

might have prevented the creation of two independent postwar states, one (the FRG) split between elitist modernism and ‘commercial unculture’ and the other eschewing trivial culture and promoting instead outdated bourgeois humanism and Marxist agit-prop. Nor am I at all convinced that national cultural unity is something desirable; to me, that smacks too much of authoritarian tutelage, or intellectual and social stagnation.

Finally, I feel I must protest Hermand’s peppering his text with anti-American jibes. It is certainly true that much of American culture-production in the 1930s and 40s was driven by the profit motive; that is even more true today. But one must remember that the market has many niches, and that even accounting for mystifications, it does allow for a more democratic system of cultural delivery than top-down *Besserwisserei*, whether in the form of Wilhelmine bourgeois or communist authoritarian. In his rush to condemn American shallowness, Hermand seems to forget that it was largely the private market, private charities, and private institutions such as the Institute for Advanced Study, or, yes, Metro-Goldwyn Mayer, which helped to keep so many German exiles afloat during the years their own state-funded institutions would not employ them. It is certainly true that Americans did not appreciate the talents of some émigrés, but is it fair to blame Americans for not reading modernist novels in German (p. 210)? Frankly, I found endearing an anecdote Hermand cites with horror, in which Arnold Schoenberg was greeted at a banquet by a film composer (whose name Hermand does not bother to cite) with the words: “Hi Arnie, who are you? Never heard of you. But your stuff must be good, because otherwise you wouldn’t be sitting here” (p. 198). What I hear in these words is friendly interest, not contemptible ignorance. I just wish Jost Hermand had given this form of limited cultural pluralism its due.

Suzanne Marchand

Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge

JOHNSON, J.K. – *In Duty Bound: Men, Women, and the State in Upper Canada, 1783-1841*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2014. Pp. 304.

A quarter century ago, in his book, *Becoming Prominent: Regional Leadership in Upper Canada, 1791-1841*, J.K. Johnson endeavoured to provide a “collective biography” of the Upper Canadian elite through a social and demographic analysis of the colony’s elected officials. In his new study of Upper Canadians and the state, he broadens his scope to include colonists of more modest means, and even those who lived in grinding poverty.

Generations of historians have delved into the voluminous correspondence between individual Upper Canadians and the provincial authorities, extracting rich material for specific regional and thematic studies. Yet Johnson recognizes that the thousands of individual petitions drafted by Upper Canadians offer a rare window

into colonial society as a whole, both from the perspective of the province's "ordinary people" and from the officials who governed them.⁽⁴⁾ The documents restore some voices of the colony's silent majority—people who do not appear elsewhere in the historical record. By systematically mining these petitions and the subsequent correspondence, Johnson provides new insight into the workings of the colonial regime and the relationship between Upper Canadians and their government.

It has often been assumed that ordinary settlers had little interaction with the limited state apparatus in Upper Canada, and that government remained largely irrelevant in a dispersed, mostly agricultural colony. Yet, after sifting through samplings of individual colonists' appeals, Johnson challenges that assumption. He concludes that at some point in their lives, a striking number of Upper Canadians drew on the age-old right of English subjects to petition the Crown—in this instance as individuals requesting everything from land, employment, and schools to pensions, pardons, and poor relief. His comprehensive study explores the ways in which settlers sought to extract tangible benefits from officials who had the power to grant them.

The most common type of petition involved applications for Crown land grants and deeds, reflecting the centrality of agriculture and land speculation to the province. These appeals often entailed years of back-and-forth interaction between individual colonists and the governing regime. To obtain land between 1797 and 1819, for example, applicants needed to journey to the provincial capital (at their own expense) for in-person interviews with the colony's Executive Council. As Johnson notes, "Here the state and the people were definitely not abstract entities, not at arm's length from one another, but in the same room together..."⁽¹⁹⁾ Even after satisfying the authorities of their good character, settlers needed to navigate a bureaucratic labyrinth in order to acquire land and, eventually, to have their title confirmed. This required time, money, and persistence. Aspiring land owners had to make multiple trips away from their farms and livelihoods in order to shuttle between various officials, most of whom collected a share of the required—and steadily increasing—fees. After receiving location tickets for their tracts, many never bothered applying for deeds, creating legal problems for their heirs. Indeed, the colonial land system proved so arcane that even the lieutenant governor struggled to comprehend its intricacies.

Despite the raft of regulations, the authorities made exceptions to the rules, or crafted unspoken ones of their own. Several black settlers had their land applications rejected. Johnson, and perhaps the historical records, provide little reasoning for this, beyond the obvious persistence of racial prejudice. Disabled veterans, unable to clear and settle their lands as required by law, failed for years to obtain the patents they needed in order to sell their tracts for badly needed cash. After their individual petitions reached a critical mass, however, the government carved out a loophole and confirmed their titles. At other times, the authorities bent the rules for widows, Loyalist families, and especially the well-connected. Notwithstanding the system's shortcomings, Johnson concludes that most petitioners who asked for land received it.

Among Johnson's chief aims is the deflation of the myth of self-reliant yeoman farmers who operated independently of government. He calls this "one of the hardest misconceptions about Upper Canadian society, perpetuated even by otherwise reputable scholars." (242) Although this myth holds less weight among scholars than the public at large, *In Duty Bound* is a useful corrective to the tendency to romanticize our colonial forebears as rugged individualists who eschewed charity and state support, even when faced with hardship and ill-fortune. As Johnson argues, "Government was highly relevant to the thousands of Upper Canadians who gained some or all of their livelihood directly or indirectly from the state..." (243)

Although petitioning did not guarantee a successful outcome, it sometimes set the wheels of the colonial apparatus in motion. Requests requiring outlays of public funds, however, often encountered a "suspicious, tight-fisted, penny-pinching administration," obsessed with legal procedure. (246) As many desperate supplicants discovered, state relief required a designated pool of funds allocated by specific legislation. Unless authorized to disburse public money by the imperial government, even sympathetic lieutenants governor could do little for those in economic distress, short of dipping into their own private purses. That reality did not, however, deter hundreds of families from asking for help.

Johnson recognizes the limitations of his sources. Although most petitions contain valuable biographical information about petitioners and their families, Johnson acknowledges that many supplicants portrayed themselves in as sympathetic a light as possible. (7) Despite these shortcomings, he wrings an impressive amount of useful data from the documents.

By patching together a sampling of the fragmentary records generated by thousands of otherwise anonymous colonists, Johnson enhances our understanding of the challenges, aspirations, and lived experiences of ordinary settlers. Engaging and accessible, his book also yields a greater understanding of the nuts-and-bolts workings of the colonial regime. While Gerald M. Craig's fifty-year-old volume, *Upper Canada: The Formative Years*, remains the most comprehensive survey of the colony, *In Duty Bound* is an indispensable and long overdue study of how Upper Canadians interacted with those who governed them.

Gregory Wigmore
University of California, Berkeley

PELLETIER, Tommy Simon – *Vivre et pêcher dans les Notre-Dame. Excursion archéologique sur le barachois de Mont-Louis au Régime français*, Québec, Presses de l'Université Laval, 2014, 192 p.

Cet ouvrage, tiré d'une thèse de maîtrise, présente, de manière quelque peu vulgarisée, les résultats d'une recherche en archéologie historique effectuée dans le village de Mont-Louis en Gaspésie. On parle ici d'un ancien poste de