
This well-researched and extremely readable book represents another major contribution by Paul Rutherford to our understanding of the development of mass media in Canada. He has chosen to study the daily press of late nineteenth-century Canada which he describes as our first mass medium. The focus is on the big-city dailies where the presses of eleven major cities have been scrutinized, supplemented by an examination of newspapers emanating from several smaller centres of population across the country.

After an introduction that provides the necessary background and context for the study, the succeeding chapters examine all the major aspects of newspaper production and dissemination. We find a wealth of information on the prerequisites of mass communication. Factors that contributed to the evolution of the daily press and its popularization, technological changes that affected newspaper production, and the press of the 1890s are explained with great clarity.

Attention is paid to some of the 'characters' who added colour to the history of the Canadian press, such as George Brown of the Globe and John Ross Robertson of the Telegram, but it is a pity that we could not have had more. In the chapter that deals with the 'daily fare,' editorial matters, advertising, the impact of special features, and the way in which news was selected and presented all receive attention. The chapter on 'mythmaking' is particularly fascinating; myths exposed range through the dogma of modernity and the idea of progress to continentalism and imperialism. The penultimate chapter looks at readers' rights (libel actions, etc.), publisher / reader relationships, the press and the pulpit, and the various influences of politics and big business. The conclusion pivots on a paper by S.D. Scott, journalist and editor, published in 1901 which describes the newspaper of 1950. Rutherford's comments on this paper remind us of the pervasiveness of the newspaper in our daily lives, be it 'an agency of social control,' 'a means of social liberation,' or 'a source of cultural uplift.'

This was certainly a pleasurable book to read, avoiding as it does the obscure writing style evident in so many works of history and literary criticism. Errors are few and in most cases may be laid at the door of the compositor (1978 for 1878 and 1980 for 1890). The missing end note to chapter two (no. 27) is particularly unfortunate as it is clearly an important reference regarding the Montreal Witness.

As far as content is concerned one could dispute the statement that, besides the newspaper, the public school was the only other champion of what is termed 'improvement.' My own research indicates that the public library also made an important contribution to the education and 'improvement' of the majority of the population.

It is not clear why the author considers the conversion of the mechanics' institutes (which he describes as bourgeois) into public libraries a 'special irony.' With the advance of literacy and wide-spread education, and the need for a better-informed population, equipped to cope with the complexities of an industrial society, it was a
natural progression. If the author means that the irony lies in his belief that the working classes took over what, in his opinion, was essentially a middle-class institution, it should be noted that the claim of middle-class dominance has not been proved satisfactorily. In fact, the evidence indicates that in the smaller centres of population and in rural areas there existed a marked working-class presence.

Bibliographers may wonder what significance this book might have for them. Admittedly, only some of the stuff of bibliography is here: paper, ink, and printing presses. Nevertheless, there are parallels to be drawn between the evolution of the Canadian newspaper and the history of the book in Canada; they share a common heritage. The bibliographic community cannot help but benefit from reading this latest offering by Paul Rutherford.

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This large, handsome volume will appeal to a wide variety of interests, historical and bibliographical. It catalogues some forty-five hundred separately issued lithographs, showing all or major parts of American and Canadian cities and towns, published during the first hundred years of lithography on this continent. It also provides biographical and professional information about the more important artists and artist-publishers in this field and a detailed study of how they worked. John W. Reps, a city planning historian at Cornell University, first became interested in urban views for the information they provided about the evolution of American cities. His comprehensive and well-documented examination of this North American phenomenon has involved him in many other subjects, including nineteenth-century printing technology. The Canadian content, though small, is an integral part of the work: many American artists were active in both countries, and Canadian views were frequently printed in the United States. More than one hundred Canadian cities and towns, in all provinces except Alberta and Saskatchewan, were portrayed in one or more views, the most popular subject being Quebec City — not surprisingly, given its picturesque character and setting.

A small, introductory section of coloured plates whets the reader's appetite by demonstrating the range of styles and printing techniques involved. Despite the inevitable reduction in size, the lithographs illustrated here and in the larger section of black and white plates are reproduced with great clarity. Reps goes on to discuss how the artist worked, converting his sketches and any available maps of the area into an imaginary 'bird's-eye' view. Two chapters on the history of lithography in America and its changing technology provide a useful survey of the subject, not only for the student of urban views but for anyone wishing to read more widely in the literature.