ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

CULTURE

Selected Contemporary Native Issues in Canada: Observations Made in the Field
Eric John Large
Xlibris Corporation
978-1-4771-0300-5
Four Stars (out of Five)

Eric John Large, a member of the Saddle Lake Cree Nation in Alberta, Canada, has served his First Nations people for more than thirty years as councillor, chief, and most recently as Indian Residential School Coordinator and Resolution Health Support Worker. Large's expertise, compassion for his subject, and credibility, make *Selected Contemporary Native Issues in Canada* an invaluable addition to the library of any person or institution interested in indigenous peoples in general and Canadian First Nations issues in particular.

This exceptional book opens with five chapters that provide an introduction to the people of Canada's First Nations and an overview of the challenges they face, from treaty interpretation and negotiation dating back to the 1800s to the costly contemporary health problems they face. His work with the survivors of the Canadian [Indian] Residential Schools to seek redress and a healing outcome with the Canadian government makes up a significant portion of the text.

The dense and wordy titles of these short chapters provide insight into Large's careful writing style. For example, chapter one is titled "International Definition of a Nation-Contrast Northern Plains Cree Definition with the Standard Definition of a Nation." And though the title of chapter five is unconventionally long, it beautifully shares Large's passions and broad field of interests: "Future Trends-Dealing with Ruptured Canada and First Nations Relations, Increasing First Nation Youth Population, Diminishing Indigenous Languages and Culture, Alienation, Marginalization, Anomie, Despair, and Depression in First Nations Peoples; Responsibility of the Government of Canada, Second Level Governments (Provincial and Municipal) and First Nations Governments to Work in True Partnership."

The bulk of *Selected Contemporary Native Issues in Canada*, almost 250 pages, is an appendix of Large's notes and transcripts from nearly two dozen First Nations conferences, assemblies, hearings, rallies, articles, and reports that he wrote, spoke at, or participated in between 1995 and 2011. They offer a fascinating and in-depth look at the inner workings of the network supporting international indigenous peoples rights and interests. Unfortunately, Large's

apparently verbatim transcripts can be tedious to read as they are heavy on unimportant facts, such as meticulous recordings of the start times and break times of nearly every portion of every event Large attended. The names and affiliations of the many dozens of chiefs, councillors, experts, lawyers, government representatives, and others are also listed, and these are useful and a pleasure to read, as many of the names are unique and beautiful, though an index to keep track of them would be helpful.

Selected Contemporary Native Issues in Canada has very few typographical or grammatical errors, and it's fairly well organized, though the appendix would have flowed better had it been presented in chronological order. Large's important addition to First Nations' writings is an easy-to-read and intellectually gratifying book.

Patty Sutherland