

The major weakness of the book is Dobbin's inability to clarify Brady's position of the Metis as a class in accordance with Marxist interpretation. Race and class are used interchangeably. Brady may have thought of the Metis as a class but did the Metis? Were the Metis politically aware of the distinction? These questions are not answered and deserve to be—otherwise a label is placed upon a group of people without any suggestion that it is accepted or understood.

Dobbin has begun what I hope will be a new trend in Metis historiography. Sawchuk has written about the Manitoba Metis Federation; Ron Bourgeault about the Metis of Saskatchewan but only Dobbin has dealt with twentieth century Metis leaders. Furthermore, the book is invaluable as a source for additional research on the Federation of Metis Settlements in Alberta, many of which are presently writing their respective histories. The footnotes to Dobbin's work represent new sources of evidence. Unfortunately the book lacks an *Index*. But that is a minor point. *The One-And-A-Half Men* is a welcome addition to Metis historiography. It is the second volume to come out about Alberta in two years (Sawchuk: *Metis Land Rights in Alberta*) and both deserve national distribution and attention.

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Summer of the Hungry Pup, by Byrna Barclay. Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1981. 196 pp., \$14.95, cloth, \$7.95, paper.

Perhaps times have changed in Saskatchewan. When I went to school in Saskatchewan, little or no Indian history was taught in federal or provincial schools. If taught, a value was placed on culture according to some European scale. Some cultures were regarded as more highly civilized than others. The Indian civilizations were well down the scale, because we had not invented the wheel, gunpowder or the Gutenberg press.

Then along came the sixties, with their search for a more meaningful life—Canadian students marched against discrimination in the United States, others marched to ban the bomb and stop the Vietnam war, others reinforced the romantic stereotype of the Indian as noble savage or child. A great secular missionary effort was started. A change from poverty was the goal. Indian organizations (for self-determination and economic self-sufficiency) were underwritten by government funds so that we might grow up and take our place as Canadian citizens.

The White Paper of the late 1960's sought to take away our legal status as registered Indians, and we would be "just plain folks,"

blending with all people under the sun and becoming anonymous—without our own language, culture, history, religion or support systems. Support came from white society; they would even write our history for us. A backlash developed. In white society, Indians were seen as victims responsible for their own poverty. In Indian society, a strong traditional movement began to emerge.

It is against this background that Byrna Barclay bravely writes. Her main characters are women. “Old Woman,” the Cree Indian, recounts her story to Annika, the granddaughter of her deceased Swedish friend, Johanna.

After the Battle of Cutknife Hill in 1885, the Cree surrender at Battleford and begin their life in exile. Some join relatives in their old territory (now in the United States); some move to “left over land” (also known as “land we had no part in choosing” or reserves). Those who survive the epidemics and the liquor trade, deportation back to Canada in closed boxcars, “the visit of Summer’s hungry pup” (famine) and culture shock, are put on reserves.

The story covers much territory, both geographic and psychic. Most it will not dispel the stereotype of the Indian as victim or romantic figure. In fact, the prevailing image in my Indian mind is of people adapting to ever-accelerating change. The small family group is the social unit on which we depended in times of stress. We see this in the story. With the leadership in jail, it is “Old Woman”—“New Woman”—“Medicine Woman,” who is seen as leader as in the ancient past.

Ms. Barclay is to be credited with studying the Cree language in her research. Readers are involved in her search to transcend cultural differences by having “Old Woman” become, in the end, “All Women,” in whom all voices meet. This attempt to project through time is very important to Indian history, as we regard history as a direct line from the creation myths. The use of language without articles is the poetic license allowed the “Old Woman.” Presumably, Ms. Barclay would write in some dialect form in speaking with the voice of her own grandmother.

In reference to the author’s use of Cree, this reviewer was pleased that care was taken in utilizing Cree quotes, but disagreed with some of the interpretations. After all, it is most important to me as an Indian that Cree and the other Indian languages were the first languages of North America, and hence deserve respect! I do not appreciate my language being “used” just to add “colour” to writing. I have read too many books written by non-Indians who “quote Cree”—incorrectly! By using Cree (or any other Indian language) you show respect. If an Indian Elder (who has never written a book) can be so presumptuous as to offer advice it would be this: “certainly you are free to use my

language, but please show respect for my nation by using its language correctly.”

In the acknowledgements, Barclay states “. . . I have adhered faithfully to Cree history.” She does not make the same claim of her own history. Perhaps she could more properly claim to write what she interprets to be true. As we know, there is always something lost in the translation.

The book is populated with people such as Poundmaker, Little Bear, Lucky Man and Bowboy. The author adds another dimension to the stories about Poundmaker which are critical to those who regard him as a cultural hero. This is difficult for an Indian writer to do. What rings true for this reader is not the Cree characterization but the white.

We are still waiting for Cree history to be written and published by Native writers. The appearance of this or any book should not serve as a deterrent to other writers. It is an interesting story, and I'll read Ms. Barclay's next book.¹

NOTE

¹ I understand Ms. Barclay is presently working on a sequel to *Summer of the Hungry Pup*.

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Saskatchewan Government, Politics and Pragmatism, by Evelyn Eager. Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1980. 240 pp., \$11.95, paper.

Evelyn Eager has provided a descriptive account of the machinery and history of government in Saskatchewan, similar in intent and coverage to MacGregor Dawson's classic text on Canadian government. It has both the merits and defects of that approach.

Its merits are that it is superbly organized, readable, and detailed. If the student needs a reference text for a study of Saskatchewan's history, this is ideal. When was Thatcher elected? What percentage of the vote did the CCF obtain in 1948? What were the identified issues, and which slogans were advanced by which party? All is here in a format that makes quick access possible. Also provided are details on the *Saskatchewan Act*, the history of its enactment, party organization, the Legislative Assembly, the office of the Lieutenant General, the Cabinet, the public service, and interesting historical information on the relations between cabinets and parties especially within the CCF and NDP. The defect of this approach is that it, quite frankly, lacks