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epidemics that had begun among them in 1633. Bonvillain does not draw readers' attention to these important debates. She also errs seriously in suggesting that around 1750 "more Huron [at Quebec] gave up their traditional beliefs and converted to Catholicism" (p. 76). Adherence to Roman Catholicism had been a strict Jesuit requirement for all Wendat who settled at Quebec in 1650, and the early Huron settlers were celebrated for their Christian devotion. Their piety was reinforced by the increased economic dependence on the Jesuits that followed the loss of over 35 Huron men at the Battle of the Long Sault in 1660. Cultural changes in the eighteenth century bore little relation to changing religious views.

The bibliography, while brief, contains some works that few general readers are likely to consult. Under these circumstances, it is extraordinary that it does not contain Elisabeth Tooker's seminal study of seventeenth-century Huron culture, any of James Wright's books on Ontario Iroquoian prehistory, Conrad Heidenreich's important monograph on Huron geography and ecology, and a number of important historical studies. Robert Kelly is the author of *Cornplanters of the Eastern Woodlands*.

I would like to end by citing two further examples of the tenacity and resilience of Wendat culture. Although they have long had no corporate existence, the Wyandot who live in the Detroit area continue to hold a picnic on Grosse Isle each summer. Since Bonvillain's book was published, Georges Sioui, a member of an extraordinarily talented and creative Wendake (Lorette) family, has published *Pour une autohistoire amérindienne*. This book contains the most eloquent exposition I have ever read of the relevance of North American Indian values for the whole of humanity. Sioui and his fellow Wendat continue, as did their seventeenth- and eighteenth-century ancestors, to build bridges of understanding between disparate peoples.

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The Dakota of the Canadian Northwest: Lessons for Survival.
By Peter Douglas Elias. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1988. 262 pages. \$34.95 (Canadian) Cloth.

Elias has given us a history of the Canadian Dakota that is excellent in presenting a detailed narrative of the Dakota in Manitoba and Saskatchewan in the last third of the nineteenth century; is interesting in its documentation of the Indian Affairs Department's apparently mad policy of undermining the very acculturation it ostensibly promoted; and is disappointing in its failure to describe the culture that makes Dakota, Dakota.

The basic position argued by Elias is that the Dakota occupied the land west of Lake Superior to west of Lake Winnipeg, on both sides of the 49th parallel. In the eighteenth century, Elias asserts, Dakota fought Cree and Assiniboine north to the headwaters of the Churchill River in central Saskatchewan; the Balantyne River, he says, is "Dakota River" in Cree (*Puatsipi*) and Pelican Narrows, "Narrows of Fear" because of a battle there. Following the 1763 Treaty of Paris, the Dakota pledged loyalty to Britain, and they fought with the British in the War of 1812. The conclusion of that war left the Dakota betrayed, as they saw it, by the British and increasingly subject to American incursions. In 1829, following a disastrous winter, two Dakota leaders agreed to accept American instruction in agriculture (that is, plowing) at Fort Snelling in what is now Minneapolis/St. Paul. During the next decade, several missionaries took up residence in Dakota villages in Minnesota. The Treaties of Traverse des Sioux and Mendota in 1851 restricted the Dakota to reservations and permitted an influx of colonial settlers. By 1862, repeated experiences of bad faith on the part of United States agents prompted some Dakota to attack settlers. President Lincoln diverted one of his Civil War generals to put down this "rebellion," an action for which such savage retribution was promised that most of the Dakota fled north across the boundary to Canada.

Canada had still five years before the British North America Act would establish it as a dominion. Manitoba, north of Minnesota, was even more a Northwest frontier than the American state at this time. The Dakota refugees were accustomed to Western agricultural and household work and found ready employment, as well as game and fish, in the pioneer farming hamlets in the province. The several bands scattered over western Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan, through the northwest-trending parkland belt. Although government officials would not admit the Dakotas' claims to aboriginal or alliance rights to the Cana-

dian territory they had moved into, the colonialists' need for skilled farm labor influenced the government to tolerate the refugees and to agree to settle them on reserves. Much of Elias's book is the history of these negotiations between the various bands and government agents.

Once they had land, most of the Dakota bands used the better portions for agriculture. Their years of experience with Minnesota agents and settlers, plus working for Manitoba farmers, made the Dakota knowledgeable about agricultural methods and machinery, and they planned carefully to obtain machinery, seeds, and stock to build profitable farms. They built wooden barns, houses, and outbuildings, dressed in Western clothes, invited missionaries (some of them Sioux) to staff churches and schools on their reserves, and many became fluent and literate in English.

Admirable as these accomplishments should have appeared to government officials, they threatened the paternalistic relationship between Indians and officials. Again and again, Elias records officials who intervened in prospering reserve farms, refusing to allow even literate men to operate their farms and businesses as they believed best. Coupled with the depletion of continuously cropped soil, droughts, and other natural calamities, and population growth in the Dakota bands, agents' mishandling of their trusts resulted in the decline of Canadian Dakota farming. After World War I, Canadian Dakota could no longer compete with their Euro-Canadian neighbors.

This theme of Dakota abilities frustrated by inept or corrupt government agents runs like a litany through Elias's book; it becomes repetitive to the point of blurring the particular histories of the various bands. I think it obscures some of the history. While these stories of intelligent farmers are true, they are not the whole history. An agent's report in 1908 said the Sioux Wahpeton Reserve outside Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, was the poorest in his jurisdiction. Elias does not deal with the disastrous flu epidemic of 1918, which took many Dakota lives and disrupted communities, or tuberculosis which took heavy toll of the people. He hardly touches upon the Dakota struggles to remain Dakota in provinces where the Cree and Ojibwa are the dominant Indians, struggles complicated by the small size of several Dakota bands, many of whose members had to seek spouses outside their closely related band. The histories of the Canadian

Dakota are unusually complex because they are Indian but not recognized as Canadian Indian, far fewer than the métis, composed from perhaps a dozen independent bands disinclined to cooperate, containing both persons ambitious to do well on Canadian terms and others preferring more traditional Dakota subsistence pursuits. This diversity is mentioned but not focused upon by Elias.

Part of the imbalance of Elias's book may stem from its apparent sources. Elias seems (he doesn't discuss this at any length) to have begun with oral histories taken from band historians, particularly from Robert Goodvoice of Sioux Wahpeton, Saskatchewan. I knew the late Mr. Goodvoice, a highly intelligent and reflective man who also worked with James Howard. To have recorded Mr. Goodvoice's narrative of his people's history is important; however, that history is necessarily limited by Mr. Goodvoice's lack of access to archival materials and scholarly publications other than the few directly on Saskatchewan Dakota. So far as one can judge, Elias used archives to document the statements of the band historians, but he does not go into the more general academic works on Indian policy, provincial histories, or even the Canadian Dakota.

In his conclusion (p. 223), Elias says, "No agent . . . succeeded in extinguishing key elements in Dakota culture: language, family structure, ceremony, art, gambling, good-natured debate and argument, generosity, dancing and singing, and an often irreverent sense of humor." Elias himself tells us almost nothing about any of this culture, except generosity. Only the involvement of the Department of Indian Affairs distinguishes the history recounted in the book from the history of any other impoverished group immigrating into Manitoba. The lack of attention to Dakota culture affects the history. For example, some discussion of the *tiospaye* form of social organization would have clarified the issues of band structure and membership involved in setting reserves. The momentous tragedy of the extinction of the bison herds gets no mention other than a note that bison were scarce in 1874. Extinction of the herds revolutionized the economy by removing not only the principal food but also the material for homes and raw material for tools, a major time-and-labor occupation (hide preparation) of the women, and the symbol of blessing and prosperity. Elias's subtitle, *Lessons for Survival*, led me to expect the extinction of the herds to be the focus of a chapter and the

problem of the disappearance of the herds a frequent reference in the many passages on the 1880s. Instead, the focus is on farming. It is as if a history of World War II mentioned the Nazi campaign to exterminate Jews, gypsies, homosexuals, and other groups only briefly on one page. The repercussions of tragedy on an unprecedented, indeed inconceivable, scale affect every facet of life substantially as well as ideologically.

Perhaps the best way to describe Elias's book is that it is history in the narrowest conventional sense, a chronicle of names and dates and facts like acreage. It is useful, and it is good to have this chronicle shaped by the band historians. But the book cannot be considered either a full history of the Dakota of the Canadian Northwest, or a full study of *Lessons in Survival*. In a way, its most glaring omission is a lack of any bibliography on the Canadian Dakota. If the book itself omits descriptions of Dakota culture and culture history (e.g., the "New Tidings" Ghost Dance in Saskatchewan, or Dakota involvement in the politics of the federation of Saskatchewan Indians), then the author should have furnished a list of the few books that do provide some of this—the work of Wallis, Corrigan, Howard, and myself—so the reader is guided to more on the Dakota of the Canadian Northwest. Robert Goodvoice would have been surprised that what he considered most vital was left out.

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