

*Not Quite Us: Anti-Catholic Thought in English Canada since 1900* by Kevin P. Anderson

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plex quantitative research to articulate the significance of black buying power during the rise of the consumer culture era in Canada and the United States, Thompson's analysis is also buttressed by her own personal narratives in ways that add richness to the stories of black life in Canada. Although acknowledging that the book does not utilize oral histories, the reader longs to understand the ways in which Thompson positions her personal narratives as a methodological approach when writing about black Canada. There are also moments when Thompson discusses black consumers, mostly black women, as passive in their receipt of these dominant messages about beauty in mainstream media. For example, Thompson describes how chemical-relaxer advertising constructed an image of "black woman-as-spectacle, as passive (i.e., feminine) and male-seeking (i.e., the bearer, not maker of meaning)..." However, if one considers bell hooks' argument about the oppositional gaze, black female spectators and their "awareness" of racism and its erasure of black womanhood was an important part of looking relations (Hooks, 119). Hooks posits that not all black women submitted to the spectacle of regression but often resisted this identification to create an oppositional gaze. Although

Thompson's review of textual culture creates limitations when exploring audience reception, an examination of black women's oppositional gaze may give space to illustrate how black audiences read these advertisements. How might black audiences who "look against the grain" challenge mainstream representations of beauty? It is clear that Thompson begins to tackle some of these concerns and challenges readers to consider black cultural practices in their review of black Canadian history.

*Beauty in a Box* offers a rich and textured analysis of black contributions to the consumer marketplace in Canada. It is critical and informative in its interdisciplinary approach to tackling race, gender and classed based assumptions in black beauty culture both within Canada and more globally. In so many ways, the book helped me to rethink my own politics of hair and the challenges of navigating consumer markets that largely ignore black women. Its contributions help us to consider the economic and cultural capital that black populations continue to bring to the Canadian landscape.

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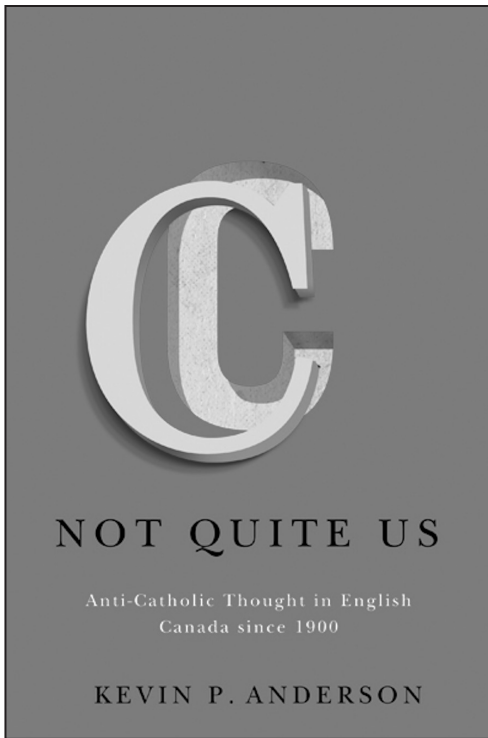
## *Not Quite Us: Anti-Catholic Thought in English Canada since 1900*

By Kevin P. Anderson

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019. 328 pages.  
\$34.95 paperback. ISBN 978-0-7735-5655-3.

The people of Cavan wanted no part of the Cistercians. It was, one councillor boasted, 'a Protestant township and it shall stay like this' (226). Others dropped dark hints that if the monks did

appear Orange vigilantes might take matters into their own hands. What shocks is not the bigotry, but the date—1976—and the place, not the Irish borderlands but some 20 kilometres from Peterborough,



Ontario. Of course, anti-Catholicism was not new to the region—Toronto was known as the Belfast of Canada for a reason—but its endurance long into the twentieth century (and indeed to the present day) is the subject of what Kevin P. Anderson describes as his intellectual history of anti-Catholicism in Canada since 1900. This is not an entirely untrodden path, either in Canada or overseas: in his high profile 2004 study, for example, the historian Philip Jenkins was only the latest in a long line of commentators who complained that anti-Catholicism was America's 'last acceptable prejudice'. More recently, the senior senator from California, Dianne Feinstein, was one of a number of her colleagues who questioned the capacity for impartiality of a Catholic nominee for a federal judgeship. 'The dogma,' Feinstein told Amy Coney Barrett, a law professor at the University of

Notre Dame, 'lives loudly within you.' Nor is this simply an American phenomenon. In 2013, for example, a leading political commentator for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation began a column criticizing the unapologetically Catholic prime minister with the observation 'It is 26 years since Tony Abbot left the seminary, but in many ways he takes it wherever he goes.' In a now post-Catholic Ireland, meanwhile, Northern Ireland's former police ombudsman complained in 2016 that the *Irish Times* and other media outlets regularly printed things about Catholics 'which would not be tolerated in the context of Islam or Judaism, or of homosexuals or humanists.' Kevin Anderson make a similar point in *Not Quite Us*, attributing modern manifestations of anti-Catholicism in Canada to a widespread if not always articulated caricature of the Catholic Church as an institutionally monolithic, intellectually obscurantist, and morally retrograde institution prone to political meddling and the protection of sexual predators. To Anderson this was not a modern phenomenon, but rather core to the development of English Canada in the twentieth century.

His book traces the shifting ways in which criticism (and at times more) of the church was pursued over decades by anglophone Protestants who sought to define Canada in terms of a 'Britishness' that identified in Catholicism a cultural, political, ethnic and above all linguistic Other, antithetical to the values they sought to inculcate and the institutions they hoped to build. The great strength of this volume is its careful delineation of the protean character of Canadian anti-Catholicism, beginning with anglophone Protestant disgust at what they perceived as French Canadian 'cowardice' in the First World War (and again in the Second) and what they suspected was a concomitant franco-

phone hostility to 'British' ideas of liberty. As Anderson's carefully marshalled examples make clear, these ideas were pervasive in the first third of the twentieth century. After the war the nature of Canadian anti-Catholicism shifted again, although once more Quebec, or rather Protestant perceptions of Quebec, remained central. Anxieties about relative population growth (both organic and imported) and disgust at what was seen as Catholic moral meddling became conflated with the incipient fascism some detected in the social and economic policies of Maurice Duplessis. The result was that Catholic Quebec came to be seen by many in English Canada as an ally of all that was dark and undemocratic in inter-war Europe. The Second World War did little to alleviate these fears: disgust at resistance to conscription was widespread and often associated with Catholicism as such, and many detected the shadow of Vichy in explicitly Catholic-nationalist groups such as the Order of Jacques Cartier. These fears continued into the Cold War: Catholicism in general and its Canadian variant in particular was simply another totalitarian-

ism opposed to the personal, political, and economic freedoms embraced by English Canada. The result, Anderson argues, was a Canadian civic nationalism that had neither room nor patience for what it perceived as Catholic obscurantism. *Not Quite Us* is very good in tracing and describing the protean but enduring character of Canadian anti-Catholicism, and if its focus on every manifestation of English Canadian anti-Catholic expression can at times seem relentless, the detail is rich, deep, and ultimately convincing. In the end the reader is forced to agree with Anderson's conclusion that English Canadian anti-Catholicism has been integral to the Canadian project. 'It has,' he writes, 'constantly shifted in composition, reflecting the symbiotic relationship anti-Catholicism has shared with a central question in Canadian history: who is an ideal Canadian and how can this ideal be cultivated and protected?' (242) This richly researched book is an important contribution to that debate.

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## *Purchasing Power*

### *Women and the Rise of Canadian Consumer Culture*

By Donica Belisle

Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 2020. 304 pages. \$85 cloth, \$29.95 paper, \$29.95 eBook. ISBN 9781442631137. (utorontopress.com).

*Purchasing Power* reveals that Canadians' consumer habits of a century ago were ultimately connected to power. Canadians used the consumer realm to empower themselves, and disempower others based on class, race, and ethnicity—a sentiment that continues today

as consumerism in Canada, and globally, continues to rise at an unsustainable level that accentuates inequalities. Belisle's book effectively illustrates the source and history of Canadians' consumer habits, which fuel today's consumer culture. Since the late nineteenth century, Canadian women's