

an exploration of best practices could have edified the public not merely on methods of resistance, but also offered insights into the policies required for systemic transformation. For instance, a compelling argument could have been advanced for the self-regulation of the consulting profession via third-party intermediaries, which would serve to enhance the regulatory framework for consultants in the public sector. By integrating comprehensive policy recommendations, the book could have substantially augmented the public's understanding of how consultants might be regulated more effectively by governmental bodies. Resistance, in this context, should be perceived as a means to an end; the ultimate objective must be the comprehensive transformation of the prevailing system itself.

The Consulting Trap offers a powerful critique of the influence TPSFs wield over governments and the dangers this poses to democracy. The book is essential reading for anyone concerned about the future of public services and the capacity of governments to maintain independence and accountability. By urging citizens to challenge the dominance and supposed expertise of TPSFs, Hurl and Werner provide a blueprint for reclaiming democratic processes and rebuilding a transparent and accountable public sector.

History Has Made Us Friends: Reassessing the Special Relationship between Canada and the United States.

Donald E. Abelson and Stephen Brooks, eds., Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2024, pp. 338

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As Abelson and Brooks emphasize in the Introduction to their edited book, the concept of the special relationship “that originated many decades ago, in circumstances very different from those that exist today, continues to have a serious hold on the Canadian imagination. It remains, at least implicitly, the yardstick against which the condition of the Canada–US relationship is measured” (5). The book seeks to offer a fresh and more nuanced perspective on the dynamics and nature of the special relationship by tackling an old and familiar concept, for many rather slippery and politically contested, and recasting it in ways that are more fluid and manageable.

The argument is that the special relationship has been understood too narrowly by those who, in recent decades, have dismissed it as a relic of times past or indeed as something that never truly existed except at the level of political rhetoric. In the Introduction, the editors begin by examining the origins and history of the idea of the special relationship, its various meanings and how it has been conceptualized. They recall Charles Doran for whom the Canada–US relationship has few parallels in terms of scope or amity. For Doran, the special relationship operates on two rails, one structural and the other involving politics and policy. At the structural level, the Canadian–American relationship continues to be unique or special as no other pair of countries can demonstrate the combination of close governmental interaction, institutional ties and buffers, pacific conflict resolution and extensiveness of cross-border bureaucratic and private sector activity. The policy level, however, has not exhibited the same consistency, as it has had its ups and downs along various contexts, leaders and administrations. Yet, the special relationship has never depended on personal relations at the top, although these have sometimes made an important difference, owing to the structural characteristics undergirding Canadian–American relations. In the subsequent chapters, the recent state and likely future trajectory of Canada–US relations are assessed to determine whether the concept of the special relationship

accurately describes both the features and the associated consequences of this “enduring” partnership.

The book has three sections. The first deals with key themes in Canada–US relations, such as Canadians’ views on the United States (Michael Adams and Andrew Parkin) and the challenges Canada faces in making its voice heard in Washington (Roy Norton), as when the Soviet Union dissolved and unipolarity set in (Michael Hawes and Christopher Kirkey). The second section focuses on the special relationship, notably the extent to which personal relations between the two countries’ leaders can impact Canada–US relations, considering Trump’s protectionism (Greg Anderson), various presidents and prime ministers (Asa McKercher and Susan Colbourn), Brian Mulroney and Ronald Reagan (Donald Abelson), as well as Canadian nationalism (Stephen Brooks) and Quebec’s relations with the US under Jean Charest (Stéphane Paquin). The third and last section concentrates on how Canada and the US have navigated important policy files, including the environment (Debora VanNijnatten and Andrea Olive), Arctic sovereignty (Adam Lajeunesse), defence co-operation (David Haglund and Wesley Nicol) and border security (Sara McGuire).

The analysis of the idea of the special relationship is brilliantly done by the editors in the Introduction. The other chapters address how evidence of a special relationship may be exemplified within their specific themes or topics. While some chapters do so more thoroughly, others refer only tangentially to the notion of the special relationship, if at all. Chapter 9 is the one that most discusses the Canada–US special relationship while emphasizing that there are more signs of it in the environmental field than in any other. The treatment of the special relationship is in fact essentially limited to the Introduction. The book would notably have benefited from a conclusion summing up how its various chapters actually contribute to a reassessment of the special relationship between Canada and the United States. Yet, *History Has Made Us Friends* provides numerous valuable insights on what is arguably one of the most important relationships between two sovereign states. It is thus to be of interest to scholars and students of International Relations and Foreign Policy, not to forget those interested in all or some key aspects of Canadian–American relations.

Population Control: Theorizing Institutional Violence

Jen Rinaldi and Kate Rossiter, eds., *Montreal & Kingston, London and Chicago: McGill-Queen’s University Press*, pp. 344

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The work of Jen Rinaldi and Kate Rossiter in *Population Control* captures the nuances of institutional violence and how it is created, maintained, and reproduced across a variety of settings. It helps readers understand that this violence encompasses more than just forms of direct harm. This structural approach reveals both the supposed care and ultimate loathing that result from such systems. The edited collection speaks to the idea that “the reinforcement of the logic of institutional violence – the structured, organized provision of care to loathed populations – remains intact” (5). Ultimately, it demonstrates that while several large-scale institutions no longer exist, their approaches and discourse continue to inadvertently influence those deemed part of an unruly population.

The collected chapters provide an opportunity for individuals who have endured institutional life to share their experiences, shedding light on how violence has manifested and how we might avoid these patterns in the future. The book is organized into three main sections. The first section explores the lives of children, focusing on how they are forced to