

the economic importance of the harvest to Newfoundland. The author is willing to consider that the motivations of the swilers are more than just economic while on the other hand he accepts the altruistic pronouncements of the anti-sealers at face value. In conclusion, it may be said that *The War Against the Seals* is good imperialist history. The American portions of the book are written from an acceptable mixture of primary and secondary sources. The same cannot be said for the remainder of the book. Newfoundlanders have in the past suffered from a lack of imperial concern; in this book they suffer from imperialistic scholarship. This new master undertakes to write their history from secondary sources alone. If the use of primary sources is a necessary component of the writing of American history, then the same must be true for Newfoundland history. By this test *The War Against the Seals* is a failure.

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Frank H. Underhill: Intellectual Provocateur. R. DOUGLAS FRANCIS. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986. x, 217 p. ISBN 0-8020-2545-5 \$27.50.

In *Frank Underhill: Intellectual Provocateur*, Douglas Francis has produced a well-written and balanced account of one of twentieth-century Canada's most interesting and significant figures. Unfortunately the book fails to explore fully all the logical possibilities of its subject.

Frank Underhill taught history at Canadian universities. As this study makes clear, however, his role as an academic scholar was consistently overshadowed by those of teacher, political commentator, activist, and general intellectual gadfly. One can in fact pose the fundamental question whether Underhill may be considered to have been an historian at all, in that he lacked the ability to synthesize which characterizes the craft; as W.L. Morton noted, "the best of his mind was analytical and critical," being dominated by "the radical's propensity to fragment." Underhill himself commented that "the only way I know how to make myself useful is to be constantly critical." In this area, he had few peers.

Following a brilliant student career at the University of Toronto and Oxford, Underhill taught at the University of Saskatchewan (where he felt like "a nonentity at the edge of nowhere") before moving to the University of Toronto in 1927. For the next forty-one years he was to devote himself to improving the state of Canadian politics, through his teaching, his provocative speeches and writings (particularly his editorials in *Canadian Forum*), and through his own active participation in political life.

His most noticeable contribution, of course, was as what has been called the "busy midwife" to the birth of the CCF. A founder and first president of the leftist League for Social Reconstruction, Underhill looked on the Great Depression as the means whereby a fundamental right/left realignment of Canadian politics might result. Although he had initially felt that the LSR might serve simply as the provider of ideas to a revitalized and genuinely progressive Liberal party, he quickly became involved with the CCF, drafting the party manifesto which was adopted at Regina in the summer of 1933 (typically, he missed the deadline — the draft had been due in January). This involvement with the

CCF was itself but an aspect (albeit the most important one) of Underhill's lifelong quest for a radical tradition in Canadian history, and a genuinely liberal party in the present.

That search forms the theme which dominates the book. It is Professor Francis' contention that "a biography of Frank Underhill is at the same time an intellectual study of Canadian liberalism, for his thinking over time embodied the evolution and essence of that liberalism." The accuracy of this claim depends, obviously, on the definition of liberalism being used. Given Underhill's long association with the CCF, "liberalism" as used by the author presumably comprehends the entire Liberal/CCF-NDP spectrum. While most observers would accept that the CCF-NDP may be placed in the liberal tradition, broadly defined, Francis' equation of Underhill's own thought with "Canadian liberalism" is only tenable within such a relatively loose definition of his key term.

This, perhaps, is to quibble too much. The book does disappoint, however, in its failure to pursue the analytical possibilities of this claim. If Underhill's intellectual development did in fact mirror the evolution of Canadian liberalism, then surely the many conclusions arrived at here regarding the nature of his own thought might have been paralleled by some broader and more general observations on the nature of Canadian liberalism and Canadian political culture in this century. These the study fails to provide. For example, although the notes contain several references to Underhill's writings on subjects such as "Conservatism, Liberalism, Socialism: What Do They Mean In Canada?", there is a lack of references to the basic writings of others on the same subject.

Within his chosen bounds, though, the author does a fine job of portraying the man who claimed, only partially in jest, "my speciality is general invective." The formative years of his intellectual development, his experiences in the First World War, the Department of History at the University of Toronto, the crisis of academic freedom in the early 1940s caused by Underhill's outspoken statements on Canadian foreign policy, and finally his gradual return to orthodoxy in his views — all are given solid treatment in the book. As a straight intellectual biography, *Frank Underhill* is a definite success, and a worthwhile addition to the still relatively small, but growing literature of Canadian intellectual history.

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Captured Heritage. The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts. DOUGLAS COLE. Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985. 373 p. ISBN 0-88894-460-8 \$24.95.

In 1929, a representative of the French Foreign Office wrote to the Attorney-General of British Columbia requesting a totem pole from the Queen Charlotte Islands. The Quai d'Orsay official was under the impression that the Haida people were extinct and that their ceremonial poles had been abandoned. The request was forwarded to Francis Kermodé, Director of the Provincial Museum, who replied that reports of the Haida's demise were greatly exaggerated. Many Haida artifacts, however, were becoming scarce, the director explained. Even so, Kermodé was willing to accede to the French request and, with the assistance of the Dominion government, a pole was duly despatched to Paris. (Provincial Archives of British Columbia. Records of the Provincial Secretary. GR 1668 vol. 2, f. 2.)