



In Divided Unity: Haudenosaunee Reclamation at Grand River (Critical Issues in Indigenous Studies)

Theresa McCarthy

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In February 2006, the Six Nations occupation of a 132-acre construction site in Caledonia, Ontario, reignited a 200-year-long struggle to reclaim land and rights in the Grand River region. Framed by this ongoing reclamation, *In Divided Unity* explores community-based initiatives that promote Haudenosaunee traditionalism and languages at Six Nations of the Grand River as crucial enactments of sovereignty both historically and in the present.

Drawing from Haudenosaunee oral traditions, languages, and community-based theorists, *In Divided Unity* engages the intersecting themes of knowledge production and resistance against the backdrop of the complicated dynamics of the Six Nations community, which has the largest population of all First Nations in Canada. Comprising the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora nations, citizens of the Six Nations Confederacy collectively refer to themselves as Haudenosaunee, which means “we build the house.”

Theresa McCarthy critiques settler colonial narratives of Haudenosaunee decline used to rationalize land theft and political subjugation. In particular, McCarthy illustrates that current efforts to discredit the reclamation continue to draw on the flawed characterizations of Haudenosaunee tradition, factionalism, and “failed” self-government popularized by conventional scholarship about the Iroquois. Countering these narratives of decline and failure, McCarthy argues that the 2006 reclamation ushered in an era of profound intellectual and political resurgence at Six Nations, propelled by the contributions of Haudenosaunee women.

Centering Haudenosaunee intellectual traditions, *In Divided Unity* provides an important new model for community-based activism and scholarship. Through the active practice and adaptation of ancient teachings and philosophies, McCarthy shows that the Grand River Haudenosaunee are continuing to successfully meet the challenges of reclaiming their land, political autonomy, and control of their future.

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