Christie Blatchford. *Helpless: Caledonia's Nightmare of Fear and Anarchy, and How the Law Failed All of Us* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2010).

Review by Timothy C. Winegard, Wilfrid Laurier University

Certain elements of the Aboriginal population erect barricades or (re-)occupy lands as a means to promote legitimate grievances and bring governments to the negotiating table. For a minority of others, however, these actions represent an opportune avenue to safeguard lucrative commercial enterprises—such as gambling, the tobacco trade, and a sophisticated smuggling network—with a view to intimidating domestic residents, usurping authority, and establishing "no-go zones" for internal and external security forces. To the detriment of those engaged in justifiable protest, this minority often usurps control of the original political action to promote their own interests under the guise of historical grievance. Nevertheless, an understanding of the historical roots, the agendas of multiple, webbed actors or factions, and the divisive atmosphere surrounding Aboriginal barricades, is challenging in its own right. This understanding, however, is made all the more complex given the inevitable, often sensationalized, media exposure and disinformation campaigns that accompany Aboriginal actions. Each "crisis" is comprised of unique history, governmental legislation, and native-newcomer relationships, and must be researched, mediated, and resolved within its individual historical context.

In the preface to her book, *Helpless: Caledonia's Nightmare of Fear and Anarchy, and How the Law Failed All of Us,* Christie Blatchford bluntly states that, "This book is not about Aboriginal land claims. It is not about the disputed one in this particular case" (vii). This is, indeed, the most valid statement of the book, and she remains true to her word. Blatchford summarily ignores the background and history of the twenty-nine land claims (submitted between 1951 and 2006), and the land tenure of the Haldimand Tract and the Six Nations of the Grand River. In doing so, she produces an account of the events at Caledonia/Six Nations between 2006 and 2010 that provides little more than a series of sensationalized snapshots of select occurrences, completely removed from any historical framework.

The record of the relatively peaceful local land disputation, and that of 225 years of respectful co-existence among the residents of Caledonia and Six Nations, was ignored for the sake of four years of contention and

acrimony, wrought by small opposing groups without consensus or sweeping support from the majority of their respective community members and leadership. The actions of both factions were equally antagonistic. Assigning fault or blame does not allow for negotiation or resolution. Yet, this is precisely what this book promotes. The reasons for the violence and confrontation are as important, if not more so, than the actual hostility itself. In paradoxical logic, given the tenor of her writing, Blatchford admits that, "they [the reasons] are, in one way or another, in the background of everything that occurred in Caledonia" (viii).

Blatchford is a journalist, who, by both training and experience, exhibits a certain writing style that attempts to appeal to the masses through dramatic and energetic prose, as evidenced by the title of this book itself. In this respect, she may very well succeed in grabbing the attention of the reader as she navigates her way through the contentious waters of the Grand River and the relationships between certain members of its shoreline communities of Caledonia and Six Nations. Without situating the recent disputation in any form of historical context, however, *Helpless* is shallow. This crucial chronological framework is something Blatchford should have given greater consideration to before she "sat down to write this sucker" (vii).

Blatchford's generalization that, "Academics, government officials and native Canadians have devoted entire careers to the study of those issues [land claims and native-newcomer relations], and they haven't begun to figure it out," is false, pessimistic, unwarranted, and a gross generalization (vii-viii). It is precisely this attitude that undermines the positive steps taken by First Nations peoples and organizations and of all peoples and governments of Canada to reconcile the assimilationist and hurtful policies of the past. In fact, it is disrespectful to all First Nations peoples, sponsors, and leaders, and, to those non-Aboriginal politicians and Canadians who have fought, struggled, and advocated for, equality and just recompense for a legacy of subjugation and dishonour.

Throughout her book, Blatchford attempts to speak on behalf of the residents of Caledonia, while at the same time, disregarding the voice of the Six Nations community. She does not speak for either. Blatchford's book echoes the hollow constructs of colonial thought, which has no relevance to modern solution and dialogue. Nor is her message supported by or concurrent with the progressive and alternative solutions being offered by both First Nations communities and the Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo. While it may be convenient, for

her purposes, to disregard 225 years—I use this number only in reference to the Haldimand Proclamation, and not to the invaluable service of the Five/Six Nations as allies of the Crown—of history, dialogue, and co-existence, this approach lacks any veneer of credibility.

The ongoing evolution of Canadian, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis relations has certainly witnessed negotiations in good faith, and positive land claim agreements, such as those of the Nisga'a and the Gwich'in, and the creation of Nunavut, to name but a few. These examples did not reach mutual satisfaction and settlement by focusing solely on contemporary issues. Rather, they incorporated all facets—both past and present—of respective land occupation and title, and government-First Nation relations. If anything, *Helpless* does provide a one-sided account of a peripheral component of these larger issues facing Six Nations/Caledonia. Certainly, the opportunity exists for more systematic and historically based research and discussion to help facilitate mutually beneficial negotiation and resolution.

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Patricia A. Monture and Patricia D. McGuire, eds. *First Voices: An Aboriginal Women's Reader* (Toronto: Inanna Publications and Education Inc., 2009).

Review by Helen Agger, University of Manitoba

In their introductory remarks, *First Voices* editors Patricia Monture and Patricia McGuire note that history has typically been written from a male perspective, and that "the stories of Aboriginal women were ignored" from the time of Canada's inception (1). The editors' stated goal is to counter this imbalance, but the more general position underlying *First Voices* is that "Indigenous stories should not be seen as mere entertainment, but rather they are the first literatures of this land" (2). Notably, one of the contributors to the anthology is male (Klugie, 38-41).

The editors compiled more than sixty brief and previously published pieces into what they dub "an Aboriginal women's reader" in order to show that "our storytelling ways have not been destroyed nor have we been de-storyed" (3). Not only do the chosen narratives document examples of Indigenous peoples' knowledges, they also express their histories, ground their epistemological systems, portray and strengthen

their innumerable relationships, share sacred understandings, and even evoke laughter (2). Moreover, while revealing clear commonalities between Indigenous groups, the narratives also reflect tremendous diversity among these groups.

First Voices is organized into seven sections intended to guide the reader through a literary journey that begins with a collection of compositions titled "Profiles of Indigenous women". Collectively, these life stories are considered a teaching tool that helps individuals understand their own personal transformations. This teaching tool is a potential source of inspiration with which individuals can deal with the challenges of daily living. Included in this first section is the personal account of Beverley Jacobs, who responded to Prime Minister Stephen Harper's 2008 Statement of Apology for the residential school debacle. Jacobs describes what it meant for her to witness this historic event in person, and explains why she needed to hear about remedial action. She herself was deeply affected by her grandmother's personal accounts of abuse at residential schools. The next segment of the journey—"Identity"—is a collection of stories underscoring the complexity of Indigenous self-identity. This section is followed by "Territory", in which noted activist-writer Winona LaDuke is among the seven contributors.

Based on the number of pages (203) in the fourth segment—"Activism"—it seems reasonable to assume that the editors consider this subject to be particularly important. Included are sensitive, insightful commentaries including that of Métis scholar Carole Leclair, whose cautionary observation reminds us that use of the English language can be "a betrayal of... teachings" (270). The next two sections—"Confronting colonialism" and "Confronting the Canadian legal system"—contain informative insights about issues that continue to be a dominant part of Indigenous discourse on an every-day basis. These include Rosemarie Kuptana's succinct essay, "Keeping the Circle strong in the North" (309-311), which provides the reader with the "pep talk" that we all need from time to time.

The book's final section—"Indigenous knowledges"—returns to the foundational systems of what Indigenous peoples affirm to be their forms of knowing, thus completing the circle of the literary journey upon which Monture and McGuire have taken their readers.

Each composition situates the subject in a different context, from the bustle of a world conference in Beijing to the quietude of a visit to the homeland. Readers will find distinctively and intricately structured modes of presentation with complex layers of meaning, particularly in

Monture's pieces, "Kohkum would be mad at me" (9-10) and "White man tell me" (291-292), and also in Mojica's intriguingly titled monologue, "An invocation/incantation to the women word-warriors for custom-made shoes" (185-187). Then there is Monture's "Freedom" (351), a terse poem that captures the strengths and vulnerabilities of life through the thought-provoking metaphor of glass bottles.

In their concluding remarks, the editors express hope that those who read *First Voices* will acquire not only sufficient interest and motivation to ask difficult questions, but also the knowledge needed to discover useful answers (520). These narratives may even lead readers to establish a means of survival by inspiring them to try writing on their own (521).

Approximately twenty black-and-white photographs are interspersed throughout the anthology, contributing to the richness of the work. With so wide a range in style and content, there is little doubt that most readers will find at least one piece that stands out for them. *First Voices* is a substantial volume of 538 pages, a collection of Indigenous literary self-expression well worth the attention of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous readership.

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Andie Diane Palmer. *Maps of Experience: The Anchoring of Land to Story in Secwepemc Discourse* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

Review by Melody Martin, First Nations Studies, Vancouver Island University

Maps of Experience: The Anchoring of Land to Story in Secwepemc Discourse is evidence that anthropological studies are giving increased attention to indigenous peoples' deep and complex relationship to ancestral lands. Andie Diane Palmer—a linguistic anthropologist working with Secwepemc elders of Alkali Lake in the northern interior of British Columbia—considers various kinds of talk that occur in and about particular places on the land, and during travel between these places. Palmer examines ways in which these kinds of talk allow indigenous knowledge to be "carried forward, reconstituted, reflected upon, enriched, and ultimately relocated, by and for new interlocutors, in new experiences, and sometimes new places" (3). Some of her conclusions about the relationship

of Secwepemc discourse to the land are refreshing and candid. However, other aspects of this book demonstrate how anthropological studies are still "only beginning to come to terms with the association of landscape to narrative" (163).

In addition to its seven chapters, the book contains notes on language, transcription, and pronunciation, as well as a number of photographs and maps, a thirty-page appendix of selected transcriptions, a bibliography, and an index.

The first chapter outlines the fieldwork methodology employed by Palmer during her sixteen months as a participant-observer among the Secwepemc of Alkali Lake between 1987 and 1989. Palmer discusses experiences that are shared among Secwepemc individuals engaged in hunting, gathering, and other sustenance activities. She argues that these experiences recreate a known social context in which intimate knowledge of the land can be exchanged and acted upon, and sense can be made of events on that land.

Chapter 2—"A Brief History of Responses to Colonialism"—offers an overview of the documented history of the Secwepemc and related peoples. The principal repositories of this written record are libraries, government archives, and correspondence files. The author contends that written documentation provides compelling evidence that Secwepemc people have, since first contact with colonial agents, pursued claims to land and that they have sought a decent livelihood, control of education, and self-governance.

In Chapter 3, Palmer outlines her observations of hunting and gathering practices among the Secwepemc. She also discusses various ways in which the Secwepemc process foods and medicines from their territory, and some of the challenges that they currently face regarding access to and use of those resources.

The following chapter finally presents the actual discourse analysis promised in the title of the book. The author gives a number of examples of Secwepemc talk about places and resources that have both historical and contemporary meaning to the people. According to Palmer, this talk conveys individual and collective protocols for storytelling and for making sense of life events.

Chapter 5—"Story"—discusses the importance of story and storytelling among the Secwepemc. Making continual references and comparisons to the work of James Teit (the renowned anthropologist and photographer who recorded many stories of the Interior Salish tribes in the late nine-

teenth and early twentieth centuries), Palmer attempts to demonstrate how Secwepemc stories and protocols have changed, and, in some cases, have disappeared. Yet, she concludes that "[t]he stories may not be referred to as in old times, but many of the social practices the stories reinforced are still considered meaningful and are carried out" (135).

In Chapter 6, Palmer outlines some of the differences between a sequential, chronological telling of a life story and one that is organized according to memories triggered by and/or related to events in specific places on the land. She identifies the latter as a more open-ended process based on evolving relationships among people. Palmer contrasts this relational process with the sequential narrative style imposed by Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), whose intensive efforts to reduce alcoholism in the community of Alkali Lake have been highly publicized. In AA, participants share their life stories in the framework of before, during, and after alcohol use. In contrast, a Secwepemc narrative style centres on the *place* rather than on the specific time of life events.

In the final chapter, Palmer offers personal reflections and considers how her findings might relate to those people who have not had the experience of hearing and making sense of these types of stories. She notes the ongoing compression of Secwepemc narrative space due to the loss of access to land. Yet she concludes on a more hopeful note, stating that critical Secwepemc knowledge "will continue to be effectively transmitted, even in disassociation from the known places of reference" (166) because "*the land itself* [original italics] becomes the map of human experience by which 'telling one's life' is remembered" (168).

The selected transcripts in the appendices contain narratives rich with details of the land and relationships among Secwepemc people. These transcripts stand in contrast to the structured, academic discourse analysis of excerpts in Chapter 4. The author's analysis of the excerpts can perhaps serve as a general template for the interested reader to further analyze the transcripts in the appendix.

Palmer admits that while the Secwepemc do not need their culture reinterpreted for them, her particular targeted audience (anthropologists, cultural geographers, historians, and others who have not had the privilege of first-hand experience) will appreciate this study. It is unfortunate, however, that *Maps of Experience*—like so many anthropological studies before it—fails to foreground the voices of the people who share their words with the ethnographer. Instead, this book follows an academically standardized approach in which *written* colonial history and cultural

studies *about* Secwepemc people set the stage upon which Secwepemc discourse is analyzed, thus reifying the very information that oral histories might contest if foregrounded as truly legitimate histories in their own right. Some of the points that the author makes toward the end of the book offer salient and important ideas that have the potential to go beyond being appreciated by academics. Indeed, these ideas could help shake up some of academia's most deeply entrenched and erroneous orthodoxies about loss in indigenous cultures. Sadly, by the time the reader gets to the end, these important points have been muted by the constant overlay of documented and scholarly material that many authors feel compelled to acknowledge *first*, even in the face of indigenous peoples' increasing contestation of its authority.

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Leanne Simpson. *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-creation, Resurgence, and a New Emergence* (Winnipeg, MB: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2011).

Review by Lynn Gehl, York University

From her roots as a Michi Saagiig Nishnaabe (Mississauga Nishnaabe), Leanne Simpson reflects on her experiences as a woman, a mother, and a language learner to articulate an Indigenous framework for Nishnaabe resurgence. Setting the stage in the first chapter, she argues that resistance to colonization is inadequate. So too, she proposes, is engaging in reconciliation as it is clear that the state lacks the political will necessary for true change to occur. As a Nishnaabe learner, researcher and scholar, I could not agree more.

Appreciating the role that processes have in shaping change, Simpson is firm in her belief that theorizing and actualizing resurgence must emerge from within the Nishnaabe knowledge tradition. As repositories of deep meaning and theory, the Nishnaabe language, language speakers, and elders are the sources upon which she draws to construct an appropriate framework.

In chapter three, Simpson offers four concepts that form the framework for building a new house for the Mississauga. *Biiskaabiyaang* translates as the need to look back and to carry forward knowledge.

Naakgonigi asks people to carefully sort out their thoughts before making decisions. *Aanjigone* urges people to engage in an internal dialogue to ensure that they move beyond mere critique and that they avoid taking on the oppressor's characteristics. And *Debwewin* asks people to listen to their hearts, as emotional intelligence is also a valid way of informing resurgence efforts.

In the fourth chapter, and clearly working with *Biiskaabiyaang*, Simpson draws on traditional Nishnaabe stories. For example, the migration story informs us that the Nishnaabe are indeed a culture of mobilization. Drawing on the story of Nanabozho and the great flood, Simpson encourages Nishnaabeg to dig deep within themselves, just as muskrat did to retrieve the paw of soil that became the earth re-created. Simpson also reminds us of the power of *Gezhizwazh*, a young Nishnaabe woman who was successful at slaying a *Winndigo* because she relied on *Naakgonigi*. Drawing from the teachings inherent in these stories, Simpson argues that Nishnaabeg have the capacity to move beyond the cognitive box of imperialism. In short, these traditional stories are repositories of transmotion, fluidity, and new emergence.

In chapter five, Simpson argues that the Nishnaabe have endured because they learned from the salmon and the eel that seasonal migration was a good way to live. In addition, she points out that, by living within the natural rhythm that manifests itself through the relationship between the earth and the cosmos, the Nishnaabe governance structure has always been creative and evolving rather than static.

Throughout, and in particular in chapter seven, Simpson spends a significant amount of time discussing the importance of good leaders, and the need to nurture future leaders through a parenting style that emerges from Nishnaabeg practices. Parenting, she argues, must model Nishnaabe ways of knowing to ensure that children come to embody traditional leadership characteristics, such as the ability to honour *Debwewin* at a young age. Parenting must be rooted in *Kokum Dibaajimowinan*, translated as the Seven Grandmother Teachings. These include, but are not limited to, love, humility, wisdom, and bravery. In addition, parenting must respect and nurture individual gifts and must involve a philosophy of kindness and non-interference. Simpson's message is clear: a child-friendly culture is required in order to nurture future leaders and Nishnaabe resurgence efforts.

What I find particularly valuable in this work is Simpson's discussion and celebration of women's knowledge within the cultural order that she

outlines. She points out that it was a pregnant woman's dream that led the Nishnaabeg on their migration journey to safety. She also points out that it was a young woman who birthed the drum that resolved the differences between the Dakota and Nishnaabe Nations. Simpson places women at the centre of citizenship matters as they are the primary caregivers and nurturers. In addition, she offers a woman's version of the Nishnaabeg Creation Story, and identifies *Wenonah* as the creator, the first breastfeeder, and the nurturer of the first human beings. In offering this knowledge, Simpson places women at the centre of Nishnaabeg resurgence efforts and forestalls their disenfranchisement by yet another oppressive order.

While this work is rooted in Simpson's truth as a Michi Saagiig Nishnaabe, it also draws the knowledge of Ojibway and Odawa Nishnaabe elders and language speakers. Beyond this, Simpson relies on knowledge holders from other traditions—such as those of the Cree and Chickasaw Nations—to construct her treatise on a distinctly Nishnaabe resurgence theory. Speaking within the meaning of *Aanjigone*—if I am to add one constructive suggestion, rather than a critique—I would recommend the addition of a glossary of Nishnaabe terms. Such an addendum would be helpful in promoting the resurgence that Simpson envisions. At 164 pages, this book contains endnotes, an index, and an author's biography.

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Marie Wadden. *Where the Pavement Ends: Canada's Aboriginal Recovery Movement and the Urgent Need for Reconciliation* (Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 2008).

Review by Nathaniel Pollock, Memorial University

Marie Wadden's *Where the Pavement Ends* is a personal and politically important book about Aboriginal health in Canada. The author traveled across the country collecting stories from the activists whom she suggests are redefining the relationships between Aboriginal people and the politics of trauma and recovery. This book is a helpful primer for policy makers, academics, and the general public, even if her primary audience is the latter. In pointing out the obstacles and opportunities marking the road to reconciliation, *Where the Pavement Ends* encourages all Canadians to adopt a leading role in this movement.

Labrador is where Wadden begins, and she writes of her chance meeting with an Innu family and the subsequent relationship that developed over the past thirty years. Recall that the media has featured the Innu communities of Sheshatshiu and Natuashish prominently and rather infamously. Wadden, however, looks beyond these sordid images, and draws on stories of struggle from this family and their communities to provide a glimpse of the tensions that often go untold in mainstream perspectives on the lives of Aboriginal people. In all, the attempts to balance the stormy rhythms of contemporary indigenous and mainstream cultures are indeed difficult to contend with.

The early chapters focus on the Aboriginal relationship with alcohol. Employing national and international examples, the author attempts to trace the contemporary roots of alcohol abuse in these communities. Many of the people she interviewed are addiction survivors, and they speak openly about the impacts of poverty, industrialization, environmental degradation, and residential schools. They also speak about the ways in which these issues have fuelled—and, in many ways, continue to fuel—contemporary social ills such as suicide, FASD, and addiction.

While these "realities" have for many become normative, readers are not left to consider this current state of affairs as either universal or permanent, and Wadden expands on these issues with positive community accounts that persist in spite of this suffering. She identifies various groups and individuals who are enacting strategies to advance the "recovery movement"—strategies including the development of the National Native Alcohol and Drug Program and the DIY addiction prevention of the Chelsea family in Alkali Lake, B.C.

Wadden is pragmatic; she acknowledges that, for each positive outcome in the realm of Aboriginal health, controversies persist. She is, however, balanced in her assessment of the Aboriginal Recovery Movement, and weighs the various perspectives evenly. She also considers healing from addiction and trauma in divergent ways, observing that while abstinence-based approaches seem to work for some, others prefer more moderate approaches (such as harm-reduction). The author concludes that a one-size-fits-all approach is neither practicable nor desirable, although she strongly suggests that any approach is better than remaining apathetic.

Wadden outlines her recommendations for action to improve the health of all First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities in her final chapter. Her proposal is optimistic and balanced, and she refuses to limit respon-

sibility for change to any single institution or stakeholder. Instead, she attempts to hold us all accountable, and asserts that fostering improved Aboriginal health nationally demands a role for everyone.

Her first recommendation is ambitious: establish a federal agency dedicated to Aboriginal economic development. Accordingly, meaningful participation in the economy must serve as a foundation for substantive changes to Aboriginal wellbeing. This must be paired with improved funding in key health areas, and the development of national prevention strategies for suicide, FASD, and child abuse. Wadden further contends that grassroots community work and citizens' rights groups must be permitted to flourish. The way forward is charted by the silent leaders and front-line workers propelling the recovery movement.

Marie Wadden reminds us that Canada's prosperity often ends where the pavement ends: on isolated reserves, in graffiti-filled alleyways, and in the permafrost of the North. She contends that this nation's sense of pride and place can no longer be maintained while the chronic threats to "the very survival of the first peoples of this country" (4) persist. The need to respond in a timely fashion is our greatest challenge. Wadden positions all citizens as responsible for taking part in the restoration of health, equity, and hope.

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Martha Elizabeth Walls. *No need of a chief for this band: The Maritime Mi'kmaq and Federal Electoral Legislation, 1899–1951* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010).

Review by Yale D. Belanger, University of Lethbridge

With the dual intention of streamlining the Indian Affairs bureaucracy and hastening Indian assimilation into mainstream Canadian society, the Department of Indian Affairs in 1899 legislated a three-year "triennial system" of band council elections, thus subjecting First Nations in Quebec and the Maritimes to an elected band council model. Operational until 1951, this general model was intended to destabilize traditional First Nations leadership selection and governing processes. Perceiving this model as yet another threat to their cultural saliency, the Maritime Mi'kmaq responded variously—some ignored the process, others attempted to integrate minor components to appear acquiescent—but all

in one way or another resisted the plan's implementation. As Martha Elizabeth Walls argues in *No need of a chief for this band: The Maritime Mi'kmaq and Federal Electoral Legislation, 1899–1951*, Mi'kmaw resistance that embraced adherence to historical governing models reflects the exercise of Mi'kmaw political autonomy, which has contemporary implications for bands seeking formal recognition of their inherent rights to self-governance.

Derived from Walls' dissertation (University of New Brunswick, 2006), an introduction and conclusion bookending five compact chapters comprises this abridged 133-page study (the dissertation came in at 416 pages, notes included). Chapter one sets the stage by presenting an overview of turn-of-the-century Mi'kmaw socio-economic conditions, followed by chapter two's discussion of Mi'kmaw political processes and their innate adaptability, which in turn enabled the Mi'kmaq to manage to their advantage the characteristics of various political models. Chapter three traces the triennial band council system's development, after which chapter four examines Mi'kmaw strategies of resistance in the wake of the federal government's attempts to compel the Mi'kmaq to embrace the colonial boilerplate political model. The final chapter innovatively outlines the triennial band council system's failings and the Mi'kmaq's efforts to exploit these weaknesses.

Drawing primarily on Indian Affairs reports and correspondence between Indian Affairs officials in Ottawa and Indian agents in the field, Walls details the intricacies of Mi'kmaw political thought and operations. She shows how Mi'kmaw politicians and community members relied upon culturally specific internal political structures to resist assimilation. She further highlights how, despite federal pressure to see the triennial system implemented, regional Indian agents generally lacked the fortitude and more often the resources needed to compel Mi'kmaw adherence to the rules. This lack, combined with innovative resistance strategies, hampered the system's performance.

One of the book's key themes concerns Ottawa's "failure to undermine Mi'kmaw political practice and replace it with Euro-Canadian political values and processes" (2). This may indeed be true with respect to the chosen time period. However, one need only review the state of contemporary Mi'kmaw band politics to distinguish that, while historical values may still animate modern politics, the Canadian state's band council electoral template continues to guide modern political operations. Aboriginal Affairs also still exercises its authority over these organizations'

leaders. There is thus a need for a study of how Indian Affairs eventually wore down the Mi'kmaw political resolve that had kept Ottawa at bay prior to 1951.

In a perverse way, Mi'kmaw resistance may be partially to blame for this breakdown, in that each act of resistance described by Walls generated a response from Indian Affairs that was designed to chip away at Mi'kmaw political (self-)determination. In this instance, we see an interactive arena emerge which permitted the Mi'kmaq—through their resistance strategies—to inform the creation of new federal policies. This effective, albeit short-lived, strategy was challenged by Ottawa's ability to mobilize vast resources over long time periods, thus restricting community development and limiting First Nations political leverage. The result was not immediate political acquiescence. Rather, it was an extended period of subtle and imposed changes to Mi'kmaw political structures *vis-à-vis* a continuum of regularly altered policies that ultimately fulfilled an agenda that Indian Affairs officials had originally hoped would be achieved in a few short years.

This interplay in essence became a testing ground that provided Indian Affairs officials with the opportunity to observe and deconstruct the workings of various Mi'kmaw resistance strategies, and thereby establish new policies in kind. Regrettably, the Mi'kmaq could do little more than remain on the defensive in anticipation of the imminent legislative and policy alterations. To suggest, however, that the Mi'kmaq did little more than await these policy shifts is a hasty pronouncement, for politics is the convergence of multiple intersecting forces, and Ottawa's dictates reflected but one bundle of issues that leaders were dealing with simultaneously.

Nevertheless, Walls' study does not situate passive indigenous populations in relation to Canada as hegemonic entity. *No need of a chief for this band* more aptly demonstrates how a unique arena of interface (characterized by Mi'kmaw resistance to federal policies of assimilation) emerged to replace previous centuries of intercultural diplomacy. This interface did not lead to mutually agreeable policies, and the resistance-policy response paradigm exacerbated an increasingly polarized Canada-Indigenous relationship. All the same, the Mi'kmaq's innovative attempts to undermine federal policies call attention to Mi'kmaw political adaptability and to Mi'kmaw ability to maintain historical leadership practices, which in turn reflects an ongoing assertion of political autonomy. By current metrics, this would be classified as recognition of the right to Aboriginal self-governance.

No need of a chief for this band's intended audience is academic. The book would be of particular interest to graduate students, specialists in the field or other related disciplines, and policy makers engaged in defining the pith and substance of Aboriginal claims to self-governance. The calibre of scholarship is significant, and its appeal would be quickly lost on lower division students.