

Adelson, Naomi. *“Being Alive Well”: Health and the Politics of Cree Well-Being*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press Incorporated, 2000.

Review by Lynn Gehl, Trent University

*“Being Alive Well”: Health and the Politics of Cree Well-Being* is a critical anthropological analysis of what constitutes Cree health. The Cree studied in this ethnography live in the northern arctic village of Whapmagoostui, situated at the mouth of the Great Whale River, 1,400 kilometres north of Montreal. Adelson articulates a particular concept of health defined not by the biomedical model—disease-free, a matter of physiology and control—but as mediated by and through culture, history, and politics. A strong theoretical framework is provided along with an evocative, enriching, and thought provoking concrete account of the need to expand the boundaries of the human body.

There is no Cree word, Adelson explains, that translates into English as “health.” The closest phrase is *miyupimaatisiun*, meaning, as Adelson translates it, “being alive well.” For the Cree, “being alive well” constitutes a balance of human relationships, traditional activities, the ability to hunt and keep warm, and consumption of bush food.

Chapter Two explores what constitutes Cree identity and what it means to be Cree. Adelson suggests that, for the Cree, the past is embodied in the present through the storytelling of ancestors. History is recounted through the symbolic use of landscapes, rooting the Cree to the land. Cree identity is also constructed through the landscapes of their hunt, as well as through the animals that they hunt and consume. The message conveyed is that Cree identity and way of life is closely connected to the land.

Chapter Two also provides some history of exploitation by both fur and whaling industries and missionaries. The poverty of the 1930s, the effects of the Cold War, and the creation of the permanent village in 1958 impacted the Cree lifestyle change. Interestingly, Cree, Inuit, and non-natives occupy the village once called Great Whale, all, for the most part, living as separate entities.

11 November 1975 was a historic day for the Cree as it marked the signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) between the Inuit and the provincial and federal governments. The JBNQA established the first Aboriginal self-government in Canada, which

has had huge social, political, and economic implications. It also formally divided the Cree and Inuit into two municipalities and, further, changed their relationship with larger social bodies.

In 1989, the Quebec government began a process of land encroachment. It was here that the Cree's agency flowed. Quebec Hydro planned to divert three rivers into the Great Whale River, thus flooding acres of land and, hence, sacred burial sites. Furthermore, it destroyed bush animals and, consequently, Cree identity. The community organized themselves socially, politically, and legally within an international forum to advocate for their right to be Cree and "be alive well." Health, Adelson effectively argues, is also a matter of politics and resistance.

Chapter Three provides the reader with Cree cosmology, a symbolic analysis, as well as a description of everyday lived practices that constitute Cree wellness. The spirit world, Adelson explains, mediates Cree hunting through respect. The Cree talk of great respect for bush animals and their spirits. The spirits of the animals and the hunter play a role in a successful hunt. Animals are neither simply killed, nor is a kill simply a matter of luck. Women, too, are linked to the spirit world of hunting because animal spirits will only "visit" the hunting camps if they are well prepared.

Adelson provides an interesting symbolic analysis of bush food. There is great significance and meaning in the manner that animals are butchered and consumed. For example, goose heads are given to young hunters to ensure future success while hunting, whereas goose feet are consumed by women to draw geese down from the spirit world. Additionally, Cree food is viewed as better and stronger than the weaker "white man's" food, and therefore has more symbolic significance. Thus, traditional foods and hunting practices ensure physical strength and future survival for the Cree people.

Symbolism is also incorporated in the clothing that keep the Cree warm, another component part of "being alive well." For example, decorations are more elaborate on moccasins because warm feet are essential in the arctic climate.

In Chapter Four, Adelson expresses concern over the seemingly homogenous accounts of what it means to be Cree and "being alive well." As she listened to these accounts, she realized that it was in response to a homogenous construct known as *waamistikushiiu* or "white man." Unfortunately, "white man" encompasses a discourse of oppression that

is firmly embedded in the minds of the Cree. Adelson explains that the “white man” is a historically fluid construct that has evolved from *pwaatich*, the initial land surveyors. Thus, Cree well-being is also constructed through an ideal memory of the past when European forces were non-existent.

One’s perspective has huge implications for the kind of answers one finds, and therefore affects one’s interpretation. Adelson perceives the dominant model of health as not only biased but incomplete. She argues that, “health is neither a category nor an entity that can be known universally or against which one can determine the degree of nonhealth” (5). Thus, she practices a particular ethnographic style that challenges us to, on the one hand, rethink the biases of western biology and disciplinary power and, on the other, link our understanding of health and wellness to larger social issues and the body politic. Health, Adelson argues, is always political.

This ethnography is short and written in an accessible manner suitable for the upper undergraduate level. However, I often found myself critically reflecting on the larger issues that it raised long after I completed my initial reading. As an urban Aboriginal extending from the same the Cree linguistic group and suffering from intergenerational affects and effects of forced assimilation, this expanded account of health rings true. Historically, I have been dispossessed of traditional hunting and gathering land, left disconnected and disenfranchised, left spiritually dispossessed (a particular kind of soul loss), and left abandoned in a “white man’s” land. This “disease of colonialism” has left me in a pre-symbolic, disempowered, objectified state, and has proven western philosophy and the biomedical model inadequate. This book has provided me with a greater understanding of how one can lose one’s soul or, more accurately, have one’s right to a soul taken away. Understanding the larger historical and political processes of soul destruction allows one to shift the blame from self, family, and community, an existential shift diffusing some of the pain in the process. For many, this is one step in a life long healing journey.

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Gillam, Robyn. *Hall of Mirrors: Museums and the Canadian Public*. Banff: The Banff Centre Press, 2001.

Review by Michelle Hamilton, University of Western Ontario

Gillam succeeds in creating an accessible commentary on post-modern museology for the generalist, one of *Hall of Mirrors*' stated goals. Her childhood anecdote of visiting the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne reflects the experiences of many average museum visitors. By examining her own response to the architecture, patronage, collecting principles, and exhibit design, she demonstrates the socio-political, economic, and racial contexts that have shaped museum development. While early chapters condense others' works (especially Key and Tippett), this is a necessary background to issues presented in subsequent sections, and there is little else in the history of Canadian museums to consult. Although significant monographs are missing from her references, important theoretical works are incorporated. Building upon her introductory analysis, Gillam translates the museological and anthropological literature that questions the colonial origins of museums and their power to portray non-Western cultures in a more intelligible manner. Readers will be more likely to doubt the authority of curatorial interpretations during their next museum visit.

The second section analyzes three recent controversies in Canadian museum history, two of which concern cultural representation of the "other." Gillam argues that while museums are often touted as promoting national unity, they can also create discord, especially when dealing with minority, ethnic, or Indigenous communities. Her focus on the contentious *Into the Heart of Africa* (Royal Ontario Museum) and *The Spirit Sings* (Glenbow Museum) exhibits ignores the progress metropolitan institutions have made in applying the guidelines of the 1992 Assembly of First Nations/Canadian Museums Association task force. Their watershed report established ethical standards for museum practice, and has implications for relations with other communities. Students of First Peoples/museum relations in Canada await a much-needed synthesis of developments in their field since its publication. Unfortunately, readers of *Hall of Mirrors* will be disappointed.

Even a quick appraisal of the major museums in Canada reveals that the status quo is far ahead of Gillam's pessimistic assessment. In the past

ten years, institutions such as the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, the Glenbow Museum, the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Royal Ontario Museum, and the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre have been working with First Peoples to establish collaborative exhibits and publications, repatriate sacred items, increase access to collections, and train Native individuals in museology. Instead, brief mention of some ongoing projects is dismissed as “scattered instances of good-will” and the Task Force as “cultural tokenism.”

Gillam is correct, however, in stating that cutbacks have limited or delayed these initiatives, although several major metropolitan museums have been successful in substantial fundraising efforts from both government and private coffers. A comparative analysis of smaller museums in Canada would have been enlightening, for, with a few exceptions, they are the institutions that need to be more creative with limited funds.

The book bemoans the fate of museums due to financial problems, as well as Canadians’ perception of museums as irrelevant. The background of community discord is presented as a major cause of their disregard, yet the follow-up of the task force recommendations only improves the utility of museums to First Peoples. As well, preliminary responses to the recently opened *Nitsitapiisinni: Our Way of Life* exhibit at the Glenbow Museum demonstrate that visitors enjoy the more personal, narrative, and environmental approach that often embodies Native curation. Once again, Gillam’s reliance on obsolete information about First Peoples/museum relations in Canada conceals the optimistic future of this field.

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Helm, June. *The People of Denendeh: Ethnohistory of the Indians of Canada’s Northwest Territories*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press / Toronto: McGill-Queens University Press, 2000.

Review by Robin Ridington, University of British Columbia

Between 1951 and 1975, June Helm, sometimes in collaboration with Teresa Carterette and Nancy Lurie, wrote a series of definitive essays

linking anthropological theory to northern Dene ethnographic reality. She dedicates this selection of her writing from those years to Carterette and Lurie, as well as to the memories of Dene colleagues, Louis Norwegian and Vital Thomas. The essays focus on the ethnohistorical perspective that underlies much of her work. Helm did fieldwork in Jean Marie River in the 1950s, in Lac la Martre in 1959, and in Rae in the 1960s and 1970s. As she says in her introduction, “my research activities in the Northwest Territories ended in 1975, so the historical run of this book ends then” (p.xii).

Helm subtitles the collection, “Ethnohistory of the Indians of Canada’s Northwest Territories.” She points out that the excerpts from her writing that she brings together here constitute ethnohistorical vignettes, rather than a comprehensive reading of the past. The chapters derive from “published writings and unpublished field notes, unpublished essays and field notes of my field companions ... and some nineteenth-century records.”

The book begins with a paper, adapted from Helm’s 1987 University of Iowa Presidential Lecture, that summarizes her contribution to an anthropological understanding of band level social organization. I remember being immersed in fieldwork with the Dane-zaa when Helm’s now classic paper, “Bilaterality in the Socio-Territorial Organization of the Arctic Drainage Dene” appeared in *Ethnology*. Here was an anthropologist making sense of the way things are “on the ground.” Her analysis begins with ethnographic actuality, rather than with the abstract and essentially ungrounded typologies of Steward and Service. I was glad to adopt Helm’s method in working out an understanding of Dane-zaa kinship and band organization. Helm’s typology reflects situational reality, not theoretical imperatives. “I concluded,” she writes, “that the traditional socioterritorial organization of the Mackenzie Dene took the form of not a single kind of ‘band’ but of three analytically distinguishable kinds of groups that I designated task groups, local bands, and regional bands” (p.10). She observed that local bands consisted of “a small group of related nuclear families, usually focused around a core set of siblings” (ibid).

Helm realized that while the bands she observed were not “living fossils” (p.2), certain social dynamics present in what she and David Damas came to call “contact-traditional” communities (p.107) reflect adaptive choices that have considerable antiquity in the subarctic. Again, Helm’s instinct was to approach both ethnohistory and social theory from

the grounding of ethnographic observation. Chapter 7, adapted from a 1975 paper by Helm and six of her graduate students, gives an overview of the stages that subarctic Athapaskans went through in their contacts with the institutions, economies, and outsiders' worldviews. Other chapters describe particular challenges, such as the effects of building a highway to Rae in 1967 and the possible effects of a Mackenzie Valley pipeline.

Helm continues the theme of ethnohistorical vignettes with chapters on the fur trade and the mission period, as well as one on traditional leadership. Following these, she presents a rather technical but fascinating paper on the role of female infanticide and European diseases on Mackenzie Dene population levels, concluding that cultural practices had more demographic impact than diseases introduced from outside. The book concludes with chapters on Dogrib oral tradition as history, using oral history texts that reflect Dene traditional knowledge and belief. It would have been interesting to learn more about the culture hero, *Yampa Deja*, and his relation to similar figures from other northern Athapaskan traditions. Similarly, it would have been interesting to read a text from the prophet, Naedzo, in addition to the one quoted. What does it mean to be a prophet in Dogrib society and how would Naedzo's role compare to prophets in other northern Athapaskan societies? While Helm's work as of 1975 cannot be expected to address a later literature, Helm surely must have asked Naedzo about his role as prophet.

*The People of Denendeh* summarizes Helm's considerable contribution to the ethnography and ethnohistory of northern Dene people. While her fieldwork ended in 1975, Helm was present at the end of the contact-traditional period that now seems almost legendary. Her work helped transform hunter-gatherer studies from the discourse of conjectural theory to that of a theory derived from ethnographic observation and ethnohistorical extrapolation. This book is considerably enhanced by the inclusion of historical and ethnographic photographs that illustrate Dene life, both at the time of Helm's writing and before. The book brings together work that might otherwise be hard to locate and presents it as a coherent whole, making it valuable to both First Nations readers and to non-Aboriginal scholars. It gives a baseline from which to understand contemporary Dene society. It should be an essential part of any Canadian Native Studies library.



Pálsson, Gísli, ed., *Writing On Ice: The Ethnographic Notebooks of Vilhjalmur Stefansson*. Hanover and London: Dartmouth College, University Press of New England, 2001.

Review by Robert Macdonald, Arctic Institute of North America

Vilhjalmur Stefansson has been a controversial figure in Arctic exploration, study, and promotion. Viewed as an explorer and “expert,” through his popular books, lectures, and advice to governments (especially the United States), he was known for championing the Friendly Arctic concept (adjusting to its environment) and the region’s strategic importance. Various biographies have downplayed his scientific, ethnological contributions. LeBourdais barely mentions this in his brief study. For Diubaldo, observations of the first expeditions, including criticism of myths and methods of studying the Western Arctic Inuit, demonstrate lessons learned from his controversial Canadian Arctic Expedition (1913-1918). Seeing him as a “prophet,” Hansen largely narrates what Stefansson did, though he documented only briefly his collecting of folk tales. Hunt’s sympathetic account gives more attention to observations and quotes Dr. René Dubois in 1962 on Stefansson’s contributions to understanding diet. However, Hunt relies more on Stefansson’s published material than on the notes. Excerpts from his field notes were published in 1914, but questions of interest then were different, dealing with stories and material culture, less so on relations (p.31). Pálsson suggests that Stefansson’s ethnological contributions were obscured by his explorations and by quarrels with collaborators such as Diamond Jenness (p.3). This book attempts to redress the balance.

Pálsson has selected from Stefansson’s field books to highlight ethnographic observations and give voice to his thinking (including Icelandic) and to sources. The focus is on the first expeditions—the Anglo-American (1906-7) for which he was anthropologist—and the Stefansson-Anderson expedition (1908-1912) sponsored by the American Museum of Natural History. A portion of the notes dealing with actual traveling and interaction with fellow travelers/researchers is presented, enough to give a flavour of his working environment. Pálsson sees much less anthropological value in the entries of the “famous” controversial Canadian Arctic Expedition.

The book has two parts. The first section is a series of short essays



beginning with background and sketches of the expeditions. As well, there is discussion of recent trends in anthropology, of publishing field notes of researchers such as Malinowski, Boas, and Jenness. Stefansson's notes give insight into understanding Inuit society and relations of Inuit with outsiders (anthropologists, traders, whalers, government) at that time (p.25). A short essay on the diaries, what they contain and omit, illustrates some of their limitations. Stefansson's pre-occupation with his own "fame" precluded more scholarly publications. Two essays on Stefansson's relations with the Inuit and particularly on his Inuit family (and his reluctance to acknowledge or discuss) prove very useful in understanding the author and his diaries. Discussion then proceeds to one on intimacy of relations including those with his two main sources. These essays on family and intimacy lead to one on race, gender and ethnicity as Pálsson wrestles with reticence in telling of relations. The editor concludes with Stefansson's sense of the Arctic, Inuit adaptations to seasonal changes, cultural relativism, and his particular perspective on the Arctic.

The second part is the edited notes. They reveal clearly some of Stefansson's sources that he was less likely to emphasize in his popular books. Especially important (in the second expedition) were Natkusiak (Billy Banksland) and Pannigabluk (Fanny), traditionally seen as a traveling companion and as a seamstress, respectively. Pannigabluk particularly mentioned such aspects as names (p.154), stories on spirits (p.229), food taboos (pp.171, 231, 249), childbirth and upbringing (pp.171, 231), and travel (p.228). Other sources included Tannaumirk and Ilavinirk, and, early in the second trip, Dr. Marsh and Mr. Brower.

Critical of contemporaries, Stefansson stressed learning the language, something he noted he could not interest biologist Rudolf Anderson. As early as 28 August 1906, he recorded a few words and phrases (pp.93-94). Later, as he increasingly perfected his own knowledge, important observations included comparison of dialects such as at Barrow or Cape Smythe (2 March 1910, p.185), suffixes in the Mackenzie dialect (8 May 1910, p.195), pronunciation of letters (18 December 1908, p.154), and the significance of a whole word's meaning, not individual parts (15 March 1911, p.252). Success in learning the language was illustrated in his encounter with Victoria Islanders or Copper Inuit: he was perceived as Inuk, not Kablunak, as his speech "is from their point of view not much worse than Tannaumirk's and I believe better than Billy's" (14 May 1910, p.199). Initially he felt this dialect was similar to that of keyukokat (spirits)

(8 May 1910, p.195) but on actual arrival it was thought to resemble the Kittingaruyumiut of the Alaska-Yukon coast. This edition has a glossary of Inuktitut terms that Stefansson frequently wrote, illustrating familiarity linguistically.

Use of terms describing various groups encounters was related to this. These included Puiplirmiut, Pallirmiut, Haneragmiut, Koukpagmiut, and Akuliakattagmiut. He reflected on information received on others such as the Nagyuktogmiut (near Cambridge Bay, Ikaluktuutiaq) or the Ualinarumiut (who had iron but were not specifically located). Use of these terms underlines identification with specific geographic location.

He frequently compared customs and technology. Entries comparing sleds (1 May 1910, p.192) and snowshoes (9 December 1908, p.120) are instructive. Elsewhere, he discussed different hunting techniques, such as summer hunting for beluga and caribou, or taboos on cooking caribou on an open fire for Kittingaruyumiut but in the kitchen on a special fire for Nuvayuk (3-4 March 1911, p.295). Naturally, Stefansson focused on food gathering. He also observed trading patterns.

Another contribution concerns taboos and practices. Several revolved around birth and child rearing. In September 1906, citing Roxy, he describes customs of confining a woman in a separate tent (p.101), while at Point Hope he suggested pregnant women did not sew or use the "chamber pot" nor go on the ice when whaling (28 February 1907, p.130). Pannigabluk revealed that the afterbirth was hung in a high tree, and a woman with a young child must not eat the loon lest the child grow up to walk awkwardly (19 June 1910, p.217). A crying child was interpreted to be crying for the spirit of one deceased, or a spirit, and would cease only when the right name was given (23 January 1910, p.240). Attitudes toward abortion were recorded, and burial customs were noted, either in a grave, or on a scaffold or elevation with ceremonies and taboos.

As Stefansson observed, taboos were central to Inuit life. In September 1909, Pannigabluk indicated that several groups of women were forbidden to taste or cook brown bear until they had two children, and only the oldest could skin the bear (p.121). Caribou bones were sawn, not broken, for the marrow, lest the caribou leave the country (2 May 1911, p.263). Elsewhere, he noted that only a stone knife could skin caribou caught in snares (20 July 1911, p.273). Among the Kittingaruyumiut, in killing a beluga a man had his ears pierced and could not eat blubber until they healed, while a person who lost a relative had to eat the whale uncooked lest he never successfully hunt another (27 August 1911, p.273).

Personal adornment, such as tattooing, was obvious to Stefansson. In September 1906, he described these on five women from Herschel (p.97), while on the second expedition he was informed that if the chin were not tattooed it would grow disfigured (p.150). Later, he described tattoos on Victoria Island. On the other hand, several times he discussed labrets on men. Clothing occupied an important part of the record. In May 1909, he compared those of the Copper Inuit to clothing elsewhere (p.199). The diaries also noted hairstyles. Other observations included building of igloos, travel, medicines and general health, dancing, gambling, and other recreation.

The synopsis suggests that the diaries are a rich source of information on the Western Arctic Inuit. A review only hints at their value. Moreover, Stefansson's drawings and photographs illustrate many observations and experiences. Some were used in his public lectures, while photographs by Pálsson and contemporaries proved additional insight.

Finally, the diaries illustrate his isolation. Through letters written earlier, Stefansson read of King Edward VII's death. Upon learning of the Cooke-Peary dispute on reaching the North Pole (29 September 1911, p.230), he commented that few doubted that Cooke would claim to have succeeded, a worry to Peary's friends. He reflected on Cooke (an opportunist) and Peary (persistent and consistent). Ironically, he further suggested his innocuous expedition would not precipitate "unpleasant things."

Because these excerpts largely reflect attitudes and ethnographic observations, one gets only a partial view of Stefansson. He was a child of his time, using "Husky" and "Eskimo" to describe people, though later in his career he insisted on "Inuit." The notes also reveal he was a researcher of his time, as several times he recorded attempts to measure skulls. While the essays illuminate the diaries and help direct the reader, unlike Stuart Jenness' editing of his father's diaries, the excerpts themselves are not accompanied by explanatory notes including the background of people mentioned, such as precise meaning of names of Inuit groups and how these names might relate to customs or geographical location.

There are some corrections. Although he was born in Arnes, at the time it was part of the Northwest Territories, and Manitoba's original boundaries extended were only later, well after the family had moved to Dakota. As well, the otherwise excellent coloured maps and photographs contain an error. The Gwich'in or Kutchin were also known as Loucheux not Loucheaux, as the map indicates (it is correct in the text).

Russell, Dan. *A People's Dream: Aboriginal Self-Government in Canada*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000.

Review by Yale Belanger, Trent University

Dan Russell has produced a significant work that all students of self-governance should investigate thoroughly, both for its legal detail and philosophical reasoning regarding alternative ways of looking at implementing self-government. Utilizing a variety of intellectual perspectives, including a collectivist Aboriginal approach and the Canadian individualist philosophy embodied by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to develop his arguments, Russell has produced an interesting and well-thought out contribution to the ever-expanding literature base on self-government, arguing that Aboriginal self-government can be achieved in Canada only through a constitutional amendment rather than through treaties, as is the contemporary approach. His discussion involves how to reconcile the relationship between the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and traditional Aboriginal governing structures; how Aboriginal women's issues could be worked into the discussion; and how to mesh Aboriginal collective rights and the Charter of Rights.

Russell states early on that Aboriginal leaders would be well suited to abandon the modern treaty process as a means of achieving self-government, and then proceeds to juxtapose the current affection for maintaining this historical and familiar procedure to secure self-government with his own principled approach, which, he argues, would result in the Constitutional recognition of self-government. According to the author, "opportunity to state in clear terms the nature and scope of Aboriginal self-government" (p.198) from which all levels of government could "derive a greater sense of certainty" (p.199) would result. Arguing that the treaty approach does not reach a threshold of adequacy, Russell details its inefficacy by outlining inherent limitations within Canadian and international law. The problem lies in that the federal government, as a sovereign entity, possesses the right to enter into treaty agreements; however, the provinces do not have this option. As such, "[s]hould Aboriginal communities sign treaties with the federal authority ... unless the subject matter falls within the provincial jurisdiction implemented by the provinces, the Aboriginal parties will not be able to enforce them,

certainly not by any international dispute mechanisms, as would be their preference” (p.45).

In all, the author concludes that the treaty option is troublesome and should be jettisoned. Instead, the principled approach should be adopted, which would involve the recognition and definition of self-government. Flowing from this process is a list of seven principles that would be adhered to by the federal government in its dealings with Native people: tribal governments would possess the inherent right to self-government; inherent jurisdiction over both criminal and civil matters; tribal sovereignty is limited to sovereignty of a domestic nature; provinces would have no criminal jurisdiction over Native people on reserve but would over non-Native people on reserve; provinces would have civil jurisdiction on reserve provided that no Native people are involved; the federal government would be able to exercise authority over any people on reserve; and that federal authority is paramount to both tribal and provincial jurisdiction on reserve.

Within his argument, which stresses the examination of multiple models prior to making a final binding decision, Russell indicates that Aboriginal leaders would be well suited to examine the United States situation and the significance of domestic dependent nation status. Russell claims that domestic sovereign status, as it exists in the U.S. could be, with a little effort, instituted in Canada, although he recognizes that once ideas such as sovereignty become entrenched in law, it is up to a panel of judges to determine exactly what these laws represent. Similar to what occurs in Canada, there appears to be much more emphasis placed upon self-determination south of the international border, although there is also significant distance between the U.S. government and tribal councils, which hinders a nation-to-nation relationship to which Russell aspires. The author is clear that tribal government in the U.S. is tenuous at best, while also at the liberty of the U.S. Supreme Court to determine sovereignty issues, as is also the case in Canada. Once again, the goal as he puts it, is to become better informed by the American experience, which, in turn, will provide additional facts to aid in making an informed decision regarding what self-government in Canada may become.

One highlight of *A People's Dream* is Russell's commentary on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People's (RCAP) final report, which represents one of a handful of published critiques available. Framed within the context of self-government, the author's primary concern is that the

commissioners relied somewhat erroneously upon the Sparrow decision in formulating the core/periphery self-government model. In this instance, the Sparrow court reasoned that Aboriginal rights are immune from government regulation. As such, “[s]ince Section 35 rights cannot rely upon the Section 52 entrenchment function (in the 1982 Constitution Act), simply legislation that affects Aboriginal rights, even to the extent of extinguishing them, may be valid” (p.148). This suggests that Aboriginal rights, including the right to self-government, “would first have to be negotiated with the relevant federal and provincial governments before it could exercise any jurisdiction in this area” (p.151). This results in RCAP’s core/periphery negotiation structure and design. Concern is also raised by Russell regarding the use of the word “vital” by RCAP, a concept that has the power to effectively curtail those bands seeking self-government by forcing them to “review each piece of legislation to determine whether it is vital to the integrity of its community. Although such a task is daunting, there is nothing in the RCAP recommendations that would clearly relieve an Aboriginal government from such an undertaking” (p.152).

Furthermore, according to Russell, the Commission’s reliance upon the Sparrow decision to generate its self-government formula literally has the power to undermine the current self-government agenda, something the author attests to in his final chapter: “The RCAP recommendations will never generate the kind of self-government authority to which Aboriginal communities aspire” (p.198). Russell suggests that Aboriginal communities “should officially abandon the recommendations on self-government contained within the report” since the Commission “was not given a mandate to accede to every wish of Aboriginal communities on the issue of self-government” (p.201). In short, he cautions that should the report’s recommendations ever be implemented, “Aboriginal people will never realize their aspiration of self-government” (p.201).

Despite cogent analysis and the intellectual development of an alternative theory for attaining self-government that is both effectual and attainable, in the end, Russell raises more questions than he answers, a situation reflective of current debates concerning self-government. Implicit in this line of argumentation, however, is the notion that, despite all the work being done in the field of self-government, Aboriginal leaders should not become complacent simply because self-government

negotiations appear to be proliferating: there are still myriad questions that require resolution prior to the establishment and implementation of any substantive self-government model in Canada. It is nonetheless inspiring to see critical analyses of current developments surrounding the self-government movement act as catalyst for the creation of new and innovative ideas that hopefully will come to inform this debate.

This is an impressive book that offers insight into one of a variety of approaches that could be taken when seeking to implement self-government. Unfortunately, despite both a well-crafted and -substantiated argument, the current self-government process is at this juncture so unequivocal that ideas such as Russell's may appear anomalistic, which may result in their being neglected by leaders intent on attaining self-government while the capacity to do so still exists. In any case, *A People's Dream* remains a significant contribution to Native Studies and legal scholarship in Canada and should grace the bookshelves of all serious students of Native politics and law and self-government.