

**Anne-Marie Mawhiney (ed.)**, *Rebirth: Political Economic and Social Development in First Nations*. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993, pp. 148 \$17.99 (softcover).

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*Rebirth*, an edited collection of eleven speeches, stories, and papers, is directed towards both Aboriginal and non-aboriginal people who wish to understand historical and contemporary perspectives on community development in First Nations. It is an attempt to "give voice to stories about the ways in which First Nations are addressing their own conditions" (back cover).

The political question of appropriation of voice is most contentious in current publications regarding Aboriginal people in Canada. We have had a long history of having our stories told for us; self-determination depends on our own voices being heard. *Rebirth* declares itself to be "first voice", that is the voice of experience, the voices of First Nations themselves. Yet, *Rebirth* includes material by both First Nations leaders/educators and non-Native academics. The first half of the book is dominated by academic analysis of historical relations of "welfare colonialism" (Coates and Morrison), a primer to avoid the misunderstandings arising due to "cultural differences" (Speilmann) and a critique of the split between political negotiations for constitutional self-government and the delivery of effective and culturally distinct social service programs (Hudson and Taylor-Henley).

While these authors provide a critical review of the past and current failings in Aboriginal and white interrelations, the real strength of the book is in the remaining half: the detailed narration of lived experiences of First Nations people doing developmental work in their own communities. *Rebirth* records stories of organizers, acting on their own views of self-government, and establishing political, economic and social measures aimed at improving the lives of their people. The struggles and successes of working at various levels in our communities to incorporate/use as foundational the belief systems of our Ancestors, as manifested in current day continuing colonial conditions, are told. As Mawhiney states, "[t]he stories that are contained in this volume reinforce the fact that First Nations are able to establish their own strategies and solutions to their living conditions without outside intervention . . . it is these case studies—the stories of successful developments in local First Nations that make this volume unique" (p. 15).

The words of Chief Leona Nahwegahabow, linking past to present to future, call us to action in the traditional way, through the voice of her

own experience, her own self as a role model of activism in her community. Tony Hall's rendition of the events surrounding the Blockade at Long Lake 58, placed in the context of the "Indian Summer of 1990" — Oka and Eliza Harper, and in relation to the historical and current grievances that led the people of Long Lake to take political action, is a beautiful case study of resistance . . . how it manifests and dissipates in a specific context, how the "aboriginal rights industry" is infringing on the achievement of rights. Photos add to the impact of this personal story of political activism, and to the poignancy of the book overall.

Mary Laronde declares that native people are the "experts" on land management, calling for co-management, rather than historically predated lack of consultation. "We are the experts in stewardship, because we love the land, because it is our homeland, because it is our Mother . . . we do not try to improve upon her, nor manipulate her for our own selfish ends" (p. 102). Her fact sheet on the lands of the Teme-Augama Anishinabai is a clear illustration of how land swindle happened and continues to happen today. Goulais explores how his community has used the traditional pursuit of fur, to develop an economically sustainable industry today, and how this is linked to social development. Daybutch calls us to the challenge of Unity, to get rid of the idea of being torn between two worlds, past and present . . . "There is only one world to be in: ourselves. We must live our own truth as we understand it" (p. 112). Seven principles for sustainable economic development founded on traditional beliefs are articulated. "Our paths may be faint from lack of use, but our traditional ways and teachings are still here. Our ways may be silent at times, but they will never die" (p. 113).

McKenzie and Morrisette describe a Youth program focused on two principles, Aboriginal cultural healing and active participation of youth in all levels of program development. The project shows how knowledge of traditions and historical treatment of the traditions by the dominant society, can help youths develop consciousness of culture and colonization, which is necessary to relate to current Aboriginal realities. The authors distinguish between culture as recognition of value difference and "practices of culture of origin as an active, empowering agent for change" (p. 122). They spell out the components of the programs, including sweats, ceremonies, elders, along with a political analysis of colonialism, providing a model of how "incorporating culture and traditions into programs is possible, even in a large urban setting where Aboriginal people are a minority group" (p. 129).

Brown and Antonioni give a personal testament to gaining strength as Aboriginal women through working together, supporting each other, giving back to the community what they have received. Nabigon tells us that the foundation upon which self-determination must be created is spiritual, the

land and our ways are gifts. Using a "cultural paradigm" he explores the gifts from the four sacred directions, the search for harmony, the role of the Elders as essential for individual and community healing in the transition from colonialism to nationhood.

Hearing Aboriginal voices is also essential to cultural revitalization, to reclaim our own history, tell our own stories. No academic analysis, regardless of how thought-provoking or pro-empowerment of First Nations, can any longer be understood as speaking for us. In these days of identity politics, a paradoxical aspect of this publication is the amount of space that appears to be taken up by non-Native theorists. Let us continue to break free of academic colonialism, and tell our own stories, the whole story, the full details, no edits please.

This book is documentation that First Nations community revival, self-determination, is happening at all levels: spiritual, social, political and economic. There is beauty and hopeful vision in the words gifted in this book, from those who struggle and tell of the wisdom gained through experience. As Arthur Solomon, Elder, who opens and closes the book with his words of inspiration says, "[i]t is beautiful to see after all these many years of struggle. Gitchi-meegwetch" (p. 147).

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**Robert Mullaly**, *Structural Social Work: Ideology, Theory and Practice*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993, pp. 240, \$17.95 (paper).

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Marxist and radical social work theorising gained currency in many European and North American schools of social work throughout the 1960s and 1970s, and on into the 1980s. A vast literature addresses the nature of the welfare state, social policy emanating from the state and social work practice within capitalism. It is within this tradition that Robert Mullaly sets out to advance the argument for a social work practice that will contribute to transforming relations of dominance and inequality. He and others engaged in this project call this approach "structural social work".

Structural social work theory as it has emerged in some Canadian schools of social work is a reconceptualization of earlier Marxist and radical social work paradigms. Contained in these earlier schools was a blistering critique of the social control function and outcomes of the modern day welfare state. Indicative of this theorising was a characterising of social workers, to paraphrase Sheila Rowbotham, a socialist-feminist writing in