

their medical systems should remain beyond the prying eyes of the scientists and other non-Indians remains pervasive today. That the authors were able to document one healer's activities is really quite remarkable given this fact. There are, to my knowledge, no other comparable contemporary discussions of Indian medicine in print. This is unfortunate, since if one goes back to the ethnographic literature of the early part of the century, it becomes clear that Indians were once very willing to share their knowledge with non-Indians. The legacy of a century of oppressive government policies is clearly the culprit in the reticence of Indian people to speak for the record of their medicine today.

This is a book that will spark controversy because of its content. Nevertheless, it is an extremely valuable source of useful information on Cree healing practices. As such, it would be valuable to all those in the medical field seeking a better understanding of an important, contemporary alternative to biomedicine. Those interested in medical anthropology, medical sociology and Native studies will also find it very useful. Indeed, perhaps all anthropologists should read this volume for the important methodological issues it raises. How the residents of Willier's reserve, and other Indians, feel about the volume is important, even essential, to understanding the future of research into Indian medicine. This question remains unanswered.

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J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989.

*Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens* is a valuable contribution to the growing literature on the experience of Native people in Canada. Tracing the relationship between Indians and Euro-Canadians over five centuries, Miller achieves a timely and lucid synthesis of a large body of existing scholarship. This relationship, he concludes, was largely determined by the reasons the respective groups had for interacting with each other. And, far from being passive victims, he insists that Indians were active agents of commercial, military and political alliances with the White community, and were "assertive contributors to the unfolding of Canadian history."

Miller argues that relations between Indians and Europeans evolved through three distinct phases, characterized by co-operation, coercion and conflict. Until the early 19th century Indians served as commercial partners and military allies of the European population. The relationship that developed was mutually beneficial, since it involved non-directed culture

change of a generally positive nature. However, as European settlement and technology overcame the early Native dominance, Indians lost their commercial and military relevance and became an impediment to the new economic frontiers of agriculture and resource development. Co-operation gave way to coercion; Indians were removed from the land by treaties or encroachment, and subjected to an intensive program of assimilation through reserves, schools, evangelization and legislation. This "policy of the Bible and the plough" was continued by the federal government after Confederation, but inadequate government funding and sustained Indian resistance prevented its realization. The manifest failure and expense of these policies was compounded by a dramatic rise in the Native population and the emergence of organized Indian political protest after World War II. Since then, Indian-White relations have been characterized by conflict. While the federal government seeks to escape from the financial burden attendant on its special relationship with Indian people, Native leaders have been frustrated in their attempts to formulate and entrench Aboriginal rights. Miller concludes that the evolution of greater autonomy at the local level, such as band control over education, represents a step in the right direction.

Such an ambitious undertaking obviously dictates a selective approach, but the focus is occasionally questionable. Given the importance of patterns established in the 17th century, one would expect a more detailed discussion of early Jesuit missionary activity. The crucial treaty period in western Canada could be expanded upon as could the impact of resource development in the North and the increasing urbanization of Native people. With the exception of a brief passage on phrenology, there is no systematic discussion of the evolution of Euro-Canadian racism, which was surely as important a factor in shaping Indian-White relations as economic determinants. It could be argued, too, that Miller exaggerates the scope and effectiveness of Indian resistance, perhaps confusing it with indifference or apathy. The issue of Native acquiescence and co-operation with the government's policy of assimilation also needs to be addressed to balance the general image of monolithic resistance conveyed in these pages. Such coercive practices as the ban on the potlatch were first requested by Native converts, after all, suggesting that the government was perhaps more successful in imposing European values than the author implies.

These caveats aside, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens* is a work of great merit and is essential reading for those interested in this aspect of Canadian history. It is accessible to the general reader and will also prove extremely valuable both to specialists and those teaching survey courses in Canadian history or Native studies.

Michael Cottrell