

federal government and whose name is entered on the official register, in other words, one who fits the definition in *The Indian Act*. 'Indian' is not to be confused with 'Native' which is an umbrella term encompassing Indian, nonstatus Indian, Inuit and Metis: "... in this book we shall reserve the term Indian to denote registered (status) Indians." The problem is that the authors, after carefully defining the term, are inconsistent in their use of it throughout the book. Thus, on page 50 the reader is given statistics for the average yearly earnings per Indian worker. The next lines give statistics for the Native labour force. Further on we are given educational statistics for Natives which are later compared with those for Indians. All this despite the fact that no national statistics have ever been gathered concerning Natives—simply because the problems of definition make them impossible to gather.

Having opted for a *legal* definition of Indian, the authors are on shaky ground when to prove their points they use statistics such as those gathered by the Solicitor-General's Department or by the Law Reform Commission which are based on observable *racial* characteristics. At other times in the book the authors set aside *legal* and *racial* definitions and use the term 'Indian' in a *cultural* sense. This 'Alice in Wonderland' use of words leaves the reader reeling. One can understand the use of the term 'cultural genocide' in relation to the assimilative policies of government. But to then remove 'cultural' and thereafter speak of 'genocide' shifts the meaning of the argument rather dramatically to physical extermination.

Despite such limitations, *Out of Irrelevance* will serve as an invaluable reference book.

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**Urban Indians: The Strangers in Canada's Cities**, by Larry Krotz.  
Edmonton, Hurtig Publishers, 1980. 176 pp. \$9.95, paper.

Larry Krotz has succeeded in his latest book in addressing a difficult subject in an insightful and sensitive way. Avoiding the temptation to resort to numbing statistics or gushy appeals to sentiment, the author evokes the spectre of the urban Indian in the Canadian West, and then calmly and accurately interprets the issues in a holistic fashion. The reader is left feeling both that the urban Indian has been given a fair representation in the book, and that the issues and circumstances of urban Indians are the result of every citizen's negligence in failing to insist on justice for all.

Title choice for the book is practical. Although urban non-status Natives probably outnumber status Indians, to the majority of people, Indian physical features evoke the description "Indian" rather than "Native," regardless of the legal definition of Indians as rendered by *The Indian Act*. Furthermore, the use of the descriptive word "strangers" adds a further dimension of reality to the title—especially when the word is interpreted as descriptive of a people unwelcome and unaccommodated.

The book is not an academic study in the usual sense of intensive theory application and quantification. Rather, Krotz, by use of numerous personal interviews and provision of background information, has written a descriptive study resembling a drawn artistic picture. The author displays a sensitive maturity which allows him to feel with his human subjects and still retain a clear self-identity.

A subject like urban Indians and their experiences could not be discussed without some recourse to basic theory. However, Krotz never does personally espouse any one theoretical analysis of the factors precipitating a hard life for many Indians. Rather, he makes statements intermittently throughout the book that provoke thoughtful analysis and speculation in the reader. For instance, in regards to the urban Indian's chronic housing crises, Krotz states that housing is not a problem to anyone—the problem is poverty. In other places he underscores this same thesis, as in his description of the \$130,000 family, clucked over by a troupe of social service professionals, while the basic family poverty gnaws on like a dreadful disease.

The nearest Krotz comes to specific theory application is his appropriation of William Ryan's (*Blaming the Victim*: Random House, 1971) basic presuppositions concerning Black poverty in America. However, even here Krotz does not state that in fact Indians are totally victimized in Canadian cities, but rather gently suggests that maybe society should shoulder some of the responsibility for the circumstances.

The Indian people whom Krotz chose to interview come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. These diverse sources lend greater credibility to Krotz' descriptions. It is indeed the case that Indians come from different socio-economic stratifications within Indian society, and Krotz recognizes this fact. The interviews also underscore the fact that there are poor Indians and relatively well-to-do Indians, but Krotz does not let this factor lead to the spurious conclusion that the Indians' situation is just like that of the rest of society. Rather, the reader is subtly led to the inescapable conclusion that while there may be some differences among Indians, basically, to be an Indian in a western Canadian city greatly increases one's chances of being caught in a treadmill of debilitating poverty.



The photography of John Paskievich cannot be overlooked. Paskievich successfully collaborated with Krotz in an earlier work, *Waiting for the Ice-Cream Man*, and Paskievich has succeeded again. Two sections of photographs in this latest book, one section on Reserve Indian life, and one section on urban Indian life, strongly indicate that in John Paskievich Canada has gained a sensitive photographic artist of the social scene. His works have been exhibited in art galleries from Ontario to Alberta, and his photographs lend a pathos and a dimension of reality to Krotz' book which words alone would have failed to elicit.

*Urban Indians – The Strangers in Canada's Cities* is a book which could enjoy a variety of uses. It may be read as light but informative reading for the person with an interest in Indians or urban issues, or it may also be used as a thought- and discussion-provoking teaching aid in courses related to the subject, at a high-school, university, or any adult learning level. In short, it is a versatile book, with a subject matter and style amenable to diverse usages.

In summation, Larry Krotz has given a sensitive, personal treatment of a gigantic public issue and has done so in a style which keeps the reader's interest. Personal social comment and personal interviews combine to make old issues live again. The author's own diagnosis of why the issues revolving around urban Indians chronically fester is an appropriate ending to this review of a provocative book . . . "The dilemma or the frustration is mainly that of a society that doesn't know how to help."

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**Sundogs: Stories from Saskatchewan**, edited by Robert Kroetsch. Moose Jaw, Coteau Books, 1980. 184 pp. \$7.95, paper.

*Sundogs* is the first major collection of short stories by Saskatchewan authors, and a further indication of the literary ferment of the last decade as the primarily third generation in Saskatchewan begins to write the province in detail. Poetry has been until now the primary medium for that exploration—over thirty books of poetry by Saskatchewan poets have been published in the last six years, some of them very substantial achievements. A reader can best enter that poetry world through another Coteau book, *Number One Northern*, a 1978 anthology of poems by Saskatchewan authors. Now *Sundogs* is the matching anthology of short stories, a genre which has as yet been little published in book form. I know of only four authors in *Sundogs*,