

[52]). But there is plenty of political and intellectual insight and challenge here for non-historians, and the broad synthetic canvas simply whets the appetite for the more substantive volumes. *Rebels* is an astonishing book by any measure, and should be read for both its take on the left and for the way it re-thinks ossified categories in Canadian history.

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Gareth Stedman Jones, *An End to Poverty? A Historical Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

In his extended essay, *An End to Poverty?* Gareth Stedman Jones provides a novel account of the origins of social democracy and its prescriptions for dealing with poverty. Rather than tracing the evolution of the nineteenth and twentieth century welfare state and the ideas that sustained it, Stedman Jones depicts Thomas Paine and the Marquis de Condorcet as the intellectual progenitors of modern social democracy. Responding to the American and French Revolutions, Paine and Condorcet sought to apply enlightenment ideas about education and actuarial probability to the problem of mendacity through universal education and social insurance schemes. They reasoned that such contributory social programs would help develop a republican social citizenship; that the social, political, commercial, and moral were all interconnected and the possibility of eliminating chronic economic deprivation could be accomplished within the parameters of civic life. Drawing on the initially optimistic response of liberals to the American and French Revolutions, Paine and Condorcet offered a reading of Adam Smith that allowed them to combine his embrace of commercial society with an egalitarian project of democratic community building.

The fierce monarchial and anti-republican reaction to the revolution in the 1790s, and the conservative nationalism and evangelicalism that followed, however, buried these moderate republican proposals by appropriating and re-interpreting Smith in entirely different directions. Indeed, in a sense this book is all about how rival authors fought over the legacy of Smith's ideas. Paine and Condorcet are Stedman Jones's heroes because they recognized that Smith's economic analysis was entirely compatible with liberal, moderately egalitarian republican politics. Malthus is one of the chief villains because of the way in which he redirected later political economists away from such social democratic ideas with his heterodox Christian views about the origins of poverty.

Further, Stedman Jones sees early political economists, like Jean-Baptiste Say, splitting the social and political realm, and pushing political economy to concern itself with economic freedom and markets rather than with democratic

culture. As a result of the efforts of Malthus and Say, amongst others in the early nineteenth century, poverty came to be depicted either as an issue of personal behaviour and morality, or as a purely economic problem. And consequently, the alleviation or elimination of poverty ceased to be part of a democratic project of creating citizens. Meanwhile, the later development of socialism divided society into opposing camps of workers and capitalists, occluding the significance of commercial society for civic life that had been recognized earlier by Paine and Condorcet. Thus, instead of the heroic rise of the working class and of Labour representatives pushing for economic amelioration in response to the development of industrial capitalism, Stedman Jones posits socialism and laissez-faire political economy as polar extremes carving up the liberal-republican vision of social democracy first formulated by Paine and Condorcet.

Clearly, Stedman Jones makes this argument as a plea for a return to social-democratic politics today: a politics that ought to draw on the initial republican project by combining commercial society with social equality and inclusive citizenship. Indeed, Stedman Jones is entirely upfront in his motives, stating in the first few pages that he aims “to make visible some of the threads by which the past is connected with the present” in order to disabuse those who have recently tried to “remove any residue of an old-fashioned collectivism” by embracing the libertarianism of Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations* (1-2). While this desire to liberate Smith’s ideas from the ahistorical appropriation of neo-liberals does not undercut Stedman Jones’s book as a significant and original piece of historical scholarship, *An End to Poverty?* is perhaps too heavy on argument and too light on evidentiary explication to satisfy academic specialists.

But perhaps the most interesting light in which to consider this book is how it caps Stedman Jones’s intellectual odyssey from the new social historian of *Outcast London* (1971), through the modest linguistic turn of *Languages of Class* (1983), to the textual analysis of the traditional intellectual historian. For although this book is clearly not intended as a theoretical or methodological intervention, and despite the social-democratic sympathies and sophisticated critical analysis evident within it, *An End to Poverty?* projects ideas as derived primarily from the political realm, largely autonomous from socio-economic developments. Like in his work on Chartism, Stedman Jones sees the political revolution of the late-eighteenth century Atlantic world, and the hysterical reactions to its republican radicalism that followed, as ultimately more significant in shaping the ideas of the modern world than the socio-economic revolution caused by the development of late-eighteenth century factory towns. Stedman Jones is too good an historian to put the division in such stark, crude terms, and indeed, he would no doubt resist such a characterization. But it cannot be denied that this is a work that focuses almost entirely on the interplay of texts, not on the place of ideas within society or culture. I was left wondering if the

evolution of textual interpretations fully explains the social and political impact of political economy? Did not the changing material world at least influence later generations of radicals and social democrats to produce new ideas that seemed to fit the conditions of their own time? More than once while reading this book, Stedman Jones's method (though not conclusions) reminded me of Gertrude Himmelfarb's two volume intellectual history of ideas about poverty, *The Idea of Poverty* (1985) and *Poverty and Compassion* (1991). Fifteen years ago, amidst the fury of the debates about the linguistic turn, such a comparison would have seemed shocking. In this instance, it is not the method that distinguishes the scholarship of Stedman Jones and of Himmelfarb, only their political commitments.

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David Rogers and John McLeod, eds., *The Revision of Englishness* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2004).

This collection of articles operates on two levels. It sets out to analyse the reaction of various English writers, poets, and film makers to both the influx of immigrants from across the former empire that began in the postwar era and to the shifting definition of Englishness associated with that rapid demographic transformation. Given that Rogers and McLeod invited the contributors to "reflect self-consciously upon their relationship with Englishness as a part of their critical endeavours" (10), the articles also document the reaction of modern scholars to the question of what it meant to be English during the same period.

Focused on the issue of Englishness and how that identity has been challenged and changed since the effective collapse of Britain as an imperial power in the years after 1945, *The Revision of Englishness* is more cohesive than most collections of conference papers. Almost all of the essays have something thought-provoking to say about the lived experience of Englishness, whether portrayed through novels like Adam Thorpe's *Still*, Hanif Kureishi's *The Black Album*, and Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*; through the poetry of Philip Larkin, Ted Hughes, and Geoffrey Hill; through films like *Bhaji of the Beach*; or through the lives of the contributors themselves. In the last case, however, *The Revision of Englishness* sometimes seems to teeter dangerously on the brink of self-indulgence. Some of the self-conscious reflections invited by Rogers and McLeod convey the sense of being part of a captive audience at an academic conference perfectly, but that is probably not what the editors had in mind. For instance, Alan Sinfield's autobiographical admission that "I was in love with Derek, and wanted to have sex with him in some partly comprehend-