Sara Z. Burke. *Seeking the Highest Good: Social Service and Gender at the University of Toronto, 1888–1937.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996. Pp. 194. $55.00, cloth; $17.95, paper.

From 1887 to 1937, middle-class reformers in Canada confronted unregulated capitalism, revolutionary movements, and an informal social welfare system based on individualism, family networks, and voluntary charity. They responded by developing a new theory and practice of social service based on the administration of public funding through a central state, according to the tenets of scientific liberalism: academic and applied sociology. This link between the state and academe was important for the development of public welfare following the Second World War.

Scholarly interest in the origins of the Canadian welfare state has elicited a growing body of research into the complex intersection of intellectual history, university life, and social service exemplified in Paul Axelrod's *Making a Middle Class* (1990), A. B. McKillop's *Matters of the Mind* (1994), Doug Owram's *The Government Generation* (1986), and Marlene Shore's *The Science of Social Redemption* (1987). Sara Burke's *Seeking the Highest Good* (1996) shows how applied sociology emerged from the institutional relationships among the Department of Political Economy (1888), the University Settlement (1910), and the Department of Social Services (1918) at the University of Toronto.

Burke uses biography and traditional archival sources in the Archives of Ontario, the National Archives of Canada, the United Church/Victoria University Archives, and various University of Toronto Archives to narrate how academics at the University of Toronto fostered the development of a reformist ideology called the "Toronto Ideal." A variety of traditions influenced the development of the ideal: British Idealism and Toynbee's University Settlement model, the new Department of Political Economy at the University of Toronto, the evangelistic missions of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches, and the sociology of the London School of Economics and University of Chicago. Burke describes how the University of Toronto exerted academic authority over the new profession of social work and explains how the English-Canadian model for social welfare became masculine and bureaucratic.

The Toynbee Model arose in England during the 1880s as a challenge to the charity work of middle-class female volunteers. This "university settlement movement" promoted muscular Christianity as a synthesis of British Idealism and religion. Young middle-class men, as resident missionaries in slum areas, were to devote their lives to the cultural elevation of the working classes rather than to seek personal salvation. The model promoted unification

of classes through a shared sense of citizenship. It identified the lack of cultural stimulation—rather than physical poverty or class power—as the primary cause of working-class squalor and "degeneration." The working class was to be "morally uplifted" by modelling its life on a higher class. Educated, middle-class men, those destined to wield economic and political power, were expected, after their missionary service, to support sympathetic legislation. As settlement houses spread, liberal instruction displaced the conservative obligations of charity, but social reform remained limited. Among those seeking professional training, women continued to outnumber men.

As the nineteenth century ended, Canada's universities were in transition. The curriculum of the University of Toronto incorporated a British idealist ethic that inspired Toynbee Hall in London. Under W. J. Ashley, the new Department of Political Economy injected the moral convictions of idealism into the empirical study of economics to convey a sense of civic responsibility and to challenge laissez-faire principles. The new social science of political economy assumed a potential class compromise could be realized. To secure conservative public opinion, it promoted gradual state intervention in opposition to secular socialism and traditional moral reform. James Mavor, the new chair, continued Ashley's initiative and produced a generation of graduates who staffed significant positions in government. Contrary to assumptions favouring the formation of the affiliated University Settlement (1910), Toronto males did not respond to issues of poverty through practical settlement activity; rather, they chose, as did future prime minister Mackenzie King, an intellectual commitment to idealism, a pursuit of office, and an affinity for evangelical Christianity.

During the same period religious revivalists promoted YMCAs and City Mission work. Evangelism on one hand, and the social gospel on the other, defined key conflicts. Some members of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches used social-work methodology, particularly casework technique, thus incorporating the goals of Christian charity and spiritual conversion into applied social science. Unlike university settlement houses in Chicago and London, evangelism in Toronto assimilated a spiritual form of economics, as did University Settlement when it opened in 1910. It excluded women and intended to provide male students from the university with their first real opportunity for volunteer service. Although British and U.S. settlement houses equated professional status with female social work, the idealist ethic at University Settlement viewed social service as voluntary and masculine.

Demands for a "scientific understanding of poverty" without socialist implications went hand in hand with the university's first official response to the poverty crisis. President Falconer, who formed Hart House for males, overlooked the long-standing commitment of university women to neighbour-

hood work at Evangelia House. Contrary to Falconer's interest, University Settlement work became a female and professional enterprise. By the end of the First World War, social service could no longer be defined as a uniquely masculine responsibility and University Settlement provided employment for educated female social workers.

The University of Toronto formed the Department of Social Services (DSS) in 1918 to exert academic authority over the development of the new profession of social work. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, and to gain respect from the wider university community, females sought professional recognition and endorsed an academically rigorous program. The changes devalued female contributions, since university elites emphasized professional knowledge over technical skills and vocational training. Further devaluation came when the Social Service Alumni promoted professional qualifications for public positions in social service. The pursuit of professional standards also reinforced the bureaucratization of administration and policy-making, allowing males who monopolized academic education in the social sciences to organize social work as a male preserve. The new curriculum underemphasized casework methodology and fieldwork and devalued female skills that had defined professional social work. By 1950 women were found primarily in the low-paying practitioner sector, while men, a minority in the field, controlled administration and planning.

From 1928 to 1937, E. J. Urwick and Harry Cassidy ushered in a rearguard defense of spiritual certainties in the DSS and promoted Toynbee's idealism to counter the bureaucratic and scientific priorities of other departments. Their actions prevented theoretical sociology and "materialism" from gaining a foothold in the DSS. Professional practice developed into a sociology program that emphasized the standards of applied social research. By 1932–33 the university instituted a four-year honours course in sociology under the auspices of the Department of Political Economy (DPE). Practitioners would receive a diploma in social work after completing an additional year of practical training in the DSS. Urwick's approach split applied sociology and social philosophy, thus paralyzing the coordination of sociology and social work. By the 1940s the predominantly female staff at University Settlement had been alienated, male faculty members dominated the boards of directors, and British idealism lost its persuasive power. Nevertheless, as technical expertise and efficiency took on new importance, the social scientists at the University of Toronto retained close ties to the humanities and did not completely repudiate the moral imperative of the Toronto Ideal. Harold Innis, as chair of the DPE, opposed the introduction of American statistical sociology and non-academic Christian sociology. In 1963 the University of Toronto formed an independent Department of Sociology. The university placed the School of Social Work

outside Innis's control. Under Cassidy the School emphasized a new type of social scientist: the public welfare expert whose existence rejected the aim of a personal connection that had formed the core of the idealist reform movement.

Burke successfully shows the limits of idealism in facing urban poverty. Its vision of society could not be achieved through the educational courses operated by middle-class residents of settlement houses. The compromises and disillusionment experienced by idealist reformers were many. Further, Burke artfully lays out the complexities and paradoxes inherent in the gendering of academic, bureaucratic, and professional practices. Although social welfare was no longer perceived as a voluntary masculine enterprise worked out at the community level, the growing complexity of public-welfare services demanded trained women and men to organize bureaucratic resources at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels. Progress, defined as order and technological expertise, undermined the altruistic community spirit of the Toronto Ideal. Given the cross-currents of influence, Burke successfully describes how failed attempts to institutionalize the ideals of service not only devalued casework techniques and specialization but also marginalized women and professional social work in Canada's emerging welfare bureaucracy.

Absent from Burke's account are the connections of reform to the political economy and class politics of the day. By isolating middle-class educational institutions, Burke fails to deal satisfactorily with the way reformers confronted the growing power of labour *and* the pressures for gender mobility within the middle class. Macdonald's Tory-worker alliance had disintegrated, and working-class independence became the rallying cry for revolutionary movements created by the consolidation of capitalism. Out of labour's new movement culture, working-class activists articulated modern ideologies of socialism, syndicalism, and labourism.

By contrast with Marlene Shore's account of sociology at McGill University (1922), questions of industrialization and interclass politics are absent in Burke's text. Rather, Burke begs the class question: "most of the academics discussed here belonged to the British middle classes; all certainly shared a middle-class perception of the social problems they addressed. . . . As this struggle remained confined within the boundaries of middle-class thought and action, the contest was propelled not by the dynamics of class, but by the conflict of gender" (p. 6). Burke simply assumes a middle-class boundary, leaving undocumented the mediating influences of industrialization, urbanization, and class conflict in Canada. For example, why did distinctive middle-class and working-class cultures exist in the first place? Why was intervention or amelioration necessary? Who financed or promoted university involvement?

Further, to its detriment, the text neither introduces counter-theoretical questions nor departs from traditional kinds of data collection that might answer those questions. More innovative methods might uncover contradictory economic, class, and gender problems facing both reformers *and* revolutionaries. The analysis of socialist or labour institutions or a history from below might have created a more lively and enlightened reading of events, and transcended the middle-class perspective. Taking no cue from Foucault, Burke fails to answer questions about epistemic power and the objects of university practice. Middle-class progressives may have "discovered" and "uplifted" but they also constructed "gender," "class," and "race" through their gaze. Their actions "disciplined" the urban poor and "abnormalized" their life as culturally defective. Why did University of Toronto academics have the power to act as they did? Who were the people that these reformers acted on? Where did they come from? Where did they go? What was their ideal?

Still, despite its limitations, *Seeking the Highest Good* fills an important niche. Burke limits analysis to Toronto academics who promulgated the "Toronto Ideal," which enabled and constrained a gendered approach to the issue of urban poverty and the "degenerate" classes. This book should be read by those interested in how gender politics and middle-class ideas permeated the social sciences, public services, and professions in Canada.

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Paul-André Turcotte. *Intransigeance ou compromis. Sociologie et histoire du catholicisme actuel.* Montréal: Éditions Fides, 1994. Pp. 455.

L'étude d'une entité religieuse, en particulier d'une église dans ses rapports avec le profane pose des problèms à la fois d'ordre méthodologique et structurel. En effet, comment peut-on expliquer rationnellement le rôle d'une composante sociale qui s'inspire et prend source dans le divin? Société en elle-même; société dans la société; société se prétendant au-dessus de la société. Voilà le dilemme. L'étude se complexifie si, comme au Québec, l'Église s'est impliquée dans l'organisation civile et s'est avérée instigatrice d'institutions devenues, au cours de l'histoire des composantes importants de la société. C'est à cette tâche que, depuis quelques annés, le sociologue Paul-André Turoctte se consacre. S'inspirant des travaux de Max Weber et de ceux d'Ernst Troeltsch, Turcotte éclaire sous un angle nouveau et critique le rôle de l'Église, au vingtième siècle, dans ses rapports avec la société civile. La période étudiée par Turcotte est particulièrement significative. En effet, après