

Against the background of works such as Grobsmith's *Indians in Prison: Incarcerated Indians in Nebraska* (1994), Waldram's *The Way of the Pipe: Aboriginal Spirituality and Symbolic Healing in Canadian Prisons* (1997), and Ross' "Race, Gender, and Social Control: Voices of Imprisoned Native American and White Women" (1994), this life history of Eugene Delorme achieves new dimensions.

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### References

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1994 *Indians in Prison: Incarcerated Indians in Nebraska*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
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1997 *The Way of the Pipe: Aboriginal Spirituality and Symbolic Healing in Canadian Prisons*. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press.
- Diamond, Beverley, M. Sam Cronk and Franziska von Rosen: *Visions of Sound: Musical Instruments of First Nations Communities in North-eastern America*. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1994, ISBN 0-88920-228-1 Cloth CDN\$ 49.95; 0-88920-242-7 Paper CDN\$ 24.95.

This is an epochal work. While methodological advance and refinement are always worthy of attention, what makes the work of Diamond *et al.* exceptional is nothing less than a redefinition of method, purpose and the goals of scholarship within ethnomusicology. That the broad fabric of contemporary scholarship is stretched tight with innovation and conflict is evident enough. To the credit of its authors, however, this work does not push the button of new cant for new categories. It enters new, mostly unexplored ground and illuminates territory previously unimagined or

deemed simply too illusory (however powerful) to be defined, examined, and adequately transmitted within established conceptual frameworks.

Musical instruments of the North American Aboriginal community, particularly the drum, have occupied a well-cultivated place in the collection of symbols through which Natives have been imagined within the non-Native community. The drumbeat, as an example, remains amongst the most effective, commercially viable sounds in the filmmaker's catalogue. It is the aural trigger (we rarely saw the drum in those movies) leading to and from smoke signals, circled wagons, grease paint and terrifying ululations. It is a symbol of tenacious power and utility (a "gesture of control," as Diamond would put it), resonating beyond its function as an icon of popular culture to penetrate museum walls and even color curatorial decision making.

Stepping out from behind the colonialist mask is a serious challenge and constant preoccupation in ethnomusicology and particularly in organology, the study of musical instruments. Theorizing how best to do this is, in fact, the focus of much of the best current work in the field. In this environment, Diamond *et al.* are both bold and especially thoughtful in choosing to substitute arresting questions and breathtakingly imaginative interpretation for the gummy opacity of "theorization." Avoiding conversionary babble of all stripes, the authors draw direction and openness to interdisciplinary engagement from recent critical theory, but, I think more importantly, breadth of vision from large and enormously knowledgeable group of Native Elders and consultants. The authors have listened carefully to what they have said and have had the respect and sensitivity to never lose sight of Native instruments as bi-directional conduits linking all spheres within a spiritually-centered world; a world from which instruments emerge and return conceptually, functionally and physically. What makes the book so very powerful is the sense that its authors have moved beyond documentation of this discovery to link scholarly engagement itself with such a world.

The book is the product of a nine-year collaboration ("Sound Producing Instruments in Native Communities") initiated at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, where Diamond (now at York University in Toronto) was a faculty member in the School of Music and Ms. von Rosen and Mr. Cronk undergraduates (they will be newly minted Ph.Ds from Brown and Michigan respectively when this review appears in print). The volume is handsomely designed, includes clear, well integrated figures and illustrations as well as a valuable bibliography and detailed, extremely helpful endnotes. Wilfrid Laurier University Press will also be producing a companion volume in

computer disk format entitled, *A Catalogue of Musical Instruments of First Nations Communities in Northeastern America*.

The organization of the book is unique. It is idealistically modelled much as would be an artwork, which form a determination of the same modalities of reasoning and argumentation that have generated content. Each of the six dense chapters arises from a trenchant abstraction—an excellent strategy opening access to areas of enquiry and styles of interpretation that establish the unique imprint of the work. These abstractions include such matters as “cultural knowledge,” “relationship, complementarity, and ‘twin-ness,’” “real,” “languages of sound,” “languages of image, design, and structure,” and “motion, cycles, and renewal.” Each chapter is preceded by a three-way dialogue amongst the authors. These are wide-ranging discussions, apparently spontaneous and recorded as such, that flow from personal experience and, I would imagine, recognition of the simple utility of supporting the challenge of group authorship by sharing and reflection. The decision to find a place for such dialogues within the text is a bold one. While it all seems a bit earnest and occasionally a trifle precious, the dialogues intensify the human face of this research and are an interesting “set-up” for the analyses that follow. Integrating the findings and interpretations of the group, Diamond’s text makes generous reference to specific contributions and insights of her colleagues. By any standard, Diamond’s writing is clear. Given the cooperative nature of the research and the author’s commitment to multivocality as an interpretive paradigm, the writing is remarkably seamless.

There is a passion in this work that transcends the consuetudinal heat tremulating through so much recent “cultural studies” analysis. Refreshingly, it is not the product of “hot button” vocabulary, nor is it politically fired. Both the broad definition of and path through the subject as well as the tone of expression suggest that ideas of meaning, cosmology, and spirituality as uncovered in this study are galvanized by personal engagement. This is impeccable scholarship that is strengthened and never compromised by its underlying personal, even poetic dimension.

The critical research paradigm is the view of the Native instrument as text. With the forthcoming second volume dedicated to documentation and systematic description the enquiry here is directed at establishing what such a text can mean. The comprehensivity and depth of knowledge of Native theoreticians and philosophers working with the researchers and the preparedness of both parties to cast the net wide have yielded an array of powerful, subtle questions... How are musical instruments integrated within First Nations metaphors accounting for meaning, purpose, and structure? What are the modalities of representation in the sound and structure of

instruments for such metaphors? What are the networks of relation linking the instrument to the natural environment, the natural environment to design, to sound, the sound to language, language to name, materials, social and symbolic function? How is all the foregoing linked to unbounded matrices of identity encompassing nature, spirit, individuals, communities and all living things? How is "attention drawn" by elements of design and embellishment? What is the source of such appeal and to whom does it appeal? What is the source of the instrument's power? Is the instrument sentient in some sense? What lies at the "far end" of such sentience?

There is an important sense in which this is not a book about instruments at all. It is, rather, a book that passes through musical instruments only as a point of entry opening to horizons articulated end to end with the ontological bases through which Native life is lived. Musical instruments constitute a bounded universe but also serve as the needle's eye leading to another, unbounded universe. Diamond *et al.* exercise the utmost sensitivity in their understanding of what can and what cannot be "known." The authors' intense response to their own findings and conclusions will inevitably be understood as advocacy—not in any sense a bad thing. Many non-Native readers will have no hesitation in contemplating with envy a world fixed in spirituality rather than rationality, nature rather than technology, choice rather than imperative, complementarity rather than opposition, multivocality rather than monolithicity. But "same/different" anti-parallels remain compelling for non-Natives—even those who have well assimilated Diamond's point that sameness and difference are not concepts with clear parallels in certain Native languages and thought systems. Interesting questions arise in this connection, such as Diamond's point that the euro-centric notion of history as sequential is "different" from the Native view and may not be appropriate for Natives, who are more likely to understand history in terms of fundamental First Nations metaphors such as circularity, turning, and renewal. Nevertheless, the authors refer to a "sequential pattern of existence" in Native life with reference to the uniqueness of individual ceremonies and instruments (p.172). An interesting question arises, then, as to why a civilization identified as having a "sequential pattern of existence" might not also understand its history as sequential. Wouldn't a culture so successful in avoiding doctrinal rigidities, so able to creatively adapt elements of non-Native culture (instruments made of Pepsi cans and plastic drain pipes e.g.) find a sequential view of history affirming in some sense if not entirely complete for their purposes? In fact, wouldn't sequentiality of patterns of existence and sequentiality of history serve as an example of the notion of the "twinness of things," a particularly powerful concept explored in the fourth chapter of the book?

This is a work for scholars in Native Studies and ethnomusicology. It will also be of value to advanced students with solid grounding in Native culture and cultural theory. No musical expertise is assumed or required. Together with its forthcoming companion disk, *Visions of Sound*, will establish a new standard in both intellectual rigour and creative treatment of the subject matter.

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Ellis, C. Douglas: *âtalôhkâna nêsta tipâcimôwina. Cree Legends and Narratives from the West Coast of James Bay*. Told by Simeon Scott *et al.*, text and translation edited and with a glossary by C. Douglas Ellis. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press (Publications of the Algonquian Text Society 4), 1995, ISBN 0-88755-159-9 cloth CDN\$ 75.00. Set of 6 audio cassette tapes sold separately: ISBN 0-88755-163-7 CDN\$ 65.00.

In many respects this collection of Cree texts, edited by C. Douglas Ellis, is a landmark in Algonquian Studies. It is the first collection of texts in the Moose Cree and East Swampy Cree dialects to be published. Moreover the collection is based on the earliest tape-recordings of Cree texts. Earlier collections were based on dictated texts. Although other text collections based on tape recordings have been published, those recordings were all made later than 1970, whereas the texts in Ellis's book were all recorded between 1955 and 1965, at least thirty to forty years before publication. Also, it is the first collection of texts in which not only monologues, but also transcripts of conversations are presented—obviously something which only became possible with the advent of sound recording equipment.

The book contains 68 texts or text fragments, and in the tradition of the series *Publications of the Algonquian Text Society*, the Cree texts and their English translations are presented on facing pages. There is a Cree-English glossary of all stems on pp. 445-554. A separate list of dependent stems (body parts and kinship, terms) and medial and final suffixes (classifiers, instrumentals, incorporated nouns) appears on pages 440-445. Discussion of editorial conventions (pp.371-389) and cultural and linguistic notes (pp.391-434) are included. The 23 page introduction gives information on