

Compact, Contract, Covenant: Aboriginal Treaty-Making in Canada.

By J. R. Miller. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009. xiv + 379 pp., acknowledgments, illustrations, maps, bibliography, index. \$85.00 cloth, \$35.00 paper.)

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In this first-rate book J. R. Miller provides an excellent overall look at treaties between First Nations people and Canada from earliest colonial times to the present. Beginning with the earliest French contacts with native groups in the early seventeenth century and continuing to the present, the narrative traces the multiple paths followed in the treaty relationships. Significantly, its ethnohistorical analysis places First Nations people at the center throughout. In fact, the narrative argues persuasively that tribal and band diplomatic procedures and demands for using fictive kinship practices dominated and even shaped the negotiating sessions for generations. The result is an analysis that incorporates effectively the motivations, ideas, goals, and leaders on both sides of the negotiations.

Miller categorizes the treaty agreements into three types. The first, and often least formal, developed out of commercial links between native groups and early French leaders. Desired by both sides, these pacts depended on formal meetings and promises rather than legal settings with resulting paper documents. The second style of agreement followed soon after as both sides sought to gain diplomatic and military allies against imperial competitors and tribal enemies. The narrative demonstrates how such treaties shaped the relationships between the colonial groups and their indigenous neighbors until the end of the French and Indian War. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 that followed brought dramatic changes leading to the third type of treaty.

This third type is an agreement based on Anglo-Canadian demands for the cession of land and its resources by the First Nations people. Although the new variety of treaty did not end existing practices, the balance between the two sides tilted gradually. After 1815, Canadian authorities began to coerce First Nations groups into frequent land surrenders in present western Ontario and around the Great Lakes, often giving the bands little but unkept promises in return. With Confederation in 1867, Canadian officials came to regard First Nations people as impediments to expansion, so during the 1870s they negotiated the numbered treaties clearly seeking to limit native territory and rights. As the negotiations became more legalistic, they tended to conform less to native protocols, with the oral commitments not always appearing in the later written documents. These practices continued in the agreements negotiated farther north between

1899 and the early 1920s when formal treaty-making ceased. In Canada, unlike the United States, the government reinstated processes for negotiations beginning soon after the 1972 James Bay Agreement. In the west, the recent developments grew out of disputes between British Columbia, which refused to accept native land title, the Niagara people, and the federal government. Despite the BC stand, a series of court decisions accepted First Nations' claims and led to the creation of the Office of Native Claims. Unfortunately, this complicated and stretched out the deliberations so that few claims have been settled yet.

Miller presents the treaty-making experiences within the broad context of Canadian history, in an organized, readable, and effective manner. He divides the analysis into logical time periods, explains how one approach evolved into the next, and demonstrates the effectiveness of native leaders in presenting their ideas, practices, and demands. Based on his broad knowledge, use of the relevant primary and secondary materials, and a keen awareness of contemporary legal issues, his analysis is essential reading for understanding Canadian treaty-making in the past or the present.

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Native People of Southern New England, 1650–1775. By Kathleen J. Bragdon (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009. xviii + 293 pp., list of illustrations, acknowledgments, preface. \$32.95 cloth.)

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Kathleen Bragdon's second installation of *Native People of Southern New England* falls short of the first volume's high standard. To be sure, this study makes a valuable contribution by using Wampanoag-language sources to explore continuity in Indian values, practices, and community life during the tumultuous period between 1650 and 1775. Unfortunately, throughout the book Bragdon stakes out her scholarly turf by caricaturing "historians" (always unnamed) who have covered similar ground. Contrary to her assertions, I cannot think of a current historian who casts Indians during this period as "simply 'red' Englishmen" (76) or as cowed Christian converts fated for disappearance, or who depicts colonial Indian culture as in a constant state of decline from a supposed pre-contact period stasis. Rather, numerous historians whom she either ignores or hardly acknowledges, including Daniel Mandell, Harold Van Lonkhuysen, Charles Cohen, Daniel Richter, and me, have carefully related New England Indians' creative adaptations to English colonialism to those people's distinctive cus-

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