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1986

Review of Stampede City: Power and Politics in the West Edited by Chuck Reasons

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Barr, Brenton M., "Review of Stampede City: Power and Politics in the West Edited by Chuck Reasons" (1986). *Great Plains Quarterly*. 936.

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industry. In economic terms, what benefits that industry benefits the city. The authors of this book argue that what is good for the petroleum industry, however, is not always good for all inhabitants of Calgary.

The headings of *Stampede City's* nine lively and provocative chapters reflect many of the authors' sentiments: "Calgary: Where Free Enterprise costs a little more"; "Oil: You can bank on it"; "City Hall: Public Funds and Private Interests"; "Real Estate: The Land Grab"; "The Media: Corporate Cheerleaders"; "The Stampede: Cowtown's Sacred Cow"; "It's Just a Game? The 1988 Winter Olympics"; "Western Separatism: Counter-elite of the Marginalized"; and "Casualties of Progress."

The contributors contend that "the glowing image of growth, progress and profit that Calgary projected" (p. 7) did not extend to all Calgarians. While the standards of living, or profits, rose for some, those of others reciprocally declined. Civic and provincial politicians accommodated the interests of the business and related service community rather than public at large. Many of the megaprojects commissioned in Calgary during affluent times were not carried out as a result of plebiscite but will eventually be paid for by the city's taxpayers.

The contributors comprise a self-appointed group, Calgary Collective Ltd. They criticize numerous civic and corporate leaders, including many elected officials. Although one author, E. Husband, while an elected alderman on Calgary City Council between 1980 and 1983 energetically opposed many of the allegedly extravagant undertakings of these civic leaders, the contributors give the impression of being a small but vocal group of onlookers shouting, "The Emperor has no clothes." Two, including the editor, are professors at the University of Calgary; the other five have engaged in various forms of community or social activities. All appear to support the idea that formal public direction of economic and community affairs would be preferable to the situation commonly prevailing in Calgary in which the business classes largely control

Stampede City: Power and Politics in the West.

Edited by Chuck Reasons. Toronto, Ontario: Between the Lines, 1984. Photographs, endnotes. 216 pp. Can\$25.00 cloth, Can\$12.95 paper.

Stampede City inquires into the boom and bust generated by the petroleum industry in Calgary, Alberta, between the mid 1970s and early 1980s. Calgary is Canada's sixth largest population center but is the corporate and financial center of the country's petroleum

land use through investment and social involvement.

Too often during the boom many incidents or developments occurred which quickly became obscured to Calgarians because of the rapidity with which they superseded each other. Many people were caught up in various ways with the dynamism of change, often involving real estate speculation or the hoopla of growth. The authors develop and document their facts with many references to the media or to individuals interviewed during their research. Many opinions running through the book's arguments, however, are largely those of the individual contributors and often are phrased in sensational or inflammatory terms similar to the chapter headings.

Hyperbole has its place in certain types of journalism, of course, but in *Stampede City* it detracts from the serious subjects of the book. The contributors unfortunately may have reduced the impact of their research by imposing their unstated but evident political and personal philosophies on what should have been a cogent, and, in view of their qualifications, authoritative investigation. The reviewer learned a lot from reading *Stampede City* but wonders if the biases of the authors did not interfere with the book's message.

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