Jean Barman

Iroquois in the West

Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019. 314 pp.

In *Iroquois in the West*, historian Jean Barman provides a highly detailed account of how Haudenosaunee men departed Kahnawà:ke and their homelands and travelled to various regions, which are known today as Montana, the Pacific Northwest, and Jasper, over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Fur trading contracts and the prospect of improving their quality of life were key factors in their decision to depart their communities, leave family members, and sojourn long distances. Barman argues that "Iroquois engaging the West, be it briefly or forever, were ambitious and determined" (4) and that they "accommodated themselves to their circumstances even as they held on to their senses of self" (6).

Over the course of eight chapters, Barman relies on written archival documents, based on sources created by fur trading companies, as well as religious and government bodies, to better understand how Haudenosaunee men were integral to "a West in the making" (106). Barman contends although these archival documents are "slivers from the shadows of the past, the stories that survive are all the same powerful, attesting to the self-confidence of Iroquois and their descendants who shared their selves with others." (9) In other words, Barman's history is derived solely from colonial records, void from the voices of Haudenosaunee people themselves.

This book provides readers with in-depth understanding of the nineteenth-century fur trade and the role that Haudenosaunee men played, according to fur trading partners, missionaries, and colonial officials. Barman argues that trapping and trading skills were strong in the Kahnawà:ke region and the fur trading companies valued this expertise, thereby well positioning Haudenosaunee men to obtain and sustain contracts. She asserts that they were "welcomed into the fur trade on a par with whites" (52). The main sentiment throughout is that Haudenosaunee men largely benefitted from their work in the fur trade, but Barman notes that some were victimized by the economic practices of the fur trade. Despite this, she highlights Haudenosaunee employees' "persistence in making known their disagreements face-to-face on a rational basis," "unsettled the superiority that those in charge took for granted" (79), and prompted structural change for the Hudson's Bay Company through the rewriting of finance policies. It is a stretch, however, to think these HBC employees upended the fur trade.

The argument that Haudenosaunee men were "integral to the fur trade's expansion across the Rocky Mountains and into the Pacific Northwest" (117) and engaged the "fur trade on their own terms" (143) is plausible. Moving into the later eighteenth and early twentieth centuries, a local population of Haudenosaunee people settled in Jasper and the Pacific Northwest rather than returning home to Kahnawà:ke. A new generation of Haudenosaunee descendants arrived and, Barman argues, continued to maintain "strong senses of self" (152) and that "markers of identity long survived in the West" (171). Into the early twentieth century, the Haudenosaunee families

of Jasper, like other local Indigenous Peoples, were subjected to policies of forced removal from the Land in the development of Jasper Park, but, as Barman argues, "in no way did it render Iroquois inert" (198). She concludes that "for over two centuries, Iroquois in the West have navigated, and sometimes crossed, the Indigenous-white divide. In doing so, they have continued to be their own selves, their presence across time and place sufficiently noticed by others to make it possible, drawing on slivers of stories from the shadows of the past, to tell their own story" (233).

Thus far, Barman has not yet provided an assessment of Haudenosaunee gender constructions and/or practices; the work of Indigenous Studies scholars and their critical analyses of Indigenous masculinities would have been a welcomed contribution. In a short section entitled "Daughters in Demand," however, Barman turns to three Haudenosaunee women who married locally, in the West. Unlike Haudenosaunee men, the case studies of these women reveal that they "melded into their husbands' lives and more generally into the everyday ways of the Pacific Northwest. The three women's paternal Iroquois and maternal Indigenous descent did not thereby disappear and may have affected their life course, but it was likely not a principal determinant" (157). One should question this statement with caution, given that many Indigenous societies were and are matrilineal. Considering that Haudenosaunee people in the west retained "strong senses of self" (152), it is curious that these three women, upon marriage to men, did not. Further explanation is required.

Throughout, Barman argues that Haudenosaunee men established, in most cases, amicable relationships with other Indigenous peoples, first with Séliš people — or, Flathead Indians, as she calls them — in current-day Montana and then with Nehiyawak — or Cree people — in current-day Jasper. She frames these new relationships as a direct result of fur trading contracts that allowed Haudenosaunee men to travel. Given that Haudenosaunee people have lived on their lands since Time Immemorial and travelling the land was/is critical to their survival, they surely had long established relationships with other Indigenous nations.

Barman opens by drawing upon the work of Indigenous Studies theorist Audra Simpson and her brilliant analysis of how Mohawk people of Kahnawà:ke articulated and maintained political sovereignty despite devastating colonial policies. This instilled hope that perhaps Barman's research would draw upon the central tenets of the discipline of Indigenous Studies. I was disappointed, however, to discover that Barman's work is very clearly a 'traditional' history. Although she worked with Haudenosaunee descendent Carey Myers of the Da'naxda'xw First Nation, there is no mention of the depth of that relationship or anything to suggest that Haudenosaunee peoples were consulted or involved. This reviewer, therefore, must refute Barman's claim that "this is their story" (3).

Key to Barman's argument is that "the principal depiction of Indigenous peoples as bit players in North America's past overlooks the many ways that, despite the obstacles put in their way, they have, in different ways, self-determined their lives in whole or in part" (6). Although not framed in these terms, Barman assesses and critiques the "agency" of Haudenosaunee people, a familiar analytical framework in Indigenous-Canadian historiography. Barman's work makes a valuable contribution in how we

understand the ways Indigenous peoples influenced and guided the creation of the 'West' and the economic atmosphere. Barman calls Haudenosaunee people "ambitious," "determined," "remarkable," and "assertive." Nevertheless, I encourage historians to use bolder language: Indigenous nations in the colonial country of Canada were, and are, sovereign nations with distinct and unique governing structures.

All in all, *Iroquois in the West* provides readers with a meticulous and in-depth account of how Haudenosaunee men traversed Indigenous lands, shaped fur-trading policies, interacted with other Indigenous nations, and made new homes in foreign lands. I recommend this book to all interested in advancing their knowledge of Indigenous-Canadian histories.

Crystal Gail Fraser
University of Alberta

Jason Ellis

A Class by Themselves? The Origins of Special Education in Toronto and Beyond

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019. 384 pp.

This book presents a judicious, balanced argument about how the Toronto Board of Education began to take account of students with special needs in the early 20th century. It covers the years 1910 to 1945, while referencing the very different state of affairs we find ourselves in today—"educators at this time simply did not yet possess the modern sensibility that disability is not a deficit" (126). It gathers new evidence from documents, student records, statistical analysis and interview data to explore the complexities of what we call special education.

Special education was "one drop in an early twentieth century outpouring of reform" (11) intended to deal with urbanization, industrialization, and immigration, while serving business interests. Jason Ellis follows a long line of educational historians who have examined how progressive policies formed the public education system, at a time when progressive moves had the support of a disparate coalition of reformers from the right and the left, as well as the support of educators intent on expanding the system.

The book provides a detailed record of the people, ideas, and social movements that began special education classes in the Toronto board and shaped them over their early years. It puts data from a single school board in the context of educational debates about disability, integration, eugenics, efficiency, testing, vocationalism, and the purposes of education. It raises questions about how much public schools should accommodate, whose responsibility it should be, and how "separate" and "equal" can or cannot be combined. These are ongoing and critical issues for the system, useful to see in historical perspective.

At the turn of the century, separate classrooms began to be the mechanism for accommodating differently abled students in school. "Auxilliary" education in Toronto