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Rae. The chapter on population fluctuations in light of female infanticide and European diseases is described as a "dense, tightly argued research paper," reprinted without its footnotes which "are necessary for full documentation and assessment of data" (p. 192). In my opinion, it would have been more appropriate to either rewrite the piece for this volume or simply include a summary with a citation to the easily available journal article.

The final section, "Being Dene," comprises four chapters. The title of chapter fifteen, "Traditional Knowledge and Belief," is rightly characterized as "a gross exaggeration" in that the chapter "barely touches on what Dene culture holds and once held as measures of meaning and understanding" (p. 271). Four legends are recounted accompanied by brief, but intriguing, discussions of "power" and "blood and femaleness." A fine description of the Dogrib hand game, accompanied by photographs, forms another chapter. A third chapter on "Enjoyments and Special Times" explores Dene values and recurring and informal pleasurable activities before the advent of cars, radio, and television. The book closes with accounts of the lives of two persons. The first life history narrative, constructed using interview transcripts, is quite rich and stands in contrast with Helm's "personality analysis" of the second individual, which lacks the insight and convincing feel of a first person narrative. Helm expresses regret that she recorded "almost no consistent life history materials" (p. 340), a sentiment that one cannot help but share.

As a historical resource for people in Denendeh, this book provides many captivating glimpses that will hopefully stimulate further ethnohistorical explorations. The book as a whole would likely have been even more valuable with more material specifically prepared for this volume.

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Political Principles and Indian Sovereignty. By Thurman Lee Hester Jr. New York: Routledge, 2001. 142 pages. $55.00 cloth.

The story of the United States government's treatment of American Indians is well known, but its retelling by Thurman Hester shocks and angers. He aims not only to describe American Indian policy but also come up with a meaningful answer to its decimation of Indian culture. Upon closing the book, the reader is left with a feeling of frustration.

Hester's argument is what he calls "a philosophical examination of the Indian 'plight'" (p. 1).The obvious strength of this approach is his thoughtful use of sources and clear statement of assumptions and relationships. There is a weakness in argument, though, especially apparent in the conclusions about sovereignty. Here Hester is unable to escape his craft's love of abstraction. Lacking practical and concrete ideas about sovereignty, he ends with little more than familiar rhetoric.

The book's philosophical method is syllogistic. Hester convincingly lays out his major and minor premises but less compellingly deduces his conclusion. His major premise is that the contemporary plight of American Indians resulted from their loss of local control, both individual and collective. His minor premise is that the United States government's Indian policy systematically destroyed American Indians' local control. His conclusion is that a good life for American Indians on reservations will follow upon the federal government's abolishment of plenary control and recognition of full tribal sovereignty.

Hester uses comparative health, economic, and educational statistics to describe the life of American Indians today. American Indians between the ages of five and fifty-four are one-and-a-half times more likely to die than American whites. Only 9.4 percent of American whites live in poverty, while 27.2 percent of American Indians live below the poverty line. A high school diploma is held by 65 percent of American Indians and 83 percent of American whites, and a college bachelor's degree has been earned by 9.4 percent of American Indians and 22.9 percent of American whites. American Indians make up less than 1 percent of the United States population, but they are inordinately dispossessed of health, wealth, and formal schooling.

After exploring a variety of theories about the cause of poverty, school failure, and alcoholism ("arguably the number one killer of Native Americans" [p. 11]), Hester concludes that these problems "seem to be related to an external locus of control" (p. 14). Specifically, he argues, a lasting consequence of colonialism is that "Native Americans tend to feel that they do not control their own lives" (p. 14). Having lost much and fearing that even more will be taken from them, American Indians tend to be oriented to the present and not the future, tend to be without goals, and tend, therefore, to lack motivation. For Hester, "external locus of control" is more than social science jargon; it is what the United States government's Indian policy has wrought (p. 14).

The second premise of Hester's argument is America's disastrous Indian policy which is discussed in some detail for two-thirds of the book. The early era of "settler imperialism" was not "Indian voluntarism"; the actual choice was between "loss of territory versus death and destruction by settlers with a concomitant loss of territory anyway" (p. 24). The next period saw all three branches of the federal government creating, carrying out, and rationalizing the policy of removal. Although settler greed, threats by the states, and coerced sales of Indian land are the hallmarks of this period, the "doctrine of discovery" and its corollary theory of "domestic dependent nations" are its legacies. According to the Supreme Court in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831), the American Indian had come to occupy "a state of pupilage."

Having reduced the American Indian to the status of children, the federal government acted *in loco parentis* even more severely. During what Hester calls the era of "decimation and war," white settlement was accompanied by driving American Indians to reservations, turning over reservation schools to religions, settlers' killing off game herds, and the US Army killing off American Indians. The government policy, according to Hester, recognized two types of Indians: the pacified and the hostile. America's Indian population fell from 600,000 in 1800 to 250,000 in 1900. Another casualty of the century was Indian local control. The federal government's ceasing to deal with tribes through treaties in 1871 illustrated that its view of the American Indian had changed from sovereign to ward.

The unrelenting process of decimation continued in the late nineteenth century with the Dawes or General Allotment Act of 1887. The US Congress took away from the tribes control of reservation land because common ownership was not sufficiently American. Congressmen could not deal with the ambiguity of "governments within governments," and, in Henry Dawes' words, tribal ownership of land meant "'no enterprise to make your home any better than that of your neighbors'" (p. 67). Before allotment 138,000,000 acres were in Indian ownership, and after allotment Indian holdings had shrunk to 48,000,000 acres. The stated aim of the Dawes Act, Indian assimilation, was furthered by Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding schools on the reservations and forced United States citizenship in 1924. The most pronounced result of these assimilation tactics was white settlers' acquisition of surplus reservation land.

Hester dates the era of promise—of meaningful local control—not from the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 but from the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975. Although the 1934 act was an admission that allotment had failed, Hester thinks it was motivated more by assimilation than self-government. The 1975 act began the process of the tribes "contracting" and "compacting" to run governmental offices on the reservations. These initiatives, says Hester, brought about progress on the reservations toward the classic goals of good government: representative leadership, accountability, responsive services, and reform—but not sovereignty.

Tribal sovereignty remains absent from reservations, Hester argues, because Indian authority is not yet "'supreme, absolute and uncontrollable'" (p. 94). American Indian policy, though improved, is still characterized by the United States government's "plenary power," which is the opposite of local Indian "control of their own lives." Hester's penultimate conclusion is that Indian well-being will not be realized as long as Indian sovereignty is withheld. His final conclusion is that "the federal government should specifically renounce plenary power" (p. 93–94). After Indian sovereignty is at hand, "the first move for Indian people is must be to recognize the right of the United States to exist" (p. 113).

Hester, to his credit, admits that his conclusion is an "idealistic dream" (p. 113). He hopes, but not very confidently, that the United States government will wake up to the realization that its continuing refusal to renounce plenary power violates the American principle of popular sovereignty and is ultimately based on the contemptuous position that "might makes right." The reader who has stuck with him, though, deserves more, even if the book is short. The *ergo* of his syllogism is about as satisfying as an 8 A.M. lecture in philosophy. There is no reason to believe that moral imperatives will suddenly prevail, and there is every reason to be dismayed at Hester's ignoring the "Humpty Dumpty" reality—pervasive weaknesses in contemporary tribal governments and continuing dependence on Washington. A possible alternative to Hester's conclusion would be the US government's abolition of the Bureau of Indian

Affairs, exercise of its trust role in the form of generous block grants, and the assumption by tribal governments of the full responsibility and risk of self-governance.

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American Indian Population Recovery in the Twentieth Century. Nancy Shoemaker. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000. 176 pages. $16.95 paper.

The twentieth-century population history of American Indians is a relatively underdeveloped field of study. Before the welcome appearance of Shoemaker's study, the most extensive general treatment of the topic has been some chapters in Russell Thornton's excellent *American Indian Holocaust and Survival.* Most of the action in American Indian historical demography has been in the estimation of pre-Columbian population and analysis of the cause, timing, and magnitude of decline to the Indian population nadir at the end of the nineteenth century.

Recent understandings of twentieth-century Indian population growth have been dominated by the fact of the large increases in American Indian population attributable to increasing classification of mixed-ancestry Indians as Indians in Census enumeration after 1960. But, as Shoemaker observes, there is much more to understand about the twentieth-century recovery than that. By the beginning of the twentieth century, many Indian tribal populations had stabilized and begun at least a slow increase. Changing rates of fertility and mortality both contribute to Indian population growth. There is an important and largely untold story about these conventional components of population change.

One reason that the modern population history of indigenous Americans is not studied more often is the exasperatingly poor quality of available data. Analysis of American Indian population dynamics must confront serious data limitations—poor or nonexistent vital registration data, worse administrative data from the Indian Office/Bureau of Indian Affairs, variable Census undercounts, and inconsistent classification of race. The analysis of tribe and reservation-specific population histories raises additional difficulties: geographic mobility and inconsistent Census reporting practices with respect to reservation and tribal populations.

Shoemaker addresses these questions by careful mining of available Census data—for example, inferring life expectancy by Brass's method, inferring fertility from child-women ratios, and analyzing age at marriage and at starting and stopping fertility, birth intervals, and rates of childlessness. These methods are not perfect remedies for the data problems. When it comes to the manufacture of population-history silk purses, American Indian data are irremediable sow's ears. Thus the analysis is necessarily fragmentary and appropriately cautious rather than comprehensive and definitive.