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Book Review: *Saskatchewan: Geographic Perspectives*
Edited by Bernard D. Thraves, M.L. Lewry, Janis E.
Dale, and Hansgeorg Schlichtmann

Tom Carter
University of Winnipeg

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Saskatchewan: Geographic Perspectives. Edited by Bernard D. Thraves, M.L. Lewry, Janis E. Dale, and Hansgeorg Schlichtmann. Regina, SK: Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, 2007. xviii + 486 pp. Tables, figures, color plates, maps, references, index. \$75.00 cloth.

M.L. Lewry notes in his introduction that outsiders and even many residents of Saskatchewan perceive the province as flat, agricultural, and unvarying—a misconception this book certainly helps to counter. Its contents highlight not just the province's social, cultural, and demographic diversity, but also the tremendous diversity in its physical landscape. But this collection of studies does much more. Structured around four broad themes—the physical environment, historical and cultural geography, population and social geography, and economic geography—its individual essays focus on specific topics ranging from climate change to agriculture, transportation, urban development, ethnic diversity, Aboriginal peoples, and political geography. Readers are bound to gain a rich understanding of the province. Although contributors home in on the local, various authors also highlight Saskatchewan's place, particularly in the area of economic geography, in Canada and the world.

The province's north, south, urban, and rural differences and similarities receive considerable emphasis. Historical perspectives, recent trends, and current dimensions, which are part of most chapters, provide excellent coverage of changes over time as well as the issues and challenges facing Saskatchewan today. Historical materials and discussions of current challenges facing Aboriginal peoples offer a much needed, but often neglected, perspective on the province's geography.

Although most of the book's authors are geographers, contributors from archaeology, economics, entomology, and history, along with other disciplines, are also represented, adding to the wealth of information provided on issues of importance to the province, particularly in the areas of historical, cultural, and economic geography.

Written in a fashion that will appeal to several audiences, the book is an excellent teaching resource for faculty and students, its provincial focus easily expanding to cover major concepts and themes in geography. Its detailed information will interest historians, economists, planners, and the general

public, as well as geographers. Attractive maps, figures, plates, tables, and photographs are clear and add significantly to the discussion. Focus studies provide additional detail on topics of importance, adding depth to the discussion.

If the book has a weakness, it is the absence of a strong focus on social geography. Various chapters bring social issues into the discussion, but there is no detailed attention to poverty, health, housing, education, and other aspects of social geography. That aside, this collection offers an excellent portrayal of the geography of Saskatchewan. It will be an invaluable resource for years to come, offering a choice vantage point from which to engage future geographical perspectives on Saskatchewan. **Tom Carter**, *Department of Geography, University of Winnipeg*.