

colonial realities with the need to maintain a relationship with the land. Here the creation of the Baker Lake Eskimo Council is a central feature and the authors are particularly thoughtful in their reading of the council's minutes. Given the later importance of the Baker Lake Inuit in establishing aboriginal rights to land in Canada, it exemplifies Inuit action during the period.

If the book has a weakness it is that the two sections feel separate from one another and the reader is left wanting more narrative to connect them. This was bureaucracy mismanaging the land, by dividing culture from nature, and Inuits organizing to try and reassemble that land; it also was a growing philosophical and political negotiation through the period, which ultimately resulted in the creation of the Nunavut Territory. The organization in some ways works against this narrative arc, but this a minor criticism of a book that makes a significant contribution to the growing body of ethno and environmental history of the Canadian North.

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Buffalo Inc.: American Indians and Economic Development. By Sebastian Felix Braun. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008. xii + 271 pp. Illustrations, tables, bibliography, and index. Cloth \$39.95.

The American bison is a sacred responsibility for many modern tribes, and a commercial venture for some. Using a case study in tribal buffalo ranching, this monograph probes the relationship between cultural ideals and economic constraints in an era of American Indian self-determination. The particular case is *Pte Hca Ka* (The Real Buffalo), a cutting-edge operation on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, circa 1990 to 2006. It is analyzed—in an introduction and fourteen topical chapters ranging over ecology, management, politics, development, and other social scientific fields. The author is a Swiss anthropologist trained at Indiana University, now teaching at the University of North Dakota, and the anthropological perspective predominates here.

The scope of this book is at once more narrow and more broad than the title suggests. Taking an ethnographic approach to a single case study leaves little room for a fuller discussion of other tribal bison herds and the insights such comparative analysis would yield. Yet even the coverage of *Pte Hca Ka* is thin and episodic; surprisingly few pages are devoted to fleshing out the case study, and only attentive readers will be able to piece

together the historical chronology. *Buffalo Inc.* is based on ample field research, but Braun seems less interested in reportage than theory. Lengthy passages are given over to reviewing the scholarly literature, not just on American Indian economic development but on a host of related academic questions as well. The chapter parsing “Reservation Identities” (p. 76) is particularly tedious, as is the author’s predictable angst over the politics of ethnography. The real buffalo and their tribal stewards, meanwhile, trail away in the background, like the denouement of a dime novel. And the literary analogy holds in at least one other way: Braun’s prose is earnest but awkward, with run-on sentences and grammatical errors appearing throughout the text.

This book joins a large and growing literature on the American bison, and the author shares with many other writers “an interest in the cultural ecology of the Great Plains” (p. 14). Historian Ken Zontek’s contemporaneous *Buffalo Nation: American Indian Efforts to Restore the Bison* (Nebraska, 2007) covers much of the same ground—including a photo essay on the Cheyenne River Sioux herd—in a more accessible, informative manner.

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Catastrophe in the Making: The Engineering of Katrina and the Disasters of Tomorrow. By William R. Freudenburg, Robert Gramling, Shirley Laska, and Kai T. Erikson. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2009. 209 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, and index. Cloth \$26.95.

Catastrophe in the Making analyses the political, economic, and ecological origins of Hurricane Katrina, but it is part of a broader literature of environmental history that explores how the built environment has an impact on the health and welfare of people in the United States and around the world. Katrina has been the subject of a small army of books that have sought to understand that tragedy from a number of disciplinary and political perspectives. These analyses have mostly focused on the devastating power of the storm itself, or on the ineptitude of government officials in how they responded, or did not respond, to the immediate causes and aftermath of the hurricane. But the authors—William R. Freudenburg, Robert Gramling, Shirley Laska, and Kai T. Erikson—professors of environmental studies and sociology, take a broader historical approach, and, building upon the work of Craig Colten and others, analyze the long-term political, economic, sociological, and environmental causes of the disaster that mesmerized and saddened a nation.