local" economic conditions holds considerable merit, and his careful handling of his data permits him to probe meaningfully into the experience of family formation.

One of the most significant responses to the new industrial realities was the emergence of a socially differentiated pattern of family formation. Strong evidence of this difference appears in the analysis of age at first marriage. Men and women from bourgeois and agricultural families tended to delay their marriages for several years longer and have larger age differences between bride and groom in contrast to labourers or urban-manual workers. These newly married couples also indicated socially differentiated patterns of household structure. Although most couples from all socio-economic backgrounds lived in independent households following marriage, bourgeois families showed the highest level of household complexity, including kin and non-kin household members. Conversely, working-class households had the simplest structure, most often containing only a nuclear family. They were, however, more likely to reside in multi-family houses where their relatives were their neighbours. Both types of household structure indicate that industrialization did not destroy kin networks, but rather provoked new uses of these familial relations which were constrained and moulded by socio-economic position.

The influence of socio-economic status on family formation becomes more strongly evident in Gossage's examination of fertility patterns. Overall, there was a significant fertility decline of 21 per cent between the first and third cohorts. How-

ever, he argues that "family limitation emerged in Quebec over a long period; on an extremely uneven time table; and with wide variations by social class, region and ethnicity" (p. 147). Bourgeois families showed evidence of family limitation in the first cohort; however, this reduction in family size does not appear in working-class families until nearly a generation later. As obvious as the differences appear, the rationale for the variance is less obvious, and Gossage's discussion reflects a careful consideration of influencing factors including the economy, cultural background, and gender relations. He concludes by emphasizing:

> People's domestic strategies ... were informed rather than determined by material considerations. It is at this point that one must introduce cultural attitudes, religious conventions and restrictions, human sentiment, gender relations, and the possibly determinant influence of whim and folly into the discussion. But the boundaries set by constantly changing sets of material constraints, opportunities and circumstances must not be forgotten. (p. 179)

Were the review to end here, Gossage's book would be described as a welcome addition to the historical study of industrialization and family formation. Many of the significant strengths would pass unmentioned. The effective presentation of data often challenges quantitative researchers. Innumeracy prevents some readers from venturing into the "mathematics" of the text, while others misunderstand and scent weakness from the author's identification of data limitations, oftentimes eliciting criticism beyond its due. Transitions from text to table can prove jarring and distracting. As well, the micro-history approach leaves a work open to questions regarding relevance to the wider historiography.

Gossage meets and masters these challenges. The text is lucid and well organized. He partners his quantitative analysis with the stories of individuals to show clearly how the "numbers" played out in people's lives. In addition to having the graphs and explanations of demographic trends, a reader learns about the people they actually represent. The technique proves effective and serves to render his analysis more reader-friendly. This is indeed important, because his conclusions should be read by an audience wider than quantitative historians. His research presents new insights and raises some vital questions in the area of family relations and fertility which should not be dismissed by individuals wary of numbers. While there can be no hiding the quantitative approach, his study indicates some of the important questions that can really only be addressed through this onerous and demanding methodology. The careful descriptions represent clearly the utility of his research while not pushing the boundaries of plausible explanation. To this end, much of his methodological discussion is relegated to a valuable appendix, "Family Formation in Focus: An Essay on Methods", where he discusses the rationale behind his choices. This appendix proves useful both as an introduction for readers unfamiliar with quantitative methodology and a forum to address questions from more specialized readers. Gossage successfully knits his micro-history into the wider historiography within and beyond the borders of Canada. Both the appendix and footnotes offer windows into a number of debates surrounding issues, such as how the terms "house" and "family" were

used by enumerators and how this affects our research and conclusions.

Overall, Gossage gives us a valuable monograph, carefully researched, well crafted, and interesting. It should interest historians who utilize other approaches with both its accessibility and its relevance. Gossage demonstrates successfully the value of quantitative methodology and how rigorous research, careful analysis, and clear interpretation offer an avenue to understanding the experience of our past. He produces a nuanced analysis of family in industrializing Quebec which recognizes the complexity of the relationship between economic transition and social change.

Michele Stairs
York University

Andrew C. Holman — *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000. Pp. xi, 243.

The process of middle class formation and the substance of middle-class identity has been a prominent theme in British and American social history for several decades. While certain aspects of middle-class life and culture such as temperance, professionalism, evangelicalism, and leisure have been the subject of several recent works, Canadian historians have not examined the emergence of the middle class itself in a systematic fashion. Andrew Holman's *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns* begins to fill this large void in Canadian historiography. In this work, Holman sets out to answer two basic but fundamental questions: How did the middle class come to be? What did it mean to be middle class? Holman's answers to these questions provide considerable insight into social processes, groups, and values to which historians frequently refer but rarely analyse with the depth, detail, or sophistication evident in this study.

In *A Sense of Their Duty* Holman explores how economic groups become social entities. Rejecting both functionalist and Thompsonian approaches to the study of class, Holman draws upon Anthony Gidden's concept of structuration to make sense of the process of middle class formation in the southwestern Ontario towns of Galt and Goderich between 1850 and 1891. The importance of a sense of place in the making of the Victorian Canadian middle class is immediately evident in this well-crafted study. Holman convincingly demonstrates how the different social and economic conditions that existed in Galt and Goderich produced distinct middle-class identities. Galt's emergent middle class consisted primarily of enterprising and innovative businessmen and manufacturers who successfully organized to promote their town's growth and prosperity and to defend their own interests. That Galt became a booming centre of industry, Holman contends, was due in part at least to the character and behaviour of the middle-class businessmen who came to dominate the town's economic, political, and social life. Goderich, in contrast, was primarily an administrative and service centre for the surrounding countryside. Professionals and white-collar workers formed the basis of the town's rising middle class. The result