

ures of that community as Hannaniah M. Caiserman and A. M. Klein, deals with the issue of Orthodox Judaism (to help make sense of tension between francophones and Hassidim in Outremont), and takes a light-hearted look at the cultural and “theological” aspects of the Montreal bagel. While not evading the issue of anti-semitism in Quebec, Anctil attempts to minimize its scope and impact. Thus, in evaluating the tension between French Canadians and Hassidim in Outremont, he puts forth the opinion that it entailed as much a fear of change as a specific hostility to the disciples of the Baal Shem Tov (p. 160).

Taken as a whole, Anctil’s essays constitute a commendable attempt to demarginalize the study of the Jews of Montreal, hitherto mostly undertaken by scholars of Jewish studies, and to make this subject part of the universe of discourse among French Canadians. They also have a reasonably explicit political agenda, one made particularly evident in Anctil’s essay on André Laurendeau, which is only marginally related to the other essays in the collection. The major changes that have occurred in Quebec since the Quiet Revolution have resulted in French Quebec opening its doors to social and cultural forces more diverse than it had ever before experienced. In the face of such cultural diversity, the francophone majority in Quebec needs to bring to bear new creative energies. In that context, Anctil feels that the historical example of the Jews of Montreal constitutes a valuable lesson, and he calls upon French Quebec to engage in a renewed dialogue with the Jewish community (p. 51), with the goal, expressed in his last essay, of “forging a viable partnership” (p. 171).

Ira Robinson
Concordia University

Léo-Paul Desrosiers — *Iroquoisie* (sous la direction de Denis Vaugeois), Sillery, Septentrion, 1998, 4 tomes : xxxii, 324 p.; 344 p.; 352 p.; 368 p.

Born in 1896, Léo-Paul Desrosiers was, among other things, a writer of fiction and historical romances and a historian. Arguably his most important historical work, *Iroquoisie* was published in 1947 under the auspices of his good friend Abbé Groulx and the Institut d’histoire de l’Amérique française. Originally intended as the first of a five-volume history of French-Iroquois relations, only volume 1, covering the years up to 1645, was published. One of his biographers has suggested that the whole project was too expensive to be published in its entirety (Julia Richter, *Léo-Paul Desrosiers* [Ottawa: Éditions Fides, 1966], p. 95). Desrosiers continued to publish pieces of his research, primarily in the *Cahiers des Dix*. After some 50 years Denis Vaugeois has brought out this edited version of Desrosiers’s manuscript in four volumes. The work covers the period beginning with Cartier’s contact with the St. Lawrence Iroquoians to 1701, when the Iroquois and French concluded one of their many peace agreements.

The first volume begins with Vaugeois’s brief biography of Desrosiers and of the latter’s efforts to publish *Iroquoisie* in full. Vaugeois does not question whether pub-

lishers' reluctance to bring out this multi-volume work was related to questions about originality, need, or length. This is surprising since Vaugeois concedes in his introduction that "le défaut de *Iroquoisie* est d'être une étude trop détaillée, trop précise. Le lecteur avance à pas de tortue" (p. x). The introduction is followed by a brief overview of Iroquois-Native and Iroquois-French relations up to 1701 by Alain Beaulieu, who makes little sustained attempt to assess the relative contribution of Desrosiers's work, then and now, to the historiography of New France and to that of French-Iroquois relations. Rather, Beaulieu summarizes the views held by a few modern scholars of the Iroquois and of Iroquois-French relations. Comparisons between the story told by modern scholars and that of Desrosiers are left to the reader.

The editing, like the editorializing, is kept to a minimum. Desrosiers did not document his work with notes and rarely mentioned the work of his contemporaries in his historical writing, but he makes quite clear in the text the sources of his detailed narrative descriptions and verbatim conversations. Indeed, much of *Iroquoisie*, like his other historical writing, is carefully rewritten and rephrased material taken from the standard published primary sources well known to scholars of the Iroquois and of New France (for example, the Jesuit *Relations*). Other than clarifying the name, position, and occupation of a person mentioned in the text or explaining the meaning of a phrase Desrosiers used when quoting from an old French source, Vaugeois lets the text stand alone.

What, then, of Desrosiers's views of the Iroquois and of Iroquois-French relations? To say that they are dated is to state the obvious. Words such as "primitive" and "stone age" are used to describe Iroquoian culture. Like George T. Hunt, who wrote in 1940, Desrosiers tended to view most Iroquois actions, whether diplomatic or military, as aimed at gaining control of the fur trade (although he was far less dogmatic in his views than was Hunt). Since the French needed the fur trade to survive, this made them irreconcilable enemies of the Iroquois. In time the French came to realize that the Iroquois did not need to be destroyed — although why the French came to that conclusion only in 1701 is not made clear. Possibly it was because, as Desrosiers (and others before and after him) argued, Governor Frontenac had humbled the Iroquois militarily. The Iroquois apparently reconciled themselves to peace with the French either because their need to "survive" no longer depended on the fur trade or because, for the time being, it was more important to make peace with the powerful French and their Indian allies than to get furs to trade for European goods. All of this has to be teased out of what is essentially a detailed narrative account of annual, sometimes daily, events of actions between the French and the Iroquois.

In the end, this multi-volume version of *Iroquoisie* adds little except detail to the views Desrosiers espoused in his previous historical publications. Given that his views, readily available in other forms, were not considered path-breaking then or now and that Vaugeois does not point to recent scholarship — not only to correct and refine some of Desrosiers's occasional conclusions, but also to show that, on more than one occasion, his work continues to reflect current understanding of some events — one is left to wonder why this work was published and what was its intended audience. Neither Vaugeois nor Beaulieu makes a compelling case for the

continuing importance of Desrosiers's work as significant scholarship, and Vaugeois himself concludes that, as literature, *Iroquoisie* is detailed to a fault and the narrative moves at a snail's pace. Despite the latter assessment, one is left with the impression that this work is aimed at the non-specialist audience. For example, in place of scholarly apparatus, Vaugeois has added numerous illustrations that "soutiennent le texte et en rendent la lecture encore plus agréable" (p. x). General readers might appreciate the sketches of "native scenes" for their representations of "exotic otherness", yet most scholars of Native people might express some concern over the fact that the illustrations lack captions explaining what is shown or their relevance, that their placement often pays no regard to chronology, and that Vaugeois mixes historical representations with sketches taken from works of fiction (for example, in vol. 4, p. 87, the picture of Tecumseh, who lived over 100 years after the events Desrosiers chronicles, and on p. 99, the scene taken from James Fenimore Cooper's novel *Last of the Mohicans*). Indeed, even the general reader might wonder at the value of untitled and undated maps reproduced in part or poorly and in such small size as to render them unreadable (for example, vol. 2, p. 188, and vol. 4, p. 259).

Desrosiers was certainly an important figure in Quebec intellectual life, and possibly that alone merits the publication of his writing. For those interested in the subject, *Iroquoisie* makes enjoyable reading, and it is the work of a skilled writer and student of history. But the reading public deserved a more thoughtful treatment of this work and its place in the historiography of its subject to better appreciate Desrosiers and his contribution to scholarship.

José António Brandao
Western Michigan University

Gordon M. Sayre — *Les Sauvages Américains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1997. Pp. 321.

Gordon Sayre's study began "as a dissertation in the Program in Comparative Literature at the State University of New York at Buffalo" (p. xxi). He describes his book as "a broad study of how Indians have been represented in literature in two languages across more than two hundred years and the eastern third of the continent of North America" (p. xviii). More precisely, his sources are published travel narratives with descriptive accounts of the aboriginal peoples written by European visitors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The combination of the author's own experiences as an eyewitness with a general ethnography of "the Indian" was the dominant mode for these accounts. French texts dominate because the fur trade and Christian missionary work — which were of less interest to English-speakers — called for an understanding of and cooperation with Native peoples. English-language works, describing Native life, were more likely to be captives' narratives, which emphasized the resistance of the prisoner to French popery and Native savagery while awaiting deliverance. This was an unsympathetic perspective for recording aboriginal life.