

her multi-valanced ethnographies prove their theses. I was surprised that she did not reference these earlier works.

This leads me to observe that, while the book is presented to be an academic work, it is sparse on the side of theoretical perspective and any methodology, yet delivers abundantly in the development of ideas and major concepts. The writing style is easily readable, flows beautifully, and would appeal to a wide readership. It is indeed a small book, and I felt that there is so much more that I wanted to know and that could be learned from Kleinfeld's volume of ethnographic work. I thought, as well, that there must be so much data gathered from ten years of research and study that I wondered, "Where is it all?" And I found, when reaching the end of the book, that I had questions unanswered: who funded her research, and in what years did she do it? How many women and men did she interview individually, and in which communities of people? Did she give transcripts to the individuals she interviewed, other than those she sent to be read and corrected by the two community groups? Are there articles she has written that incorporate the results of her research? I also wondered whether there is a part of this study to be found elsewhere, or if we can look forward to a larger academic book forthcoming. I hope so!

In spite of these observations, I enjoyed and recommend this book. It is full of riveting stories and thoughtful reflections and observations. It will be interesting to lay readers, students, and scholars of northern studies, and in any field of narrative studies in the social sciences and humanities.

References:

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***From Meteorite Impact to Constellation City: A Historical Geography of Greater Sudbury.* By Oiva W. Saarinen. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2013. Xiv + 390 p, maps, illustrations.**

Sudbury, Ontario may not seem "northern" to some readers of this journal, but Oiva Saarinen's work provides a case study for perceptive northernists. Saarinen, a retired geography professor from Laurentian University, provides

an ambitious history of Sudbury and environs. Blending chronological and thematic approaches, he shows the interplay of natural resources, physical infrastructure, government actions, and corporate behaviour that shape many a northern Canadian community; his work also adds insight into diminishing nordicity. That said, one might wish for some more judicious editing, clearer maps, and a somewhat tighter focus in this historical geography.

The last concern reflects Saarinen's "personalized" view of the region's history (xi). He briefly explains the "constellation" approach—small centres arrayed around and interacting with or against Sudbury proper—but the useful concept begs more rigorous theoretical footings (xii). Saarinen presumes acceptance of the model; his work certainly exudes confidence. Early on, Saarinen claims that without the mines, Sudbury would have remained "wilderness" (xi). Quite apart from postmodern rethinking of "wilderness," how does he know that railways, forest, fields, and central place functions would not have built a viable, if smaller Sudbury? Or, in chapter 15, his suggestions that Sudbury's hollowed out downtown was "unique" seem odd given how commonplace the downtown "doughnut" is across urban North America. Such outbursts of self-assuredness mar this book when lacking sufficient foundation and substantiation.

Fortunately, these moments of excessive enthusiasm are balanced by an extensive regional coverage: an overview of the region's physical setting and "frontier" history is followed by large chapters on Sudbury's rise from village to town to city. Mining, too, is generously covered from pioneering prospectors and firms to the rise of giant nickel firms and even the recent demise of Canadian firms. Other shorter but useful chapters cover "constellation" communities and rural settings. Relying on a close reading of the secondary literature (xii), Saarinen—author of various publications on the region—enthusiastically mines the work of other academics, local chroniclers, and journalistic accounts.

That said, those who have worked on the region's history will find very familiar phrasing within the book. Saarinen understandably uses broad referencing, but insufficient citing of both phrases and specific data emerge—one example is inconsistent citing of early nickel mining history (51, 61). Another is referring to the use of Pinkerton agents as union breakers without citation (246). Works with broad coverage do rely on the work of others, but citations are a must.

One other technical element deserves note—as a geographer, it is hardly a surprise that Saarinen provides some good maps including a size comparison of modern Greater Sudbury with other communities (281).

Disappointingly, however, many of some fifty maps are small and blurry, greatly diminishing their utility.

Moving beyond “how” Saarinen wrote, there is the substantial content to consider. It is far from easy to provide a general history of a substantial geographic setting home to many communities, large and small, with varied economies. Saarinen is at his best emphasizing that the Sudbury area was far more than a mining town, providing very good coverage of agriculture, and sound work on the impact of railways and forestry. However, it is not always clear why some centres draw attention while others do not. Similarly, some businesses gain attention while others—Silverman’s iconic department store—are not even mentioned. Characterizations also come into play. Saarinen wisely divides outlying communities by function, but his choices are debatable—was Whitefish, for instance, just a railway village, or a multi-function community (121)? And detail can become excessive: the book opens with 30 pages of geology; do we need a list of local fish species (23)?

In the end, any organization is open to debate; but some choices rankle. Coverage of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek and Wahnapiatae First Nations is brief and opts for outmoded “victim” themes (27–29, 31–33, 155–159, 233). Finns, in contrast, get considerable (positive) attention in both rural and urban settings, including settlement patterns, institutions, and economic activities. The chapter “A Union Town?” ignores non-mining unions. While the competing Mine Mill and United Steelworkers were influential, did no other unions matter?

Beyond questions about what is covered, there is the when and where. Chronological balance here is uneven—after a long geological background, a full 100 years (1763–1862) is allocated a single page (28–29). Later, the 1920s and 1930s get short shrift. As for “where?”—the dimensions of the Sudbury region vary, seemingly suiting Saarinen’s purpose. Perhaps the somewhat distant Burwash Industrial Farm, a minimum security prison, deserves attention; more doubtful are passing references to Massey, Noelville (both an hour’s drive), and points farther afield. The “flexible” geography reflects the wide reach of the resource and railway economies and Sudbury’s influence, but how far into the constellation should one tread?

Beyond coverage issues, the book suffers brief bouts of celebratory “boosterism.” Bits of regional pride pop up, and the last portion of the book raises aspirations for the future. The book also “name drops”—noting that Michael Starr, a minister in the Diefenbaker cabinet, was born in Copper Cliff seems perilously close to trivia blended with local aggrandizement (99). Moreover, were there no “villains” in the last 130 years of Sudbury area history? Criticisms of individuals are rare, and most of fifteen extended

biographies see Saarinen praising male Anglo Saxons active in business and politics. More “bad actors,” and biographies of females, francophones, and “ethnics,” not to mention those active in social and cultural fields, would be welcome.

More positively, Saarinen does well melding complex issues into a general history, but there are exceptions. The “nickel question”—where would nickel be refined?—gets cursory coverage for the period prior to 1907 (109, 113); by then, the “duopoly” of INCO and Mond were victorious. Still, this is not an error-prone book—sound discussions predominate, with first-rate work on “mapping” the area, the rise of governance, problems caused by both low density “sprawl” into rural areas, and tensions between Sudbury and the “constellation.”

In the end, careful readers will take issue with various elements of Saarinen’s book. One can readily imagine different themes and chronologies and alternative emphases. Clearer figures, fuller citations, and less celebratory trivia would help. But to condemn the book would be foolish. Saarinen steps boldly into the history of Sudbury and the constellation communities: casual readers interested in the Sudbury area, students of resource economies, and scholars examining declining nordicity can benefit from Oiva Saarinen’s energetic and readable work.

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***The Orenda*. By Joseph Boyden. Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2013. 490 p.**

The history we find in textbooks is too often, and too easily, simplistic. Wars are won or lost. Political systems hold sway, revolutions turn tides, technology creates culture. History tells us that one thing happened. Literary fiction, on the other hand, gives the lie to the official version. Literature, which has been shown in recent studies to improve readers’ empathy, does so in part because good fiction requires complexity. A skilled historical novelist writes characters who rise in the reader’s mind and breathe, characters who cannot be real to us unless they contain all the elements of what it is to be human: weakness, wisdom, panic, desire. In his new novel, *The Orenda*, Joseph Boyden gives us history with a beating heart, a heart plucked from a breathing human chest and consumed, warm and red, by warriors.

The Orenda tells the story of the Wendat (Huron) people during the waning days of their once great farming nation. The Wendat have a brutal and intricate relationship with their great enemy, the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), a relationship that involves a retributive cycle of battle, kidnapping, and ritual torture. Into this web of violence comes a new and more sinister threat