

the very people they had been told they were there to save from the onslaught of communism: the Vietnamese and their own sweethearts, parents and friends stateside. Is it any wonder that the legacy of Vietnam for soldier and civilian alike is one of distrust?

In conclusion, I cannot recommend this book highly enough. Appy's portrait of the working-class army is sound and well researched as he explores the social and intellectual threads that made up the essence of the Vietnam-era American GI. He also evokes the GI's life before the war, during it, and after. The structure of the book makes this possible, as the reader moves from innocence and high hopes into the heart of a genuine moral dilemma and the subsequent bitterness and disillusionment. People who want to quickly condemn young men for events like My Lai might not like what Appy reveals here, but they will have a better understanding of how that boy next door could kill with so little compunction. Appy does not forgive these incidents but he makes them and the people who experienced them real, so that it is harder to make sweeping judgements about those who fought and the way they fought. On the other hand, the book will reaffirm the widely held notion that the real villain in the whole Vietnam experience was the government and the high command. William Westmoreland wasn't much liked or trusted by radicals back then; this book will do nothing to change those feelings of distrust, and perhaps, hatred. To reread his comments about strategy and grand military design in light of what Appy presents of the worldview of these working-class boys and actual military strategy will offer cold comfort to conservatives and will probably raise the hackles of those who were part of the New Left. If the flame still burns, they may even experience that fire that was in their guts and that led them to the streets in protest. Mostly, however, his book should be a reminder that this sort of war should never happen again.

Finally, I would strongly recommend this book for teachers of literature and film as a fine resource to bring to their studies of the literature and films of Vietnam. Much of the literature of the war is, quite naturally, nar-

rated by, or presented from the point of view of the educated or at least articulate soldier. Our focus often falls on how bright/innocent/dedicated young men are transformed by the horrors of the war, of how they internalize the moral dilemmas and come out with a new world view. This book will help illuminate the historical actors who lived on the periphery of philosophy but who, like the well-educated, found their lives forever changed by their time in "the Nam."

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Albert S. Broussard, *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900-1954* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press 1993).

Albert S. Broussard's *Black San Francisco* offers a detailed description of African-American life in that city between the turn of the century and the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision in 1954. Indeed the painstakingly-thorough study of the forces which shaped the black San Francisco community in the first half of the twentieth century is the principal strength of this book. Chronologically, in thirteen tightly-organized yet remarkably detailed chapters, Broussard charts the growth of the city's black population, its institutions, residential patterns, and occupational structure.

In a larger sense, Broussard seeks to describe the evolution of race relations in a western American city, arguing that "the history of blacks in the twentieth-century urban West has been largely neglected." This focus presents a useful context, as the author describes adjustments and confrontations which differed from those in eastern urban centres. San Francisco's black community remained small until World War II. As such, it straddled the advantage of relative freedom from racial violence, and the disadvantage of failure to win a place in the city's political and economic power structure. For the most part, Broussard handles this atypical situation well as we learn much from San Francisco's particular circum-

stances, but at times — especially in the introduction — he has difficulty establishing his argument that the San Francisco experience both sheds light on broader trends in African-American history, and stands alone. In fact, because San Francisco's black population remained as small as it did until 1940, the city's experience approximated that of other smaller western centres, and as such does not help us much with the broader urban experience, even in the west. Indeed, Broussard is often called upon to explain that black Los Angeles was far different.

Black San Francisco is on much firmer footing when discussing the city on its own terms. Here Broussard excels as he follows the evolution of the city's black community and its institutional response to white racism. His treatment of the NAACP, the National Urban League, the FEPC, the Council for Civil Unity, and many other civil rights organizations, is superb. His description of the effect on race relations of the Great Depression, World War II, and the postwar years is equally successful. Indeed, his examination of the war and the massive migration into the city of blacks to work in the shipyards and other war-related industries, offers an especially clear picture of this vital period in African-American history. The war constituted a double turning point for black San Franciscans who gained much during it and lost much afterwards. Here, Broussard offers a particularly important contribution. The wartime and postwar rise and fall of black American participation in the San Francisco economy, stands out especially clearly in a city where such developments meant so much and happened so quickly.

Broussard capitalizes effectively on these points in his epilogue: "The Dream and the Reality." San Francisco had always boasted of being a racially tolerant city, and black residents tried hard to make it live up to its promise. Yet in spite of some gains, post World War II San Francisco acquired the racially divisive characteristics of many other large American cities. This was especially the case with housing, jobs, and politics. "[I]solated achievements," he writes, "however noteworthy, obscure the fact that San Francisco never came

to grips with racial discrimination ..." On the eve of the Brown decision, black San Francisco had come to reflect the problems confronting urban African-Americans everywhere.

Unfortunately, to this reviewer at least, Broussard chooses to end his study in 1954, on the eve of such confrontation. He refers briefly to events to follow in such a way as to indicate the importance of his book in understanding post-1954 events. Indeed, his entire thesis is built upon such preparation, and *Black San Francisco* could have been all the more effective had it pursued its own conclusions.

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Kerry Abel, *Drum Songs: Glimpses of Dene History* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press 1993).

In recent years, the role of indigenous peoples in Canadian history has been subject to considerable reassessment. No longer content with the traditional conception of natives as a discreet and compliant element in the country's past, scholars have sought to establish their historical role as dynamic figures who often influenced substantially the course of European trade and development. Seeking to "readjust the balance of historical writing," Kerry Abel attempts to provide such an interpretation. Examining the history of the Dene people from their origins in North America until the present, Abel maintains consistently that they have shown remarkable adaptability in the face of continuing difficulties and setbacks. In her words, "the Dene aptitude for creative adaptation has permitted the survival of a sense of self and community through very different times and challenges." (265)

Like any other "pre-literate" people, the Dene have left behind very little written documentation of their past. The success of Abel's study therefore rests largely upon her ability to make effective use of a variety of non-traditional sources. She examines archaeologi-