

Rosenberg, Louis. *Canada's Jews: A Social and Economic Study of Jews in Canada in the 1930s*. Edited by Morton Weinfeld. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993. xxiii+424pp.

Professor Weinfeld has done students of Canadian demography—especially that of the Jews—a fine service by reissuing Rosenberg's monumental survey in a 1993 volume. The new edition contains a full facsimile (photocopy) of the original 418 pages in Rosenberg's 1939 book, plus a brief but certainly useful "Foreword" by S.M. Lipset and a lengthy "Introduction" by Weinfeld.

In that substantial enhancement of the book, Weinfeld provides a biographic and literary account of Louis Rosenberg and his unrivalled contributions to the scientific study of Jewish life in Canada, indicates some of the limitations and weaknesses in Rosenberg's massive achievement, and situates this study in the broader context of pre-WW II ethnic and demographic research in Canada. This historical essay on the very limited literature of that era enhances our admiration for Rosenberg's great labour of love, which produced a work of such quality despite the unbelievably slim resources and technology that Rosenberg had available, some sixty years ago.

The original book contained both a Bibliography and an Index, which are reproduced as is in this 1993 edition. Weinfeld has added a listing of all Rosenberg's known publications, from 1928 to 1970. This bibliography covers six pages, detailing hundreds of works by Rosenberg, which appeared in the Jewish popular press, in scholarly journals, encyclopedias, and other formats. Throughout, Weinfeld tells us, Rosenberg was working alone, assisted only by his professional contacts at Dominion Bureau of Statistics (now called Statistics Canada).

Where we do face some uncertainty is in the area of errors (in the original 1939 work) that are recognized by the editor preparing to republish. Weinfeld indicates (p. xix) that a few mistakes had appeared in the 1939 study, and these are only to be expected somewhere in a long book. What should the later scholar do, as editor, on behalf of the 1990s reader? It would have been wise to put an asterisk or whatever symbol at the place where a

typographical or computational error is located, and then (at the foot of the page) inform the reader about what is incorrect and what the word or table heading, etc. should properly say. On p. 34, where a table (no. 21) is mislabelled as “Montreal” but is obviously about Winnipeg, we find a semi-legible hand correction. On two other pages where Weinfeld states (in the Introduction) that Rosenberg had left incorrect data in place (p. 89), or poor interpretation/discussion (pp. 109-110), the reader using this 1993 version finds no signal/indicator of a problem with some preferred solution or likely alternative wording. Although one wishes to faithfully reproduce the classic work as it was, some editorial intervention of the above type is called for, and should have been provided.

Finally, the social scientific community interested in pioneering demographic and ethnic research must thank Morton Weinfeld for this initiative, as we can only benefit by seeing this grand achievement of a by-gone generation back in circulation. Students of Jewry anywhere (not just in Canada) would be strongly advised that this book is, and will remain, “must reading,” as the “before” database for historical/sociological comparisons of many kinds.

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