

a number have been honoured with local, provincial and national awards. Elinor Barr concludes that “Swedes in Canada today, both immigrants and descendants, are living in an era in which they can be openly proud of their heritage. There is no need to be invisible any longer” (269).

*Swedes in Canada* combines passion with academic stringency. Its fifteen chapters cover topics as diverse as the history of emigration from Sweden, the two world wars, earning a living, “Swedishness” in Canada, language, discrimination and assimilation, and emerging visibility. One half of the study comprises detailed endnotes and appendices, a comprehensive bibliography, and two indexes (personal names and a general index). *Swedes in Canada* contains photographs from archives and personal collections, as well as extracts from personal letters and published sources such as novels and short stories written by immigrants in their own language as well as in English.

Elinor Barr’s study is the first of its kind. It is eloquently written, beautifully illustrated and an important source of inspiration for all interested in what it meant to be a Swede in Canada in the early days of the country’s existence and up to the 1970s. The universities of Canada and the various Swedish societies in different parts of the country have an important role to play in ensuring that the Swedish presence remains not only strong but also clearly visible. Elinor Barr’s study is an important step in this direction.

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**Thomas Fleming, *The Great Divide: The Conflict between Washington and Jefferson that Defined a Nation*. Da Capo Press, 2015. ISBN: 978-0306821271**

A book about the conflict between George Washington and Thomas Jefferson is overdue, says Thomas Fleming. “Numerous historians have explored Jefferson’s clash with Alexander Hamilton. But little has been written about the differences that developed between the two most famous founding fathers” (1). Those differences, as the subtitle states, “defined a nation.”

Washington, we are told, was “first, last, and always a realist.” He admixed his realism with a strong faith in America’s destiny. Jefferson, in contrast, saw things through “the lens of a pervasive idealism.” Men, freed of the yoke of coercive government, would invariably find good government, if only given inspirational “visionary words” (2).

Manner of exposition is throughout fluid, engaging, and accessible. Fleming is a talented writer and story-teller, who has a knack for knowing which stories to tell when developing his thesis. That said, readers wishing for an even-handed approach to the conflict will be enormously disappointed.

Fleming paints a vivid picture of Washington as an intrepid, resolute general, with “honest zeal” and flexibility sufficient to abandon faulty or failing military schemes, and aims to show that the virtues that defined his generalship—he wrote “bold letters” to the Continental Congress that admonished them for thinking patriotism and not strategy would win “a long and bloody war” (69)—were the same virtues that defined his presidency. Washington’s plan to visit New England as president, Fleming says, was doubtless motivated by what Washington learned as general of the Continental Army: Share the camp and hardships with the soldiers and deal personally with problems of discipline and morale as they surfaced (70). And then there is Washington’s goodness. Fleming tells the brief story of six-years-old Washington Irving, meeting Washington, receiving a pat on the head, and that incident (presumably) leading to Irving’s brilliant biography of the first president (70).

Yet much of the results of Washington’s “honest zeal” as president, if we follow Fleming’s account carefully, is due to capable advisors like James Madison and take-charge members of his cabinet like Alexander Hamilton, who did much to define the economic and even political direction of Washington’s administration. (Fleming carefully eschews mention of Jefferson’s contributions to the success of the administration—e.g., his reports on French treaties, on commerce of America with foreign countries, and on coinage, weights, and measures.) Thus, Fleming’s Washington qua politician, intentions notwithstanding, comes across as more of a figurehead than a president with a vibrant and clear vision of his nation. Jefferson—“that most troublesome of politicians—an ideologue” (186)—is consistently depicted as a craven, duplicitous, and hypocritical castle-builder.

When Jefferson was governor of Virginia and the commander in chief of the militia and British forces headed into Virginia in 1780, Jefferson was not to be found rallying Virginians “with words as stirring as those he wrote in the Declaration of Independence” (21). Jefferson, it seems, was a coward. Fleming cites numerous instances of Jefferson’s duplicity. Jefferson allowed others to praise him for his actions apropos of the acquisition of the Louisiana lands, when he did nothing. The acquisition was not due to any shrewdness on Jefferson’s part, but to fortuitousness. France’s mount-

ing debts during war, the French military debacle in Santo Domingo due to plague, and Napoleon's need of money to maintain his military campaigns led to the selling of the lands (306–21). Are we to believe that Jefferson's foreign policy vis-à-vis France had *no* bearing? Did not Jefferson refuse, for instance, to loan one million dollars to Napoleon for his campaign in Santo Domingo? Again, at a celebratory dinner honoring the administration for the purchase the band played "Jefferson's March," which Fleming says was "a trifle 'monarchical'" (318). Jefferson, it seems, was again duplicitous for not having quieted the band.

Fleming also writes of Madison's duplicity—Madison drafted Washington's annual message to Congress and chaired the committee that responded to it, while he was writing essays in Freneau's *National Gazette* that condemned Hamilton's policies. Madison was mostly "an honorable and honest man," but "the best explanation for his becoming two-faced in his relationship to President Washington may well be Thomas Jefferson's role in the Congressman's political and personal life" (111). Jefferson, the snake, had poisoned Madison.

Finally, Fleming mentions President Jefferson's celebrated dinners with congressmen. Those with fellow republicans were for the sake of "subtly—and sometimes not so subtly" telling them "how he wanted them to vote on various matters" (327). It is certain that that is sometimes what happened, Fleming's account treats it as the only motive and it strongly suggests insidious, coercive measures.

There are numerous distortions or corruptions of texts for the sake of slanting. Consider Fleming's account of a dinner engagement at Jefferson's residence in the nation's capital with Alexander Hamilton and John Adams. The source, which Fleming ignores, is a letter of Jefferson to Benjamin Rush (16 Jan. 1811). Jefferson tells Rush of a conversation that turned to political ideals. Adams stated that the British constitution would be the most perfect, if some of its defects were corrected. Hamilton asserted that the British constitution was "the most perfect government that ever existed" (the quote actually reads, "It was the most perfect model of government that could be formed") even with its corruptions. Jefferson took Hamilton's words, says Fleming, as "a veritable confession of his admiration for the ruthless men and evil deeds that would eventually snuff out all traces of liberty in the mother country" (109).

Yet Jefferson also in the letter to Rush mentions a second incident at the dinner engagement. Jefferson's room had numerous paintings of famous

men, including Bacon, Locke, and Newton—“The three greatest men the world had ever produced,” adds Jefferson. Hamilton incredulously did not recognize any of the three. In brown study, Hamilton paused and added that he thought Julius Caesar was the greatest man who ever lived. Jefferson sums, “Hamilton, honest as a man, but, as a politician, believing in the necessity of either force or corruption to govern men.” In sum, Fleming depicts Jefferson as a paranoid ideologue, when the letter gives no evidence of that.

Again, consider Fleming’s skewed account Jay’s Treaty. After consulting with Secretary of State Randolph, President Washington decided to keep the treaty from the presses, for the perceived clamor of the citizenry would have made it impossible for the Senate “to consider it objectively.” Once the treaty was ratified, Washington then “decided it was time to listen to the voice of the people,” as there was “no longer any need for secrecy.” Fleming acknowledges that “there was an explosion of fury from North to South and East to West” once the treaty was made public (208). Is this not a barefaced instance of Washington’s duplicity?

Furthermore, when Genet captured a British ship *The Little Sarah* and intended to use it as a warship, Secretary Jefferson, Fleming says, was nowhere to be found. Concerning his absence, he sent Washington a note in which he complained of a fever. The note, Fleming insists, is Jefferson mocking Washington for the president’s “bouts of fever.” Fleming then accuses Jefferson of projection, because Jefferson writes in his *Anas* that Washington wished his cabinet would have decided to fire on *The Little Sarah*, though he would not have made such a decision himself (171). Why the statement is projection and cannot be taken at face value is unclear.

Moreover, Fleming discusses with *sang froid* the Alien and Sedition Acts of the Adams’s administration as if they were *needed* measures for a country presumably about to be invaded by France (259–67). There is conveniently little discussion that the Sedition Act had the consequence of incarcerating many prominent republicans, including Benjamin Franklin Bache, editor of the *Aurora*, and Matthew Lyon, congressman from Vermont and author of a “seditious” article in the *Vermont Journal*. Were all such outspoken critics of the Adams’s administration in cahoots with the French government to overthrow the nation?

Chapters 25 to 33 concern events after the death of Washington. Thus, they do little to develop or support Fleming’s thesis. They are mostly composed to denigrate Jefferson. For instance, chapter 26 begins with Jeffer-

son's description of his presidency as "the Revolution of 1800," a stark revelation of his "envy of George Washington" (288). Chapters 30, 31, and 32 show that the failures that defined Jefferson's second term are characteristic of Jefferson's capabilities as president. Fleming writes of the man as a dying duck, not a lame duck. "Well before the end of his second term, [Jefferson] virtually withdrew from the duties and responsibilities of his high office. He shipped his books and furniture back to Monticello and wrote self-pitying letters to his daughter Martha" (366).

At book's end, readers are left asking themselves this: What *exactly* was the conflict between Washington and Jefferson that "defined a nation"? Given that Fleming notes often that Washington sided politically with Jefferson at least as much as he did with Hamilton, it is difficult to believe that there were key axial political differences between the two. Yet the parting paragraph of chapter 32 is suggestive. Fleming says that Jefferson, "deeply conflicted man," was a quixotic, head-in-the-clouds prophet. Washington, in contrast, was a leader with a real vision. "Like [Washington], our greatest presidents have valued the visionary side of our heritage, but resisted the demands and pretensions of ideologies as well as the envies and angers of party politics [characteristic of Jefferson]" (367). Such parting words, prior to the final chapter explicating Madison's defection to Washingtonian politics, depict greatly different (and, in Fleming's hands, greatly skewed) characters; they do not describe or point to any particular conflict. Thus, readers are left befuddled.

In contrast to the avowed conflict between Washington and Jefferson, the political tensions between Hamilton and Jefferson were profound and caused by antagonistic visions of the budding American nation—e.g., thick versus thin government, Anglophilia versus Francophilia, and commercial urbanism versus georgic Arcadianism. That conflict was *the* conflict that defined America.

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