

The Intellectual Career of J. L. Granatstein

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Jack L. Granatstein is a senior figure in the field of Canadian historians. A highly respected academic, Granatstein studied the politics, structures of governance, military, leadership, and nationalism of twentieth century Canada. Some have deemed him to be a ‘great man’ historian who focuses on a style of history that examines the world solely through the actions of important individuals. This paper will dispute that claim. His career spanned the transition from academic history as the study of politics and leadership to a reinvented academic history that included the use of constantly modernizing social sciences. Granatstein defines the former as “old” history and the latter as “new” history.¹ The fact that he stuck to ‘old history’ for his whole career despite his colleagues increasingly being social historians caused some tension as one side looked at the other from opposite sides of a wide canyon. That should not, however, devalue the work of either side. The career of Jack L. Granatstein is one of a conservative national historian who remained focused on political and military history from start to finish.

The community of Canadian historians is not a particularly large group. This reality, however, gives room for members to establish long and successful careers. Jack L. Granatstein is an example of this with his first book being published in 1967 and his most recent in October 2020. Granatstein was born in Toronto in 1939 a city that has remained central to his life. Joining the Canadian Army in 1956, Granatstein completed a Bachelor of Arts degree at the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario, before returning to Toronto for his master’s degree. By 1966, Granatstein had completed his PhD at Duke University and ended his time in the army. Fresh from graduate studies, he was hired at York University’s History Department where he would reside until 1995. The building of a new Canadian War Museum was Granatstein’s focus from 1998 until 2000 where he served as both the CEO and Director. This incredible list of credentials continues as he has maintained a constant connection with the War Museum and sat on a number of important committees and commissions. His list of awards is long but is highlighted by the Order of Canada in 1996, the C.P. Stacey Prize in 2010, and seven honorary doctorate degrees from universities across the country. To round off this stellar career of the now eighty-two year old historian,

¹ Jack L. Granatstein, “Thirty Years in the Trenches: A Military Historian’s Report on the War Between Teaching and Research,” 40.

Granatstein is a regular voice in the media regarding public affairs on history and national defence.² Undoubtedly, the achievements of Jack L. Granatstein are highly admirable.

Granatstein's first book was the publication of his doctoral thesis from Duke University.³ Published in 1967, *The Politics of Survival: The Conservative Party of Canada, 1939-1945* is a study of the Conservative Party and its policies during the Second World War. After the failure of the Bennett government to curb the pain of the Depression, the Conservatives, also known as the Tories, fell into an unfortunate state. During the war years they struggled internally to come to a consensus regarding conscription and free enterprise as well as feebly attempting to regain the trust of the voters. Granatstein's analysis tells "a story of the politics of failure as well as the politics of survival."⁴ With 'old history' still favoured at this point, the academic community widely accepted *The Politics of Survival* as a valuable addition to the study of Canadian history and political science. That is not to say that there were not disagreements such as Granatstein's assignment of blame on the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) for the Conservatives' failure or the evidence he supplied being of equal strength to match the confidence of his claims. Nonetheless, Granatstein's thoughtful organization and ability to find valuable yet untouched sources is laudable. His research into the financial records of the Party was considered especially impressive.⁵ The young historian officially began his professional career on a positive note.

The key argument of *The Politics of Survival* is the fact that the Conservative Party was close to extinction during the Second World War and yet was able to regenerate itself. As a conservative political historian, Granatstein's research relied on government documents and the papers of important political figures. He used a minimal number of mass media sources such as newspapers and magazines generally showing preference for governmental primary sources. Granatstein explains that the Tories' motivation stemmed from the belief that Conservatism had to be ready to offer a solid alternative to a postwar Liberal government which had socialist

² "Jack Granatstein." Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary, updated July 2016, <https://cmss.ucalgary.ca/profiles/jack-granatstein>.

³ Jack L. Granatstein, "Conscription and My Politics," 35.

⁴ Thomas A. Hockin, review of *The Politics of Survival: The Conservative Party of Canada, 1939-1945*, 224.

⁵ Hockin, review of *The Politics of Survival*, 224-225; Roger Graham, review of *The Politics of Survival: The Conservative Party of Canada, 1939-1945*, 315-316.

leanings.⁶ However, it would take time for the Conservative Party to find stable ground. During the war its biggest source of internal strife was over Canadian conscription. Granatstein's research demonstrates how deeply distressing this debate was for the Party which struggled to present a united front regarding the subject.⁷ In his study of the Conservative attitudes towards conscription, Granatstein's source materials include the papers and letters of Conservative leader Robert James Manion, the *Toronto Star*, C.P. Stacey's *The Military Problems of Canada*, and House of Commons debates.⁸

Additionally, the Conservatives' sentiment towards Quebec did not help their cause. The author argues that one of their further failures was a lack of sympathy and consideration for French Canada. Voters in Quebec had their memories of the Bennett government so a Conservative Party which further alienated them by disregarding their uniqueness was not likely to receive their support anytime soon.⁹ The sources Granatstein employed to come to this conclusion included the papers of General Andrew McNaughton and Conservative politician James Garfield Gardiner, a few French articles regarding public opinion, House of Commons debates, and the Liberal Party's *Reference Handbook and Program for Canada*.¹⁰ In his book, Granatstein portrays Conservative leader Arthur Meighen as a reactionary figure who impeded other leaders from stabilizing the Party. This was a countermeasure to historian Roger Graham and his more positive portrayal of Meighen. Granatstein also believed that the Conservatives' failure could be blamed largely on the CCF whose attractive welfare state proposals were increasingly popular across the country. This further division of the vote forced the Tories to reconsider their policies during the wartime years.¹¹ Published just a year after the completion of his doctoral degree, Granatstein's *The Politics of Survival* began his establishment in the field of Canadian political history.

The next key work of Granatstein's is a continuation of his study of Canadian political history during the Second World War. Turning to the rivals of the Conservatives, he published *Canada's War: The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government, 1939-1945* in 1975. This study

⁶ Jack L. Granatstein, *The Politics of Survival: The Conservative Party of Canada, 1939-1945*, 198.

⁷ Granatstein, *The Politics of Survival*, 198.

⁸ Granatstein, *The Politics of Survival*, 23-24.

⁹ Hockin, review of *The Politics of Survival*, 225.

¹⁰ Granatstein, *The Politics of Survival*, 185-186.

¹¹ Hockin, review of *The Politics of Survival*, 224-225.

revolved around the Canadian political experience of the war and how the Mackenzie King government dealt with complex situations that arose. The author is clear to say that this was never meant to be a biography of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King but was a look into certain aspects of the national war effort. Granatstein acknowledges that despite his topic focusing on the war years, he did not include the developments from the war's front lines unless they directly influenced the Canadian government. He makes the written declaration that the theme in *Canada's War* is the development of Canadian nationalism during the Second World War.¹² He is intentional with his parameters and is sure to share them with the reader.

The scholars of this time period found a respectable piece of work in Granatstein's 1975 *Canada's War*. It is viewed as a revisionist history that reminds the historiography that Mackenzie King was a leftist who with his government set Canada on a specific trajectory for the future.¹³ Granatstein's coverage of Canadian relations with the Americans and the British is deemed to be very good as well as his inclusion of several prominent civil servants. By 1975 Granatstein was well-established as an 'old-school' historian with Conservative preferences. In light of that, one reviewer gave positive feedback regarding Granatstein's control of his Conservative bias in order to write a fair analysis of a Liberal government. The same review, however, wished for more complete coverage of Canadian industrialization during the war.¹⁴ Overall, *Canada's War* was deemed to be a worthy piece of scholarship.

Granatstein argues that the Second World War was a vehicle for transformation in Canada. Under the Mackenzie King government and through the extraordinary circumstances of the war, Canada moved towards the status of a welfare state, grew its industrial capacity, and stepped out from Britain's sphere of influence.¹⁵ In regard to the last point, Canada was still strongly attached to Britain in the opening stages of the war as demonstrated by the 'Billion Dollar Gift' given to the British war effort. Granatstein includes a brief analysis of the Canadian public's opinion regarding such a substantial gift. The sources he looked at were in line with his usual preference

¹² Jack L. Granatstein, *Canada's War: The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government, 1939-1945*, v-vi.

¹³ John W. Holmes, review of *Canada's War: The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government, 1939-1945*, 802-803.

¹⁴ Gordon Dowsley, review of *Canada's War: The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government, 1939-1945*, 206.

¹⁵ Dowsley, review of *Canada's War*, 206.

for government documents including the Treasury Records of the Public Records Office and a clipping from the Department of Finance's records. He topped it off with some evidence from *Public Opinion Quarterly*.¹⁶ The sources used for this work more broadly stick to Granatstein's previous research as he focused heavily on government documents and papers from key political actors in his narrative. He worked in archives across the country as well as in the US and Britain.

Central to *Canada's War* is Granatstein's respect for Mackenzie King. The author realizes what a complicated situation this was for the government to navigate and while the Prime Minister did not always seem graceful in his wartime actions, hindsight has proven that the Mackenzie King government did well. One reviewer points out that Granatstein portrayed Mackenzie King as more of a hero than previous scholars.¹⁷ Granatstein especially stood behind Mackenzie King's devotion to keeping French and English Canada united and cooperative.¹⁸ One only has to look back to the First World War to understand how vital it was to maintain national unity. Also, before the US formally joined the war, Ottawa was especially important as a relay point between the British and the 'neutral' Americans.¹⁹ Granatstein looks into the personal relationship between Mackenzie King and President Roosevelt as part of the relationship between the two countries. In doing so, his sources included the papers of both Mackenzie King and Roosevelt, Mackenzie King's diary and letters, Nancy H. Hooker's *The Moffat Papers*, and *Navigating the Rapids* by Beatrice Berle and Travis Jacobs.²⁰ Almost a decade into his professional career, Granatstein seemed to be sticking to the political and national history that he knew and excelled in.

Seven years later, another of Granatstein's touchstone works emerged. In 1982 he released *The Ottawa Men: The Civil Service Mandarins, 1935-1957*, a collective biography of influential civil servants in Ottawa. Granatstein dubbed them "The Ottawa Men" for their combined power and influence on the federal government from the mid-1930s to the late 1950s, an era full of historically significant events.²¹ They are studied through a combination of collective biography and policy analysis which is put within historical context.²² Despite the increasing popularity and

¹⁶ Granatstein, *Canada's War*, 194-195.

¹⁷ Holmes, review of *Canada's War*, 802-803.

¹⁸ Granatstein, *Canada's War*, vii.

¹⁹ Dowsley, review of *Canada's War*, 206.

²⁰ Granatstein, *Canada's War*, 116-118.

²¹ Jack L. Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men: The Civil Service Mandarins, 1935-1957*, xi.

²² Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men*, xi; Thomas H. McLeod, review of *The Ottawa Men: The Civil Service Mandarins, 1935-1957*, 363.

preference for social history at the time this book was published, Granatstein had once again produced a work that was respected by the academic community. His quality of organization and research was considered excellent, a theme that has emerged through the reviews of his books thus far.²³ As reviewers must speak to both positive and negative aspects, there were some faults or gaps noted. It was pointed out that there were some subjects that could have used further discussion including the relationship between the administrative and the political that is the public servants and the politicians.²⁴ Granatstein fails to define a ‘mandarin’ and one reviewer is puzzled by his choice of time frame as a third of the public servants discussed joined before 1935.²⁵ Nonetheless, *The Ottawa Men* was added to the list of Granatstein’s quality publications.

The purpose of this book was to shine light on those influential bureaucrats whose roles tended to be ‘behind the scenes.’ Granatstein explains in his introduction that some citizens did not approve of the mandarins, believing them to be an elitist group that was out of touch with reality. There were others though including Granatstein, who saw them as public servants doing their best to make change for the better. Granatstein’s research found that these mandarins were a tight-knit group who socialized together outside of work, had similar education and training, and were generally open to new ideas.²⁶ From their positions in various offices and agencies, these men set out to remodel Canada and the author argues that they succeeded.²⁷ They were a driven and single-minded group which had the potential for problematically inflexible policies such as in the case of Quebec. There is no doubt that mistakes were made but Granatstein believes that the right intentions were always present.²⁸

Granatstein admits that the argument of the book was influenced by the availability of sources as well as his desire to trace the evolution of bureaucracy.²⁹ As in the two previous works examined, he demonstrates thorough research skills. Granatstein worked in archives across the country in order to get his hands on a variety of papers and manuscripts. As usual, archives in the US and Britain also proved useful to this political historian. To give an example of Granatstein’s

²³ McLeod, review of *The Ottawa Men*, 363.

²⁴ McLeod, review of *The Ottawa Men*, 363; Norman Ward, review of *The Ottawa Men: The Civil Service Mandarins, 1935-1957*, 62.

²⁵ Ward, review of *The Ottawa Men*, 62.

²⁶ Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men*, xi.

²⁷ Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men*, xii.

²⁸ Ward, review of *The Ottawa Men*, 61-63.

²⁹ Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men*, xii.

usual employment of evidence, one can look at his discussion regarding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's (CBC) attempt to bring Lester B. Pearson on board. The author's focus lay on the papers of Pearson, Alan Plaunt, Walter A. Riddell, Mrs. C.H.A. Armstrong, Mackenzie King, and Vincent Massey, as well as Mackenzie King's diary and Historical Personnel Records.³⁰ This trend in source usage is continued in his coverage of Canada and the North Atlantic Treaty. The speeches, testimonies, articles, papers and letters of diplomat Escott Reid were heavily employed as well as Department of External Affairs records, the Bank of Canada's Louis Raminsky papers, and the US Department of State Records.³¹ One divergence from previous research is the fact that Granatstein began to use oral interviews as evidence. He lists a large number of them in the bibliography of *The Ottawa Men*. While these would be considered less official than government records, Granatstein obviously saw value in their inclusion.

The early 1990s saw Granatstein researching Second World War politics, structures of governance, and leadership of a different kind: military commanders. He published *The Generals: The Canadian Army's Senior Commanders in the Second World War* in 1993 just two years before he would retire from teaching at York University.³² It was similar to *The Ottawa Men* in the way that it was also a collective biography. Granatstein dove into the personalities of Canada's top commanders humanizing them by going beyond their accomplishments on the battlefield. The politics and relationships between the various commanders are also covered. The academic community enthusiastically welcomed *The Generals*. Granatstein was a leading Canadian historian by this point despite studying 'old history' amongst fellow scholars who were focused on 'new history.' Reviewers of *The Generals* echoed reviews of his previous books in applauding his research and organization. The strength of the book was felt to be the way that Granatstein portrayed the characters of important men who have often been neglected in historical writing as well as his obvious interest in army politics. It was agreed upon by the reviewers that the book would have been strengthened by the further inclusion of operations, doctrine, and tactics.³³ It is

³⁰ Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men*, 82-84.

³¹ Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men*, 249-252.

³² "Jack Granatstein." Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary, updated July 2016, <https://cmss.ucalgary.ca/profiles/jack-granatstein>.

³³ W.A.B. Douglas, review of *The Generals: The Canadian Army's Senior Commanders in the Second World War*, 270; Geoffrey Hayes, review of *The Generals: The Canadian Army's Senior Commanders in the Second World War*, 156.

also noticed that Granatstein subtly shifts away from the pro-McNaughton narrative of official historian C.P. Stacey.³⁴ This being said, *The Generals* was a book that Granatstein could add to his growing list of well-received publications.

Granatstein's arguments can be seen to revolve around finding patterns amongst the commanders he studied. There were many common characteristics between the older and more senior generation of commanders and the same was found between the younger and more junior commanders. An overarching similarity was the impact of the First World War. The older men had first-hand experience while the younger men had heard stories from their fathers and uncles. The bloodshed of the First World War was Canada's most significant experience with war prior to 1939 so it makes sense that it would influence the actions and decisions of Canadian commanders. Granatstein argues that it led them to be deliberate and cautious in their decisions for the current war.³⁵ The author also found that with the slight exception of Bert Hoffmeister, McNaughton and Frederic F. Worthington, the Canadian commanders lacked vibrant personalities. They strove to emulate the business-like mannerisms of the British military leadership.³⁶

Regarding Granatstein's research, his sources look similar to those of *The Ottawa Men*. He focused on the papers and primary documents directly linked to the 'important' men he was studying. They came from archives across Canada as well as the US and Britain. Granatstein continued to regard interviews as a valuable source of information as *The Generals* contains a long list of interviews mostly conducted in 1991 and 1992. When speaking to the lack of charisma in the Canadian leadership roster he cites the memoir of James Alan Roberts. Obviously primary sources would have also been employed but Granatstein does not specify which he used in his endnotes.³⁷ The same situation is present in his discussion of Hoffmeister and Albert B. Matthews. These two successful commanders were both militia officers in the interwar period who rose quickly through the ranks. Granatstein's only mentioned reference is a 1991 interview with Elliot Rodger leaving the other primary sources used as unspecified.³⁸ It is likely that Granatstein's

³⁴ Douglas, review of *The Generals*, 270.

³⁵ Jack L. Granatstein, *The Generals: The Canadian Army's Senior Commanders in the Second World War*, 5-8.

³⁶ Granatstein, *The Generals*, 3-4.

³⁷ Granatstein, *The Generals*, 265-266.

³⁸ Granatstein, *The Generals*, 202-203.

seniority in the academic community gave him the confidence to leave his primary source use unspecified as he had already built a reputation for solid research and organization.

By 1998 Granatstein left York University and began his role as CEO and Director of the Canadian War Museum.³⁹ He had a successful and respected university career behind him which gave him the credentials to speak to Canada's disappointing relationship with its national history. His book *Who Killed Canadian History?* was released in 1998 and created quite a stir in the academic community. Overall, the book was based on Granatstein's opinions regarding the poor state of historical teaching in Canada. He felt that Canadians were out of touch with their national history. His chapter on academic history in which Granatstein discussed historical teaching and publishing at universities across the country will be scrutinized.⁴⁰ It must be remembered that Granatstein was a conservative political historian who held strong national sentiments throughout his career. The chapter in question explains how he is convinced that academic history in general has made many mistakes in the previous few decades as shown by the trajectory it followed in the late 1990s. By the time Granatstein published *Who Killed Canadian History?* 'new history' was the norm. Social and cultural history took a variety of approaches to studying the past much different than those in which Granatstein had been trained. This book was a strong pushback against academic history's current state and it received a varied set of reviews.

Who Killed Canadian History? was very controversial and had scholars publishing full-length articles in response. In particular were Ken Osborne, A.B. McKillop, and Bryan D. Palmer. Osborne's response was released first and while he respected Granatstein's determination to rescue history from its current trajectory, he was wary of some of Granatstein's boldest claims and complaints. Osborne is confident that a blend of social and political historical teaching is needed. He feels that Granatstein's "sweeping, and in [his] view overstated, attacks on social history and multiculturalism leave one wondering just how much and what kinds of social history he would include in his new national program."⁴¹ The next significant review was written by McKillop who had many problems with Granatstein's opinion. McKillop argues that because of Granatstein's successful career, he "has assumed the role of champion of Canada's true national history."⁴² He

³⁹ "Jack Granatstein." Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary, updated July 2016, <https://cmss.ucalgary.ca/profiles/jack-granatstein>.

⁴⁰ Jack L. Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History?*, 51-78.

⁴¹ Ken Osborne, review of *Who Killed Canadian History?*, 116.

⁴² A.B. McKillop, review of *Who Killed Canadian History?*, 1.

goes on to accuse Granatstein of being unwilling to explore the value of different approaches to history playing it safe by sticking to what he knows.⁴³ Thirdly was the review by Palmer who wrote in reply to McKillop. Palmer argues that “we historians are, in Canada and throughout the world doing very well. If Dr. Granatstein can see no fat, Professor McKillop has no eye for any lean.”⁴⁴ Palmer says that *Who Killed Canadian History?* has had a more significant impact on the small Canadian historical community than Granatstein probably intended. The historians who were busy furiously glaring at Granatstein became blind to reflecting on their own work.⁴⁵ There is no doubt that Granatstein’s opinionated divergence from his usual line of study led to defensive responses from Canadian historians.

Who Killed Canadian History? is an opinion piece as it does not formally reference or cite primary source research. While Granatstein’s opinion is an educated one, he still brings up the works of others to prove his point. For example, when discussing the evolution of women’s and gender history, he references a 1987 study on female content in Canadian textbooks and the Sex Equity Policy of the Ontario Ministry of Education.⁴⁶ Granatstein declares that academic history has not lost all hope yet and lists historians whose work on national themes of importance he approves. These include Michael Bliss, John English, Desmond Morton, Terry Copp and Doug Owram.⁴⁷ By 1998 Granatstein was confident enough to criticize the Canadian historical academy a divergence from his previous publications.

In 2001 Granatstein was sixty-two years old. He had stepped back from his role at the Canadian War Museum and was starting to reflect on his career. Perspective often comes with age and maturity and this is certainly the case in Granatstein’s 2001 self-reflective article titled “Conscription and My Politics.” He traces the origins of his interest in political history back to his master’s degree where he ended up writing his thesis on the Conservative Party during the Second World War.⁴⁸ Granatstein then proceeds to go through his career in terms of the relationship between his politics and his research with his main focus being on the way he viewed conscription. Until the 1980s Granatstein was strongly sympathetic to the French Canadian anti-conscription

⁴³ McKillop, review of *Who Killed Canadian History?*, 16.

⁴⁴ Bryan D. Palmer, review of *Who Killed Canadian History?*, 3.

⁴⁵ Palmer, review of *Who Killed Canadian History?*, 6-7.

⁴⁶ Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History?*, 61-62.

⁴⁷ Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History?*, 73.

⁴⁸ Granatstein, “Conscription and My Politics,” 35.

sentiment. With a clear sense of humility in his writing, he admits that he had a change of heart. The early 1980s had Granatstein realizing that Quebec was tearing the nation apart making him less inclined to respect their stubborn attitude. Additionally, the 1984 publication of *Tug of War: The Canadian Victory That Opened Antwerp* by Denis and Shelagh Whitaker made him realize the importance of conscripts in battle.⁴⁹ This shift in personal politics affected his writing a change he believes is clearest in *The Generals*. Granatstein explains that he is not apologizing for this switch as he does not see it as an unacceptable process for a scholar to experience.⁵⁰ His final thoughts regarding this topic are summarized when he writes, “I believe now as I have always done that the sole task of a historian is to try to understand what happened and why. But I know now that my politics, shifting and changing as I applied my analyses to events as I lived them, shaped what I wrote as a historian.”⁵¹

Nine years later, at the age of seventy-one, Granatstein published another self-reflective article. Titled “Thirty Years in the Trenches: A Military Historian’s Report on the War Between Teaching and Research,” Granatstein uses this piece to dig into his teaching and research within the context of his entire career. He begins with his undergraduate degree at the Royal Military College (RMC) and the relationships he built with his professors there. Richard Preston is the mentor Granatstein credits with teaching him to love research. This is key, as Granatstein was known throughout his career for his superb research skills and gaining access to closed archives.⁵² His other influential RMC professor was Enzo Cappadocia who Granatstein credits with guiding him towards the field of Canadian political history. Granatstein took a leave from the military to move back to Toronto for his master’s degree, a decision that helped the young historian realize that the military was no longer where he wanted to be in the long-term.⁵³ He goes on to narrate his graduation from Duke University with his PhD and swiftly being hired at York University.

Granatstein had not taught in graduate school so the new professor reflected on the teaching qualities he admired in his own professors then attempted to emulate them. A key feature of Granatstein’s professional career was the fact that he both taught and published regularly for close to thirty years. This was unusual for the time and Granatstein goes to great length to explain his

⁴⁹ Granatstein, “Conscription and My Politics,” 37-38.

⁵⁰ Granatstein, “Conscription and My Politics,” 38.

⁵¹ Granatstein, “Conscription and My Politics,” 38.

⁵² Granatstein, “Thirty Years in the Trenches,” 37.

⁵³ Granatstein, “Thirty Years in the Trenches,” 37.

frustrations with the judging of university professors by either their teaching or research.⁵⁴ He then moves on to discuss his problems with ‘old’ versus ‘new’ history and the lack of prioritization of Canadian history. These were very similar ideas to what he wrote about in *Who Killed Canadian History?* twelve years earlier. Further distance from his time at York allowed Granatstein to approach the matter in a slightly less aggressive manner. Of his clash with social historians at York he writes, “I didn’t object to those who worked on social history topics, so why should they trash me?”⁵⁵ Perhaps that statement could be contradicted by *Who Killed Canadian History?*, but Granatstein had fair intentions. He was simply passionate that Canadians know their nation’s history. If one understands that he was a senior historian amongst a generation of younger historians who went and changed the playing field, a greater understanding of his argument can be digested regardless of whether there is agreement or not. Granatstein concludes with his retirement from the university setting saying that thirty years had been long enough – the next generation of historians could take the wheel now.⁵⁶

History can take many forms and that is part of its fascination for many. While there are trends that the historians of different decades either pioneer or join, there are those who choose to stick to their own course regardless. Granatstein is an example of this as his conservative political history was thought to be old-fashioned as social history took over in the last four decades of the twentieth century. His list of publications is length, but can be highlighted by the works examined in this paper. One can see that he was not a ‘great man’ historian but a researcher of the politics, structures of governance, military, leadership, and nationalism of twentieth century Canada. There is no doubt that the historiography of Canadian history has been impacted by the publications of Jack L. Granatstein.

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