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Author(s): Alvin Finkel

Review by: Alvin Finkel

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sive shift away from a universal to a targetted approach, from individual to family income-based entitlement and from adults (women in the case of family allowances) to children as the beneficiaries of social policy. Particularly useful is her ability to demonstrate how progressive and feminist groups were drawn into such policy-making processes, and how, at times unwittingly, they became participants in a process that ultimately led in a neo-liberal direction.

Secondly, the book is useful because it opens up for debate again the question of what type of social policy feminists want to see and how it should be achieved. In terms of social policy models, the notion of individual autonomy and individual rights combined with notions of collective solidarity is important. This implies the importance for women, certainly, of having "money in their own name," but also of going beyond that to consider how we advance notions of social solidarity and collective responsibility based on multiple networks and connections. The book, in many respects, raises as many questions as it answers. Is it better, for example, to disengage and organize autonomously, with the risk of remaining marginal, or to engage, but end up participating in debates and policy formulation in directions not of one's own choosing? How should feminists negotiate the often difficult strategic choices facing them at particular conjunctures? To begin to consider those questions requires delving in greater depth into what alternative models there are, not only to the feminist vision put forward, but also to the organizing that took place. More consideration could be given, for example, to the agendas and strategies of groups that McKean notes were *not* willing to engage with the terms set by the Tories (the labour movement and the popular sector as represented by the Action Canada Network). Similarly, it would be helpful to consider further the politics of the women's movement itself, and how, here too, the development of significant alter-

natives might become possible. These are questions which, in the current era of defensive politics, are posed all too seldom, but which are critical to consider. In April 2004 two reports were released in Ontario: one pointed to the difficulties women leaving abusive relationships faced in accessing adequate welfare support and the other revealed that homeless women in Toronto were dying at ten times the rate of other women. In this context it is critical indeed to raise the question of what has happened to the feminist voice within the social policy debate and to reconsider the parameters of a "woman-friendly" social policy. McKean's book is most welcome because it challenges us to reflect on such questions and to re-open the debate on critical issues of both alternative models and strategies.

Ann Porter
York University

Hugh Shewell, *'Enough to Keep Them Alive': Indian Welfare in Canada, 1873-1965* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2004)

HUGH SHEWELL has provided the definitive historical account of government policy towards members of First Nations who were unable to survive without outside assistance. The thrust of his book is to focus not on the "dependence" of Native recipients of social welfare but on the government policies that created that dependence in the first place. As Shewell reminds us again and again, the government and the professional bureaucrats and social workers that it employed looked at poverty-stricken "Indians" as failed individuals who needed to be trained to be workers within an industrial capitalist system. By dealing with them ahistorically and as individuals, the system could cover up the fact that, in reality, they were dealing with dispossessed peoples whose destitution had been created by the same Canadian state that now tried

to blame them individually for their lack of success within Canadian society writ large.

In the 1980s, Shewell was a bureaucrat in Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, in charge of the welfare program for British Columbia reserves. His recognition, through his work, that the program he was administering was ultimately a band-aid upon the gaping sores created by colonialist policies inspired his exhaustive historical research into social welfare policies with respect to First Nations. What he found in primary sources is mostly to be found elsewhere in bits and pieces in the burgeoning field of Native history. But Shewell accumulates so much material related to social welfare in one place that there is little doubt that his account will be the one scholars will turn to for many years to determine what government policies were in place regarding Native social welfare at different periods and why.

Shewell demonstrates that, while the underlying view that the Natives were responsible for their own misfortunes obtained in all periods, there were policy changes over time. In the early years after Confederation, social assistance was meted out when there were special requests from a First Nation, or a priest or Indian agent working with Natives, for government aid to avoid a bout of starvation. Such unsystematic aid, focusing on particular First Nations, gradually gave way, beginning just before World War I, to social work casework ideas that emphasized individual Natives or Native families rather than particular First Nations bands. Keeping down costs was a major driver in this approach, and, in the inter-war period, "led to a downward spiral in Indian welfare and neglect." (108) Though a minority of Natives were successfully able to secure either subsistence on reserves or remunerative employment within the non-reserve economy, Indian Affairs continued to insist that it was the responsibility of Natives, not the government, to secure a living for themselves.

The government consistently ignored the impact of its own policies of restricting Native fishing and hunting so as to create more opportunities for white settlers and tourists on opportunities available to Native people. Relief, when it was provided, was minimal and short-term since the philosophy of relief policy was "to control Indian behaviour and coerce the able bodied into the marketplace." (166)

Somewhat more sophisticated programs of integration of Natives into the mainstream as workers were put in place in the 1960s. The watchword became community development, and government policy now focused on involving the leadership of Native communities in social service provision and in policies affecting their community generally. But such involvement was always to be within a framework that rejected Natives' desire to return to their traditional Native culture, with its holistic linkage of spiritual and economic and social behaviours.

While Shewell provides an excellent historical account of the villainy and stupidity of federal government treatment of First Nations, he rarely discusses the reactions of First Nations in detail. For the most part, they are presented, *de facto*, as passive victims. They only suddenly emerge as active social agents during the post-war parliamentary hearings on the Indian Act. Shewell does give close attention to their briefs, and their proud understanding both of First Nations' moral right to their lands and the exploitation that they have experienced as a result of colonialism. Then the Natives largely disappear from the text again. They re-emerge however in the conclusion, "Shooting an Elephant in Canada." Shewell suggests that Native "dependency is a complex form of resistance to a socio-economic order that Indian nations neither chose nor fundamentally accept." (324) Dependency as resistance? Nothing in Shewell's nine previous chapters has prepared us for this idea. And unfortunately it exposes some weaknesses in Shewell's historical account.

Shewell's account is one that focuses heavily on original sin, in this case the government's dispossession of Native people. That's fine, but what results, perhaps because of the focus on government welfare policy, is a discussion of bureaucrats' behaviour rather than a portrait of how the victims of that policy either coped or failed to cope. We are simply told that First Nations held on to their traditional values and waited for the day when they could regain control over their lands and return to their lives of old. But this conclusion, while it may reflect the viewpoints of some of Canada's current Native leadership, requires critical analysis. As Ron Bourgeault suggested in a review of David Bedford and Danielle Irving's *The Tragedy of Progress (Labour/Le Travail* 52, 267-71), discussions of Native people rarely manage to blend both class analysis and the specificity of Native oppression. Certainly, Shewell fails to discuss Natives in the labour force, though there is a rich literature on the subject.

While Shewell mentions Albert Memmi and Edward Said in his introduction, he is only concerned with their observations about how the colonizers view the colonized and their culture. For usurpers of others' lands, the rationalization that the people being dispossessed are inferior peoples with inferior cultures is psychologically important. But Said and especially Memmi are equally concerned with the psychological impact on colonized peoples of colonizers' constructions of both their pre-colonial past and their lives under colonial rule. It is here that Shewell's reach proves too shallow. Though his account ends in 1965, at a time when the beginning of the movement of Natives off reserves and into cities was in its early stages, that provides little justification for conclusions about solutions to current Native issues that ignore changing demographics. Both on reserve and off reserve, in any case, it is clear that many Natives either want a blend of their traditional cultures and Canadian moder-

nity or simply want the latter. Racism within the context of capitalist industrial relations limits the options that they have, but not all, and likely not a majority, want only the option of living in sovereign enclaves practicing traditional lifestyles. If only because the resource base for traditional lifestyles is simply unavailable in most Native communities in the south, even the leaders who appear to preach this solution are as likely to be advocates of Native casinos and cigarette marketing operations as of a return to lives based solely on hunting and fishing. And what of the long-term impact of the psychological scars of dispossession, forced stays in residential schools, exploitation of their labour, and poverty? Native communities are faced with the scourge of fetal alcohol, a consequence of colonialism that will not disappear simply by naming its ultimate source. More recently, HIV/AIDS has ripped through many First Nations communities, and Natives are at far greater risk of this disease than the general population.

The lives of Native women, as Native women's organizations have been revealing for several years, are especially precarious. Within Canada generally, they face disproportionate risks of violence and death, their victimizers buoyed up by the racist indifference of police forces. Even within their own communities and homes, abuse of themselves and their children is commonplace. This is the case despite the fact that Native communities have a far greater degree of self-government than they did in 1965, the cut-off date of Shewell's account. Colonialism was not unsuccessful in imposing patriarchy in most First Nations and, as Native women often argue, the interpretation of Native traditions that many male Native leaders espouse is a largely ahistorical one in which the present is read backwards to make current patriarchal forms part of the eternal history of First Nations.

Enough however of the shortcomings of Hugh Shewell's important work. This is not history from the bottom up, and it is

rather shallow sociological commentary on present-day realities. But it is an excellent analysis of the thinking of social policy makers over a long period. It would be rather better if it analysed that thinking with more reference to the influence of the struggle among social forces in Canada at various times, and gave more attention to Native voices.

Alvin Finkel
Athabasca University

Pierre Anctil, *Saint-Laurent: La Main de Montréal* (Sillery: Les Éditions du Septentrion 2002)

CE PETIT LIVRE trouve son origine dans une exposition au Musée de Pointe-à-Callière. L'institution a demandé à l'anthropologue Pierre Anctil, bien connu pour ses travaux sur la population juive de Montréal, d'agir comme conservateur invité et de rédiger ce court ouvrage. Le grand public sera reconnaissant envers le Musée d'avoir pris cette initiative et envers Anctil d'avoir relevé le défi.

En quatre chapitres abondamment illustrés, ce dernier retrace l'histoire de la *Main* en utilisant une approche qui marie le thématique et le chronologique. Dans « Le boulevard de la Révolution industrielle », Anctil esquisse à grands traits les transformations du paysage urbain dans la deuxième moitié du 19^e siècle sous le leadership de promoteurs immobiliers dynamiques. Naissent alors sur le Plateau Mont-Royal des municipalités de banlieue à vocation industrielle et ouvrière; rapidement, l'industrie du vêtement y domine. Une culture de masse et des mouvements de revendication sociale voient le jour. C'est dans ce contexte qu'a lieu la « grève historique » des Canadiennes françaises de 1937.

Parallèlement, la rue Saint-Laurent se transforme en « boulevard des nouveaux citoyens », suite aux vagues migratoires qui déferlent sur la métropole, au premier

rang celle des Juifs. Ceux-ci construisent une communauté vibrante qu'Anctil excelle à décrire. Les immigrants italiens et chinois font aussi leur apparition sur la *Main*, qui devient « un lieu porteur d'une mémoire historique » et « le reflet de la diversité ethnoculturelle québécoise ».

La rue Saint-Laurent, c'est également « le boulevard du bouillonnement culturel », une vocation qui se dessine pendant la décennie de 1890 avec la construction du Monument national, et qui se poursuit avec l'avènement du burlesque et du cinéma. En même temps, la *Main* est un lieu où les femmes jouent un rôle décisif, qu'elles soient suffragettes, effeuilleuses ou prostituées. Mais, au lendemain de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, de grands bouleversements éteignent « les derniers feux de la *Lower Main* » et en font le refuge des marginaux, des gangsters, une véritable « descente aux enfers », selon Anctil. Dans les années 50, de nombreuses bâtisses bordant le boulevard Saint-Laurent tombent sous le pic des démolisseurs, en même temps que la rue « sert pendant un temps de laboratoire à tous les courants dits de rénovation urbaine (p. 83) ».

Toutefois, à la fin du 20^e siècle, une renaissance a cours lorsque la rue Saint-Laurent se transforme en « boulevard de la révolution technologique ». Des immigrants grecs, portugais, antillais, asiatiques, africains, s'approprient la rue, remplaçant ainsi les Juifs et les Italiens qui, eux, se déplacent vers les banlieues, au moment même où la *Main* est consacrée dans les romans de Mordecai Richler et de Michel Tremblay, ainsi que dans les chansons de Leonard Cohen. En fait, le boulevard devient « le rendez-vous des créateurs » aux horizons les plus variés, écrivains, peintres, sculpteurs, cinéastes, ce qui redonne un tissu aux quartiers environnant la *Main*. Au tournant du 21^e siècle, celle-ci renaît également grâce aux entreprises du multimédia, qui ne sont pas moins de 159 en décembre 2000, et aux projets de