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THE POLITICAL OUTSIDERS: Blacks and Indians in a Rural Oklahoma County, By Brian F. Rader.

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scholars, is beneficial for general readers. The annotations are sparse but helpful. As a whole, the editors have produced a useful work, but its sales, unfortunately, will be small because the book is grossly overpriced. Asking \$27.50 for a book of 173 pages is simply self-defeating.

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THE POLITICAL OUTSIDERS: Blacks and Indians in a Rural Oklahoma County. By Brian F. Rader. San Francisco: R & E Research Associates, Inc., 1978. 188 pp. \$13.00 Paper.

The Political Outsiders is a study of Blacks and Indians (specifically Creek and Cherokee) living in McIntosh County in east-central Oklahoma. The study is based primarily on census, voter registration and election statistics and on interviews conducted by the author and assistants. It is a *tour de force* in the application of established theoretical models for explaining social and political action, through which the author arrives at a series of conclusions. The ethnic citizenry does not take more active political roles than it does because the county lacks "political modernization;" "economic dependence and tradition" reinforce ethnic political and social subservience to the Whites. The ethnic citizenry believes in working within the democratic process, but the Indians are more politically active and effective than the Blacks. The ethnic leadership is "fragmented," and there is no coalition of groups; and, the political issues that interest each group are different. These conclusions, which no doubt vary in their degrees of validity, are hardly startling, and the reader puts down the study feeling that its potential has not been realized. The reasons for that feeling are many, but the following are exemplary.

One aspect of the study that blunts its potential is the persistent subjection of the acquired data to established theoretical models. One understands that graduate studies stress methodology, but there has been little attempt to disguise the dissertation effect of this study. Brian F. Rader seems intent on demonstrating that he has searched the secondary studies in sociology and

political science to find pertinent applications to his study. Hence the reader sometimes loses sight of the Blacks and Indians of McIntosh County in extended explanations and applications of models and theories. That is unfortunate, for most readers who pick up this study will do so to find what it says about those groups, not how well the author has run through his paces. A related problem is that most of the secondary studies cited deal with urban Blacks while the touted significance of this study is its treatment of rural Blacks and Indians.

A second aspect of the study that blunts its potential is a less than satisfactory treatment of the historical context. For instance, no attempt is made to distinguish between Blacks who are Creek freedmen and those who descend from Blacks who migrated from the states to Indian Territory and early Oklahoma. The former, long affiliated with the tribe, are likely to retain some vestige of interest in tribal politics and their perception and knowledge of Indian leadership would differ from that of other Blacks. Since cross-group perception of leadership is a key issue in the study, the historical bases which helped shaped that perception should have been better clarified.

The same kind of problems exist in relation to Rader's study of the Indians. For instance, the study shows that Blacks fear economic reprisals or physical abuse in retaliation for political activity, while Indians do not. Rader tries to explain this difference in perception in terms of the "culture" of the Indian. His rather stereotyped explanation grinds on the reader, for he argues that the Indian probably does not feel fear because of a cultural heritage that emphasized "bravery as a virtue and as a stepping stone to manhood" (p. 59). And despite what his respondents say, Rader believes that discrimination against the Indian does exist. Rader could have explored some rather obvious historical reasons for the Indians' lack of the fear felt by Blacks. They were not the object of Jim Crow legislation that segregated them in schools, public transportation, prisons, hospitals and even telephone booths in Oklahoma. They were not subjected to a "grandfather clause" which challenged their right to participate in the elective process; nor were they the objects of anti-miscegenation laws. They were not systematically terrorized by the Ku Klux Klan that figured prominently in Oklahoma politics for many years. While no one would argue that the Indian has not

been discriminated against, he must admit that the Indian has not been subjected to the *same* systematic discrimination and attendant fear that are part of Black history. The question is to what extent the differences in history are reflected in the answers to Rader's questionnaire.

Despite its shortcomings regarding an historical framework, the study should not be dismissed as useless. While it does not represent a giant step forward in our understanding of Indians and Blacks in modern rural Oklahoma, neither does it cloud the issues related to that subject. It is a beginning. Much more needs to be done, taking more account of the historical peculiarities of the region.

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The Trial of Leonard Peltier. By Jim Messerschmidt. Boston: South End Press, 1983. 305 pp. \$8.95 Paper.

There has been a sudden and growing surge of public interest in the case of *U.S. v Peltier*, a matter in which a member of the American Indian Movement (AIM) has been convicted and is currently serving two consecutive life sentences in a federal maximum security prison for the June 26, 1975 slayings of a pair of FBI agents on South Dakota's Pine Ridge Sioux Reservation. This seems due in large part to the recent release of Peter Matthiessen's *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* (New York: Viking, 1983), a massive book contending not only that Peltier is innocent of the charges of which he was convicted, but that the Bureau deliberately framed him for political reasons.* Additionally, curiosity is piqued by the FBI's continuing insistence that it has somehow mislaid approximately 6,000 of the estimated 18,000 pages of investigative documents it compiled relative to what it terms the "RESMURS" (Reservation Murders) case, which Peltier's defence attorneys have requested under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. The matter is currently complicated

*Peter Matthiessen has publicly said (UCLA, 1983) that he does not know if Leonard Peltier is innocent or guilty but that the hard evidence is so scant as to be insufficient to convict Peltier. [Ed.]