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In Defense of Mohawk Land: Ethnopolitical Conflict in Native North America. By Linda Pertusati. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997. 166 pages. \$14.95 paper.

In 1990, Kanehsatake, a seventeen-hundred-member Mohawk community in Quebec on 3.6 square miles of land, exploded. This "place of the crusty sand" situated in the township of Oka, with its three thousand non-Indian residents, was to be the scene of a six-month stand-off that created a nationwide crisis in Canada. A full-scale bloodbath between these Mohawk Indians and Canadian and provincial forces almost resulted. In the end, one provincial officer was killed and scores on both sides were injured. The Mohawks at Kanehsatake who engaged in armed confrontation and employed blockades were motivated by their desire to stop the expansion of the Oka Golf Club onto lands that the Indians historically claimed, including burial lands adjacent to the band's Pine Hill Cemetery. In order to diffuse the crisis, Ottawa purchased the land from the town of Oka before it could be developed as a golf course.

In only 138 pages of text, Linda Pertusati, assistant professor of ethnic studies at Bowling Green State University, attempts to give us a complete account of this ethnopolitical conflict, its roots and its meaning. The author suggests that "this conflict was much larger than the events of these six months," and insists that "the 1990 conflict is a microcosm of both the historical realities of indigenous status in general and of the Mohawk demands for national self-determination" (p. 6).

The author is accurate in seeing the conflict at Kanehsatake in the wake of the Meech Lake Accord and growing Canadian Indian opposition to it. She also accurately depicts the poor economic conditions on all the Mohawk communities that led to increasing militancy and activist efforts to overcome dependency. Mohawks, not just warriors, began challenging existing tribal and band governments that were viewed as too conservative or even as "sell-out" governments. The author also clearly shows the growing divisions within Mohawk communities between the followers of the Gaiwiio, the Code of Handsome Lake, rejected by the Mohawk Warrior Society, and the followers of the Great Binding Law as interpreted by the Mohawk Warrior Society guru, the late Louis Hall. Outside of these elements, the book offers little substance to the reader and contains substantial omissions. Unfortunately, we never get any significant analysis of the relationship of the Mohawk Warrior Society with the two

Iroquois Confederacies at Grand River (Six Nations Reserve) and at Onondaga except for generalities about the divisions between "Great Law" Mohawks and Mohawk followers of the Gaiwiiio.

The author has made use of some Department of Indian Affairs files; of records housed in the Public Archives of Canada, the Canadian Indian Rights Commission Library, and the Federal Court of Canada; and of published Canadian and provincial reports. Yet she has relied too heavily on newspapers, using the *Montreal Gazette*, *Malone Telegram*, and the *Syracuse Post-Standard*, the latter being one of the most inaccurate newspapers covering the Iroquois that I have read in the past twenty-seven years of research on the Six Nations. Moreover, despite claims to scholarship, the author has not made attempts to interview all the Indian sides of the conflict or any of the Quebecois or Ottawa leadership in opposition to the Indians. Furthermore, in order to study the origins of the Mohawk Warrior Society, one has to look to the Longhouse at Akwesasne founded in the 1930s and to the traditionalist opponents of the warriors. Those non-warrior members of the Longhouse—Ernest Benedict, Julius Cook, the late Ron La France (d. 1996), Jake Swamp, and Tom Porter (no longer at Akwesasne)—should have been interviewed to provide the entire story, not just that from the mouths of the warriors. Scholarship must be complete to be taken seriously, and this book only tells a small part of the story. Thus, Pertusati's book appears to be a one-sided defense of the Mohawk Warrior Society.

The author rightly asserts that what happened at Kanehsatake was an indigenous reaction to colonialism. Yet she fails to describe adequately the colonial world established at Oka and earlier anti-colonial efforts by Mohawks to deal with oppression on both sides of the border. She provides an all-too-brief history of Kanehsatake, in less than ten pages of text (pp. 28-37). She never mentions how key events of the past half-century molded Mohawk thinking. Some of these included the Mohawks' loss of land in the development of the St. Lawrence Seaway; the Mohawk blockade of the International Bridge in 1968; and the Raquette Lake siege and encampment of 1979-1980 at Akwesasne. Nor does the author mention the early activism of the White Roots of Peace, the militant caravan of young Mohawks who espoused traditionalism in the United States and Canada in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The author, except for a brief description of Ganienkeh, never mentions the very real

background of Mohawk and other Iroquois Indian land claims in New York state, a factor that has shaped events both in the "empire state" and into Canada. Nor does the author even mention the environmental crisis at Akwesasne which triggered Indian frustration and activist Mohawk responses there and elsewhere. The author rightly mentions the Mohawk Louis Hall, who became the theoretician and theologian of the Mohawk Warrior Society movement, but treats this extraordinary figure in cursory fashion, never examining his background as an ex-Jesuit seminarian or his charismatic leadership. Moreover, the author provides the wrong date of the Jay Treaty (p. 71).

Thus, readers would be wise to skip *In Defense of Mohawk Land*. This book, much like earlier ones written by Rick Hornung and Bruce Johansen, is too much of an instant analysis of Mohawk country that falls far short of the mark.

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In Mohawk Country: Early Narratives about a Native People.
Edited by Dean R. Snow, Charles T. Gehring, and William A. Starna. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1996. 406 pages. \$39.95 cloth; \$16.95 paper.

The Mohawk, guardians of the "eastern door" of the Iroquoian League of Five Nations, were in a strategic position when Europeans came knocking; situated as they were in the Mohawk Valley, they controlled the entrance of a principal route into the interior. Highly successful in both war and trade in precontact days, they and their fellow confederates in the Iroquoian League lost no time in facing up to the European invasion. They managed to maintain a large part of their territorial and political integrity through two centuries of colonial pressures, up until the time of the American War of Independence. Little wonder that they have made such an impression on colonial histories.

Historians have traditionally relied heavily upon the *Jesuit Relations* and official sources when recounting the relations of these formidable people with the newcomers. In contrast, *In Mohawk Country* casts its net more widely: The result is thirty-eight selections of observations by individuals from various countries and walks of life all focusing on the Mohawk Valley and its first inhabitants. Several of the accounts are trans-