

Clearly, the strength of the text is in the wealth of detail relating to the early Jewish agricultural development, its peak and subsequent decline. The author whets our appetite for a more substantial consideration of a number of key issues. Central among these is the issue of the role of religion in sustaining community. The materials presented focus on the pre-World War I period and not the subsequent development of the colonies. Very often the narration jumps from the establishment and initial years of the various colonies to a comment on the current status. The comments on the more recent status of the colonies paint a picture of decline and, in many cases, virtual disappearance. The reasons for the decline and disappearance of the Jewish agricultural communities are not addressed save in a short passage in which religion is seen as a contributing factor!. In a discussion of World War II we find the following:

The war also gave the Jewish farm parents, long worried about their children's marrying out of faith, the opportunity to send their daughters to the cities to work in factories. They were followed by their brothers in the factories and the services. Thus the seeds of disintegration were sown among the farmers. (P. 75)

This clearly contradicts the arguments frequently put forward that religion can serve as a social, political and economic bond, stabilizing communities in the face of forces that would transform them. The issue of how economic pressures transform community structures calls out for more attention.

Another issue of interest to many social scientists is the phenomenon of anti-Semitism. Mention is made of the hostility which the Jewish settlers met at times, as well as other instances in which they "were treated as equals" (p. 17). The shameful record of the Canadian state in not admitting more Jewish people fleeing the horrors of fascism during the 1930s and 1940s is alluded to but not developed.

In brief, Leonoff's short history is well worth reading. It is well researched and written, rich in detail, and enhanced by photographs. The book provides new materials on western Canadian history, though I must note that its focus is clearly on Saskatchewan, and serves to raise some more general issues for those with an interest in social history.

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New Directions in American Indian History, edited by Colin G. Calloway.
Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988. Pp. 262.

Compiled under the auspices of the Newberry Library, this book reviews six areas of recent research and identifies three areas of emerging work. Melissa Meyer and Russell Thornton examine "Indians and the Numbers Game:

Quantitative Methods on Native American History.” They note that application of quantitative methods to the large amount of government and other data has provided deeper insights into the study of American Indian history, a field which has been overly preoccupied with government policy and armed conflict. Research is critiqued in historical demography and epidemiology, archaeology, economics, politics and social history. The authors end with the caution that depending on how statistics are used, they can “prove” nearly anything.

Deborah Welch covers “American Indian Women: Reaching Beyond the Myth.” She refers particularly to leading Native women writers such as Rayna Green, and looks at works done in biography, the fur trade, literature and leadership. Welch concludes that over the past twenty years, literature on American Indian women has begun to overcome negative stereotypes, and that the complex role of American Indian women is only starting to be understood.

In “Riel, Red River and Beyond: New Developments in Métis History,” Dennis Madill looks at research on Métis origins, claims and constitutional issues. The centenary of the rebellion has generated much new research, and has moved the focus away from Red River to broader and more interdisciplinary interests. He notes that more study is required on Métis-Indian relationships and on the Métis experience in the United States.

Willard Rollings’s “In Search of Multisided Frontiers: Recent Writings on the History of the Southern Plains” notes that the bulk of existing research concentrates on military relations or Spanish policy, and that the lack of Indian cultural content or perspective results in an incomplete history. He suggests that new insights are possible through closer examination of Indian motives, oral history, and of French and Mexican archival material pertaining to Indians. Rollings points to studies of Canadian Cree and Iroquois as being more culturally balanced.

George Grossman focusses on the United States in “Indians in the Law.” He examines Alaska, the Hopi-Navajo Land Dispute, land claims, religious freedom, civil rights, water rights, traditional laws, child welfare and constitutional issues. He notes the important role that laws play in the lives of Indians and urges historians to keep pace with the flood of legal literature being produced.

In “Scholars and Twentieth-Century Indians: Reassessing the Recent Past,” James Riding In notes the popular perception that American Indian history ended in 1890 with Wounded Knee. He criticizes the minimal work done on recent Indian history by white academics as focussing much more on public policy than on “grassroots” local history, and as being paternalistic. He urges more writing of local histories by Indians and generally a shifting of the focus of Indian historical writing.

The remaining authors discuss three emerging fields of inquiry: language studies, economic analysis and religious history. In “The Importance of

Language Study for the Writing of Plains Indian History," Douglas Parks notes the amateurish and frequently inaccurate usage of Indian words and names in previous history. Historians have too long neglected the importance of Indian languages as a basis for interpreting Indian history. Parks looks at orthography, the description of words. These range from the uneven efforts of the amateur to the precision of the phoneticist. Historical Indian names are frequently mistranslated and mispronounced. Close examination of changes in Indian languages can reveal their own lessons on Indian history. Parks concludes that the study of languages has matured to the point of becoming an important factor in historical research.

Ronald Trosper writes about "The Other Discipline: Economics and American Indian History." Economists have been maligned for indiscriminate application of ideologically driven macroeconomic theories which had little relevance to the Indian situation. This tempted some historians to dismiss economics as a factor, a position which goes too far. Trosper suggests that microeconomic theory is the most useful for a self-sufficient economy which employed bartering. The arrival of modern capitalism can be viewed as resulting in Indian dependency upon the white man. The implications of Indian communal attitudes towards property need to be taken into account. The writer concludes that economic models of analysis are useful once the uniqueness of Indian history is recognized.

Robert Brightman writes the final article, "Toward a History of Indian Religion: Religious Changes in Native Societies." He examines research in various geographic regions of North America. A theme which emerges is the accommodation by North American Indians of Christian beliefs, an accommodation which was intended to reinforce rather than destroy their self-identity. Contact between Europeans and Indians saw phases of accommodation, destruction, revitalization and sometimes rejection of beliefs. Brightman concludes that an examination of religious history can shed new light on Indian history.

This book is not easy reading, as it is like an unending critical bibliography. But the wealth of high-quality research work reviewed makes it an indispensable resource for the researcher. I appreciated the Newberry Library's efforts in including Indian reviewers and Canadian material. I believe that the three emerging fields hold important keys in the development not only of Indian history, but of American Indian, or Native Studies generally. These areas are not exhaustive, and areas such as psychology and geography could also be examined.

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