

for discussion. Of significance is the frequently ignored truism that students are "becoming" adults. The first word in Moffatt's title is essentially a "present imperfect," and reminds us of the process of development at the heart of the college experience. The dejected comments of one student reflecting on the beginnings of that coming-of-age are both pointed and poignant: "I found myself intimidated when I began at Rutgers because all the students I was meeting seemed very intellectual . . . I found myself with intelligent thoughts behind a very weak vocabulary" (p. 299).

It would be unfortunate if *Coming of Age in New Jersey* fails to reach its projected readership. It offers a fascinating glimpse into student life. Moffatt's insights into contemporary culture are always apt. For example, consider his comments on the freshman understanding of the concept of culture as described in the chapter on Race, where he tells us that students'

working concept of culture is not especially deep or sophisticated. Notably missing from it was the idea that culture could fundamentally determine modes of thought and deeply influence behaviour, or that it was relativistic in any sense more profound than one person's having a taste for one leisure activity and another for a different activity.

Anthropologist: What different types of people have you noticed here at Rutgers so far?

Freshman Female (Sept. 1978): Well, I've noticed a lot of people here are into Frisbee. Is that what you mean? (p. 153).

A Victorian Missionary and Canadian Indian Policy: Cultural Synthesis vs Cultural Replacement

David A. Nock

Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, for the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion/Corporation Canadienne des Sciences Religieuses, 1988. x + 194 pp. \$14.95 (paper)

Reviewer: Elizabeth Graham
Wilfrid Laurier University

This book examines three phases of E.F. Wilson's lifework — as missionary, school principal and amateur anthropologist — with detailed descriptions of the background influences upon him in each.

In 1868 E.F. Wilson arrived at the Sarnia Reserve on behalf of the Church Missionary Society (CMS). Nock explores the aspects of Wilson's personality and strong family association with the Evangelical Movement in the Church of England that led him to take this step. In Sarnia, Wilson intended to follow the policies of Henry Venn, of the CMS, who strongly advocated cultural synthesis (i.e., a people's borrowing selected items from a dominant culture and merging them with its own). He was to organize a Native Church which would then be run by the Natives themselves. But he found himself in a community with a well established Methodist Church, and nothing worked quite the way it was supposed to. Nock assesses Wilson's work at Sarnia as a failure and takes Wilson to task for not implementing Venn's plans, for fighting with the Methodists and for ignoring Native government.

After two years Wilson moved to Garden River and, in 1871, based on schemes of cultural replacement (i.e., strategies in which the dominant culture

attempts to change all aspects of a weaker society), founded the Shingwauk and Wawanosh residential schools for Native children. An intensive program of education and cultural change is described, but, according to Nock, Wilson was not able to keep the children at the school long enough to have any lasting effect.

During his tenure as principal of the schools Wilson began to study Indian groups. Nock describes Wilson's correspondence with some of the leading anthropologists of the day, particularly the influential Horatio Hale. Returning to a perspective of cultural synthesis, Wilson founded two journals, *Our Forest Children* and *The Canadian Indian*, and wrote articles for them describing various Indian groups he had visited and studied, and several philosophical treatises on Native autonomy. The journals did not last, and Wilson's attempts to hold conferences to help Native people become independent were met with distrust by Native leaders.

The title makes reference to a missionary. A more apt title for this book might be "The World of E.F. Wilson." Less than half of the book concerns Wilson directly. Rather, this interesting and readable work provides a many-faceted exploration of the intellectual climate of the age and of Wilson as a receptacle for the ideas of prominent Churchmen and Academics. Nock describes his work as a "case study of . . . how the policies and programs of one particular missionary illumine many important features of plans incorporating cultural replacement and cultural synthesis. . . . These are problems that bedevil Canadians to this day and, because this is so, Wilson's experience between 1868 and 1893 remains alive, fresh, and relevant" (p. 2). However, these claims appear somewhat specious since the book's actual message is that Wilson failed as a missionary and educator. His school was not appreciably different from other residential schools. Yet, Wilson represented ideas that were about 100 years ahead of their time, and his attempts to put them into practice were doomed to failure, and to understand our history it is as important to examine the active failures as the successes.

In his assessment of the work at Sarnia, Nock seems to underestimate Wilson's effectiveness. He does not mention that Wilson reported a unanimous vote from the Church members of the Sarnia reserve to set up a Native Church Fund and that, by 1871, he had Native catechists at Sarnia and Kettle Point and three young men studying to be catechists. Despite the inevitability of conflict with Methodists, after thirty years of political/sectarian strife, Wilson had plans for a joint school, and he was very aware of his dependence on the Indian Council. It is not clear how Nock decides that five years at boarding school is not long enough for cultural replacement or what value there is in figuring out an "average" length of stay.

The title also makes reference to Canadian Indian policy, but its relation to that policy is tenuous. Nock suggests that Wilson failed to have any significant affect on government policies. Further, Nock's view of cultural replacement and cultural synthesis as policies representing clearcut alternatives, risks oversimplifying the equation. Native people did not always have any effective choices about accepting changes which, if not forced, were nevertheless overwhelming. Lastly, the book contains some unfortunate phrasing regarding "levels of development reached by different groups of non-Europeans" (p. 52) and "societies that had already developed a state-level society" (p. 59).