Papers of the Twenty-first Algonquian Conference
William Cowan, ed.
Ottawa: Carleton University, 1990. vii + 395 pp. N.p. (paper)

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It is always dangerous to generalize, but possibly it is not so risky if one generalizes about accepted insider perceptions. One of those recognitions is that the Algonquian Conference regularly has the widest topical coverage of the annual meetings which look at a single North American linguistic grouping. Whereas someone would feel distinctly out of place giving an ethnographic paper at the Athabaskan, Salish or Hokan conferences, which focus pointedly on language, at the Algonquian Conference you can hear papers on educational systems, Native land use, aboriginal economic practice and museum exhibits, along with your syntactic constraints and reduplication. And that tantalizing topical mélange is exactly what happened at the 21st Algonquian Conference, held October 27-29, 1989, in St. John's, Newfoundland. Hosted by Memorial University of Newfoundland, it was attended by 77 registrants and included 40 papers. Twenty-six of them are included (arranged alphabetically by author) in this publication.

Here is another generalization. After reading my way through such a volume of proceedings, I regularly feel more edified than I do as a result of sitting through several days of papers being *read* one after the other. Whatever the reason for this effect, it makes a strong case for doing exactly what I have done with this volume: giving it a good read-through rather than simply ticking a few articles for immediate reading and then shelving it as a reference book.

A third generalization is that conference proceedings are the most difficult books to review (even harder than *Festschriften*, where one can at least dwell on the biography of the person being honoured). One has only 500 words to summarize a volume. It is apparent that the richness of this volume is as much in its picture of the range of Algonquian research being conducted and completed as it is in the actual contents of the articles. Accordingly, an easy way to characterize that range is simply to summarize the first few articles:

1) A large group of Micmacs, by the late 19th century, had adopted a peripatetic pattern that conformed in many of its dimensions to that of European groups such as the gypsies (Abler).
2) *Michif*, with its verb phrase from Cree and its noun phrase from French, may have arisen as a result of a process of "relexification" whereby the predicates derive from a single language if it has verbal forms that are completely made up of bound morphemes (Bakker).
3) Research on the notion of competence among Native people of all ages in Big Trout Lake (Ontario) makes it clear that mainstream school techniques are motivated by a very different sense of what "knowing" and "thinking" are (Bennett and Berry).
4) The Round Lake (Ontario) Study, which has been going on for 30-plus years and has published various completed studies is still trying to make sense out of a great deal of data on "fostering" or childrearing by other than their own parents (Black).

5) Archaeological researchers at Lake Temiscouata (Quebec), using various techniques, have begun to accumulate a ceramic data base which they hope will eventually allow them to determine the ethnic identity of the area's inhabitants over time (Chapdelaine and Kennedy).
6) Interviews of First Nations people regarding post-secondary education in Ontario have resulted in a sensitive set of recommendations aimed at a more equitable education system and Native involvement proportionate to Native representation in the population (Common).
7) Attawapiskat (Ontario) Cree land use shifted after Contact, and particularly during the last three decades, but many traditional aspects of economic practice and life style continue – at least in insider perceptions (Cummins).

This, although it covers only about a third of the volume, gives a sense of the range of topics covered in these proceedings. As Cowan says in the Introduction, the conference contained "an interesting mixture of history, ethnology, archaeology, linguistics, economics, religion – everything you could possibly want to know about the Algonquian peoples but were afraid to ask." Year after year the Algonquian Conference gives us evidence that, for all our varying interests and perspectives, we are developing a comprehensive picture of these peoples and their past.

Aggression and War: Their Biological and Social Bases
Jo Groebel and Robert A. Hinde
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989. xvi + 237 pp. $14.95 (paper)

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The editors of this volume were signatories of the Seville Statement on Violence and their stated objectives are: (1) to summarize in non-technical terms the main part of the evidence on which the Seville Statement was based; and (2) to provide an overview of empirical research on aggression and war. The book consists of five topic areas entitled "Aggression: The Reality and the Myth," "Biological Mechanisms in the Individual," "Individual Aggression and Prosocial Alternatives," "Communication and Group Processes" and "The Macro Level: Societies and Nations."

While the individual chapters are interesting and sometimes informative, the net result is disappointing. Since there are 16 chapters and a conclusion, space limitations make it impossible to review, or even comment on each one here. In general, however, most are rather brief, characterizing and summarizing the results of research that argues against innatist (or in favour of learned) views of human violence and war. They provide an overview of the conventional wisdom concerning the sources of human violence. This is a useful and worthwhile endeavour, and one of the editors' stated objectives. The problem is that (with the exception of the section on the biology and physiology of aggression) much of what is summarized and presented is the conventional wisdom of 15 to 50 years ago.

It is, for example, difficult to conceive of an entire volume devoted to the biological and social bases of aggression and war that includes not a single reference to either sociobiological or ecological-functional explanations of war. One need not agree with either of those approaches to feel that they (and perhaps more importantly, the argu-