
**The Queen's People: A Study of Hegemony, Coercion, and Accommodation
Among the Okanagan of Canada**

Peter Carstens

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991. xxvii + 304 pp. \$55.00 (cloth), \$22.95 (paper)

Reviewer: Noel Dyck

Simon Fraser University

This book combines ethnohistorical and social anthropological perspectives in an attempt to elucidate what the author identifies as the forces of hegemony, coercion and accommodation in the lives of the Okanagan Indians of British Columbia. The first part of the book examines the Okanagans' historical relations with fur traders, missionaries, settlers and the governments of British Columbia and Canada. The second part considers various aspects of social life since the 1950s in one of these reserve communities. The most useful sections of the book are those which (1) detail the long-standing and growing significance of off-reserve wage labour for band members, (2) recount the means by which Okanagan territory has been appropriated by non-Native settlers and government agents and (3) analyze the structural constraints which currently inform the roles of band chiefs and band managers.

In a short review it is not possible to discuss all of the difficulties encountered in the book. To begin with, the segmented organization of the book (prompted by what the author refers to as a "diasynchronic" approach) places the responsibility for integrating the treatment of various substantive themes primarily upon the reader. Thus, the analysis of the role of chief mounted in Chapter 7 is not picked up again until Chapter 12. The scattered and unarticulated use of a variety of theoretical concepts—ranging from hegemonic incorporation to patron-client relationships to anthropological models of factionalism and of peasant social organization—contributes to the book's analytical impenetrability. The author has been poorly served by editors and manuscript assessors who should have insisted upon a greater effort to achieve conceptual integration and clarity. Carstens' spirited but seemingly *ad hoc* critique of the many published sources upon which his study heavily depends tend to obscure rather than to illuminate the problems that his extended research among the Okanagan has sought to address.

What seems to guide this study is a version of historical determinism erected upon an underlying acculturationist perspective which depicts the fate of the Okanagan as having been effectively decided by the beginning of the 1860s. The fur trade, missionaries and the gold rush are claimed to have produced "structural and cultural changes which could never be reversed" (p. 52). The radical and unalterable changes which are said to have taken place in the personalities of individual Okanagan and in the "conscience collective" of their society are interpreted as placing the Okanagan under the hegemonic spell of the white man and his institutions. In the clearest statement of this position Carstens concludes that this "conscience collective had two parts, an Indian part which they were learning to despise, and an unreal fantasy part, based on their observations and misunderstanding of the strangers who came from afar, like white giants" (pp. 52-53). From here it is but a short step to conclude that the Okanagan suffered from a naïve trust in their bond with the British crown (p. 64), a failure to understand the power structures of the provincial and dominion govern-

ments (p. 83) and “no more than a sort of false consciousness about the past” (p. 130).

Carstens implies that the Okanagan were swept along by forms of non-Native coercion which they could not comprehend, let alone resist or modify in a strategic manner. Within this conceptual straitjacket, the Okanagan are analytically stripped of the capacity to do more than fall victim to various forms of accommodation, the ravages of factionalism and a relentless pursuit of individual status and prestige. Indeed, the actions of the Okanagan both in the past and the present tend to be attributed to the personal characteristics and alleged eccentricities of individual band members. Non-Native policies towards Okanagan lands and communities, on the other hand, are said to be “based on institutional decisions and are not merely a function of personalities” (p. 55). Yet missing from this book is a systematic treatment of the cumulative experience of the Okanagan in dealing with important factors such as the attempt to subject them to the “Durieu system” of Catholic mission settlements, the impact of residential schools and the evolving system of socio-economic relations between Okanagans and whites in off-reserve settings. In short, this study suffers from limitations in its methodological approach and theoretical perspective and tells us less about the survival of Okanagan bands as communities than one might wish to know.

Working Women: International Perspectives on Labour and Gender Ideology

Nanneke Redclift and M. Thea Sinclair, eds.

London: Routledge, 1991. x + 242 pp. \$57 (cloth), \$17.95 (paper)

Reviewer: Susan Vincent

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One of the major themes of feminist research is the work that women do and how it is perceived. This collection of articles adds to this literature mainly through the insights provided by descriptions of a variety of case studies, rather than through a theoretically rigorous analysis.

Several of the contributions constitute partial blueprints for future action. This comes across particularly clearly in the chapters by Leonard on women's support of the Kent miners' strike, by Walton on women shop stewards, by Lyon on income-generating development projects of women, by Castelbourg-Koulma on a Greek women's project to break into the tourism industry and by Cholmeley on founding a women's bookstore in London. These chapters document real attempts to improve women's position and influence and, by describing the successes and problems involved in these processes, provide concrete paths for similar projects to take.

The case studies also provide insights into real situations so that, for example, in Broadbridge's chapter on women in retailing in a London department store we discover the kinds of skills women who work in the hosiery department actually do need. This kind of information is crucial for countering the argument that women are paid less because they work in unskilled jobs by pointing out that the definition of skill is gender-biased. The importance of gathering clear and correct information on women's choices and activities is further underlined in Hoodfar's article on why educated middle-class Egyptian women have returned to wearing the veil—it is not a return to traditional values, but a new response to the cost of Western-style clothing and, ironi-