

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-

cal and linguistic studies, native oral traditions, the records of explorers and fur traders, and government documents, as she reconstructs the history of the Dene both before and after European contact.

Although this range of sources suggests that Abel's is an ethnohistorical study, she is hesitant to label it as such in her introduction. This reluctance perhaps explains the author's examination of Dene history prior to the arrival of the Europeans. Relying primarily on archaeological and linguistic data in the absence of European documentation, Abel's analysis falls somewhat short of the standards set by previous ethnohistorians, most notably Bruce Trigger, whose works are conspicuously absent from her bibliography. Indeed, in her description of Dene history during the eighteenth century, Abel provides a rather static portrayal of Dene customs that lacks any real sense of change over time. This may result from the shortcomings of the source material itself rather than from any in Abel's interpretation, but it is unfortunate that the reader is left with a somewhat constrained glimpse of Dene history during this period.

Aside from this, Abel's examination of her sources is thorough and sensitive. The author details the consequences of European penetration into the Dene homeland, demonstrating time and again the ability of the natives to adapt to these new realities. With the arrival of European traders, the Dene soon learned to secure the best possible trade arrangements for themselves, manipulating the terms of credit extended to them. Although large numbers were "converted" by both Catholic and Protestant missionaries, Abel illustrates how the Dene interpreted Christianity much differently than did the Europeans. Some viewed conversion pragmatically, as a means of economic advancement, "visiting the missions solely for the purposes of trade." (139)

With the swift development of Canada's north after the Second World War, the Dene were able to adjust to their rapidly changing surroundings, at the same time maintaining much of their traditional lifestyle. Abel shows the limited extent to which natives integrated occasional wage labour into their traditional subsistence patterns as employment opportu-

nities arose. Even in the context of the past two decades, the author demonstrates the continuing ability of the Dene to adapt and assert themselves within the Canadian political system, as she details their efforts "to maintain their distinct society through language and continuing ties to the land." (264) Abel establishes clearly the capacity of the Dene to adjust to successive new circumstances.

Despite the clarity and consistency of Abel's analysis, however, it ultimately lacks the sophistication to do full justice to the turbulent nature of Dene history. In maintaining that the Dene were able to survive and adapt to European encroachment, a fairly simple proposition given that they still exist as a people today, she is inclined to minimize the difficulties and conflicts inherent in this process of adaptation. Disease, widely acknowledged to have had a devastating impact on native peoples throughout the Americas, is discussed but downplayed. She notes that a series of epidemics took "a heavy toll in lives," but seems to suggest that the introduction of European goods into the region was apparently sufficient compensation. The early nineteenth century is thus characterized as a period of "mixed blessings for the Dene." (111) Yet to acknowledge more fully the damage done to native culture by disease would in fact strengthen Abel's story of Dene resilience. The effects of alcohol on native society also receive only passing mention, despite the fact that, as early as the eighteenth century, rum was "both an important trade incentive and a significant profit maker." (77)

In examining the history of the Dene, Kerry Abel has succeeded in shedding light on a topic, and a geographic region, previously neglected by historians. Throughout her account, Abel argues consistently that the Dene have shown a capacity for creative adaptation to pressures imposed upon them by newcomers to their homeland. While it is difficult to contest, Abel's argument nonetheless raises many questions. In particular, there remains the significant issue of how the more unpleasant consequences of European arrival, such as disease and alcohol, affected the course of Dene history. Also absent from Abel's study is any consideration of racism, a

determining factor in native-European relations. In a period that has seen native peoples display considerable assertiveness within existing Canadian political and legal structures, it is important to understand the historical background of current struggles. In considering these historical struggles, however, Abel has left aside many of their darker elements.

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L. Anders Sandberg (ed.), *Trouble in the Woods: Forest Policy and Social Conflict in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick*, (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press 1992).

*Trouble in the Woods: Forest Policy and Social Conflict in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick* tackles head-on a "regional" topic (as all topics concerning Atlantic Canada are destined to be labelled) of national and global concern: the nature of economic solidarity between corporate capital and the state. "The intent of this book," editor L. Anders Sandberg writes in an introductory essay, "is to document the process of consolidation of power by the forest industry and the provincial government, and to recount the struggle of the men and women challenging the power structure." This may be the beatific Maritimes, but it is also the world of clear-cutting and transnational capital; this ain't the forest primeval.

A collection of ten essays with a remarkable theoretical cohesion, *Trouble in the Woods* hammers home in case after case evidence that the weaknesses of the Maritime pulp and paper industry — poor labour conditions and the lowest pulp prices in Canada — are less the result of inevitable market forces than of a century of short-sighted public policy. The governments of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick eagerly courted forestry investment that promised future prosperity, and thus presented votes. Sandberg relates how the "Big Lease" in Cape Breton offered American investors the chance to obtain cheap woodland, clear-cut it, and sell their leases

back at exorbitant rates the province was willing to pay to retain its "good name." In such a climate, the rights and wishes of the provinces' small woodlot owners have been bound to be antithetical to larger provincial policies. As Bill Parenteau shows, the New Brunswick government throughout the 1960s and 1970s hampered independent producers from forming marketing boards and enjoying collective bargaining with pulp and paper companies. The 1973 legislation that was finally to create marketing boards still permitted the corporations to bargain "in good faith." Nowhere in *Trouble in the Woods* is the state as neutral arbitrator to be seen.

In making its case against historical and contemporary forestry policy-making, *Trouble in the Woods* maintains a rigid political economy style and misses potentially rich sources of debate. For example, the woods are always "resources," and the environmental effects of forestry are largely ignored. Only Serge Cote perceptively notes that in the case he studied, the involvement of corporate foresters meant that small woodlot owners had no incentive to conserve their holdings, and acted as ferociously to clear their woodland as the larger interests did. The authors of the essays here are more concerned with the inequalities present in the forest industry, than with the nature of the industry itself.

Yet the book fails to show the reader these inequalities. The stories of "the men and women challenging the power structure" are missing. Individual pulp producers, organizers, and labourers are quite invisible, lost in a maze of submissions to commissions and appendices to reports (the authors cannot see the trees for the forest, as it were). It is unfortunate that such a tightly organized and well researched book has no narrative structure to tie it together; even an index would have helped the reader make sense of the interrelationships in overlapping essays. As it is, *Trouble in the Woods* is a dense book that will deserve the acclaim of academics and foresters whose attention it sustains.

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