

graph, and most blatantly on page 94, McGrath claims that the Inuit had no political institutions. By contrast, there is considerable recent literature in anthropology which refutes the image of primitive communism and complete egalitarianism for the Inuit. However, since not all experts agree on this question, and since there are references in the monograph to the leadership positions held by shamans, perhaps McGrath should not be too severely faulted.

This is an extremely important publication, and the editors of the National Museum of Man Mercury Series should be commended for publishing it. Because Diamond Jenness preserved some of the finest recorded examples of traditional Inuit oral literature for future generations, it is also fitting that this has been designated as a Diamond Jenness Memorial Volume.

The Boston School Integration Dispute: Social Change and Legal Maneuvers

J. Brian Sheehan

New York: Columbia University Press, 1984. xv + 292 pp. \$30.00 (cloth), \$12.00 (paper)

Reviewer: Jacquetta Hill

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This book depicts the workings of the North American class structure through the turmoil of Boston school integration in the 1970s. J. Brian Sheehan is an Australian legal specialist and social anthropologist who argues that Boston's ruling class used public school integration to maintain its control and hegemony when class conflicts threatened to arise out of the transformation of Boston from an industrial and manufacturing centre to a service and financial centre. However, the blue-collar worker elements and the poverty and "pariah" populations of Boston never got together. Instead, they were prevented from achieving class consciousness and were manipulated into divisive ethnic and racial conflict as a new middle-class population expanded into post-World War Two Boston and entered the "new material forces of production" in high-technology service and financial enterprises. Boston's power élite — the Cabots, the Lowells and others who had risen out of a protestant Yankee background — protected their oligarchic investment in urban real estate by manipulating urban renewal to make way for an expanding middle class. They also manipulated the school integration dispute to restructure the education system to train labour for new kinds of businesses resulting from post-World War Two technological changes.

However, shrewd investment in the latest technologies is not sufficient to retain élite class status; this has to be maintained through control of law. Sheehan's special contribution in this book rests on his documentation of how "Boston Brahmins" and a "business élite" retained control of the city through law while relinquishing metropolitan political control to the Irish. The Boston Brahmins moved into the state house and legislature, as well as into federal governmental seats of power. Then, through some remarkable legal arrangements, they oversaw and controlled Boston's legal and financial affairs from afar.

Sheehan's conceptual claims are documented in an extraordinary compilation of information from legal and agency documents, newspaper files, interviews with

some of the principals, attendance at court hearings and selected agency meetings, and participant observation in the Boston neighbourhood where he lived from November 1977 to September 1978. These sources are woven into six topical chapters which are sandwiched between a ten-page introduction – including reviews of the literature, of theory and of methodology – and an eight-page conclusion. Unfortunately, no diagrams, charts or tables of user-friendly graphics, lists or frequencies help pull the reader above the surface of the flow of public events, court orders, meetings, elections, public statements and counter-statements. This is not a comparative study but a case study framed by brief statements of theory.

Has Sheehan succeeded in developing a strong case which warrants the claims of his theory? Although the sheer volume of his chronicle is persuasive, there is little analytical linkage between the theory and the specifics of the account, and the fit is not as self-evident as he seems to assume. It is as if the publisher and the publisher's readers let a very fine manuscript slip through to publication with a missing chapter. Nonetheless, the corpus of the book is so rich and the account so well-balanced that enterprising instructors will find that it offers students a sterling chance to write up their own synthetic analysis and present the "missing" parts. This is a substantial volume, an admirable case study, and well worth having for its strengths.