

BOOK REVIEWS

Benn, Carl: *The Iroquois in the War of 1812*. Toronto: University Press, 1998, ISBN 0-8020-8145-2 Paper CDN \$19.95.

In his introductory comments, Carl Benn gives his reasons for writing this book:

The war of 1812 was a crucial event in Iroquois history... The Six Nations still possessed enough power to make a meaningful impact on the course of the war. Thus the lack of scholarly attention has left an important gap in the literature of both the Iroquois and the War of 1812. My objective is to help close this gap by presenting the Iroquois story between 1812 and 1815, based on an analysis of military, political, diplomatic, social and material cultural sources.

The reader does not advance far into the book without becoming aware that Benn, curator of Military History for Heritage Toronto, has made an admirable use of primary sources. The depth of detail offered in his end-notes and bibliography not only confirms his own level of scholarship but also provides a wealth of material to any who wish to pursue further studies in the area.

A reader who expects Benn to launch immediately into an account of the war might be disappointed. The book is divided into two themes, and it is the second which deals primarily with the direct involvement of the Iroquois in the fighting. Elsewhere the author uses his primary sources to bring to sparkling life the many characters involved, both Native and non-Native. His accomplishment is especially noteworthy in light of the several problems he mentions in his introduction: that the records which have been preserved are always transcribed by non-Native observers of Native council meetings and as such are open to debatable accuracy; that the paternalistic outlook of non-Native recorders silenced the voices of female tribal leaders in comparison to those of their male counterparts, even though women played major roles in Iroquois politics; that much of the council proceedings must have been omitted since the notes are often far too brief to be realistically accurate; and that the recorders frequently admitted that they made changes to the "minutes" if they felt it was advantageous to the European point of view.

While Benn admirably recreates the actions and motives of the Iroquois in the war of 1812 despite these difficulties (and his narrative of the war fully lives up to the expectations that he outlines in his introduction), this reviewer found the first chapters of the book to be the most enlightening. Benn has obviously been influenced by the writings of contemporary historians who have studied the culture of Native North Americans, their relationship with Europeans during the colonial period, and their tactics to maintain an independent identity in the face of White expansion. In his footnotes and bibliography, he mentions persons such as Richard White, who studied the Native society of the Ohio Valley; Daniel Richter who did the same for the Iroquois of upper New York State; Colin Calloway who analyzed Native communities during the Revolutionary Wars; and Olive Dickason who looked at early Canadian history through Native eyes: all whom have pioneered studies of the characteristics and survival of early American Native culture and society. Focusing on the Iroquois of what is now southern Ontario and northern-western New York, Benn studies aspects of Native life previously accentuated by these authors: the influence of the Iroquoian Great Law; the roles played by Iroquoian women; the changing face of the Native communities and the place of the individual within his or her community; the influence of oratory and consensus on decision making; divisions within Iroquoian communities arising from their geographic location in either colonial Upper Canada or New York; tensions between traditional and more modernized methods of Native leadership, and the importance to Native cultural survival of customs such as adoption, mourning wars, gift-giving and ceremonies. The chapter on Native and European methods of warfare is especially interesting as Benn combines his interests as a historian of both European and Aboriginal military techniques. It is this broad scope of Benn's book, studying the largely overlooked aspect of the Iroquoian contribution to the British victory over the Americans by 1815, which supports the claim that it

will appeal to general readers in both Canada and the United States and will have relevance for students and scholars of military, colonial and First Nations history.

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Bucko, Raymond: *The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge: History and Contemporary Practice*. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press 1998, ISBN 0-8032-1270 US \$40.00.

Raymond Bucko's *The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge: History and Contemporary Practice* is a thorough and detailed account of one of the seven sacred rites of the Lakota. In this book the Lakota sweat lodge is finally granted the attention it deserves. Raymond Bucko's scholarly efforts makes a valuable contribution to an anthropology where serious revision of old texts and ethnographic accounts is long overdue. Especially key in Bucko's critical research is indeed the chapter dedicated to the sweat lodge tradition's continuity and change. Here he looks into the responsibility of ethnographic writing in shaping Indigenous peoples' historical and cultural memory.

In this book, Bucko's attentive reflexivity, quite possibly absorbed during his anthropological training and his interaction with the Lakota as a Catholic priest, makes apparent the contradictions and the mediations that ritual and ceremonial life have undergone during decades of religious prohibitionism, assimilation policies, governmental pressure, and cultural adaptations.

The research points out the cultural negotiations that individuals express in their motivations to perform the ritual in particular fashions. Bucko's insight into the creativity of human cultural variation is most sensitive and aware. The ritual of the sweat lodge emerges from his analysis as a vital part of Lakota culture and despite the changes and the traumatic past, crucial to keeping the community united. The ritual inculcates a sense of belonging and transmits individually customised ideas of tradition.

The book is divided into seven chapters that range from early ethno-historical accounts, to contemporary Indigenous explanations and understanding of the ceremony. Part of the book is dedicated to personal experiences, and the rest to symbolic interpretation, meaning and liturgy. Raymond Bucko's blend of philosophy, theology, and anthropology of religion, make *The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge* an extremely valuable contribution to interdisciplinary research on the complex role of ritual activity in the definition of social processes and cultural practice.

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Chute, Janet E.: *The Legacy of Shingwaukonse: A Century of Native Leadership*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998, ISBN 0-8020-4273-2 Cloth CDN \$60.00; 0-8020-8108-8 Paper CDN \$24.95.

Drawing extensively on historical documents, ethnological literature, and oral tradition, Janet E. Chute undertakes a thorough investigation of Ojibwa leadership and popular decision making in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In this comprehensive study Chute focuses on Shingwaukonse (also known as Little Pine) and subsequent leaders of the Garden River Ojibwa. Renowned in modern Ojibwa traditions as an almost superhuman leader and powerful spiritualist, Shingwaukonse worked consistently towards three goals for the Grand River band: first, to make connections with the expanding Upper Canadian government; second, to "preserve an environment in which Native cultural values and organizational structures could survive;" (p.3) and third, to develop band government sufficiently to allow it to assume control of community resources. To these ends, Shingwaukonse solicited the opinions, knowledge, and support of sympathetic entrepreneurs, missionaries, and where possible, government officials. Rather than violently resisting the threats which settlement and resource development posed to Ojibwa autonomy and Aboriginal rights, Shingwaukonse and his successors developed creative strategies for integrating the Ojibwa within the growing Canadian state.

Chute attempts to set aside interpretations of Ojibwa leadership which stress self-interest and competition among individuals. Inspired by Mary Black-Rogers' work on Ojibwa "power control", she develops a complex understanding of Indigenous leadership, in which traditional conceptions of power and reciprocity between group and leader figure prominently. According to the author, individuals' power derived from their access to spiritual beings and their ability to redress the cosmological imbalances the Ojibwa believed were at the root of group misfortune. Although this power could be used malevolently (as in witchcraft), or for personal gain, support from the Band depended on the leader's working for group autonomy. Self-interested behaviour was clearly an anomaly. While Ojibwa notions of leadership originated in an abstract understanding of spiritual power, the measure of a leader was very practical: the ability to foster Band stability and provide material resources necessary for the sustenance of the group. With her focus on a culturally-specific form of leadership, Chute presents a sophisticated, nuanced conception of Native agency—a controversial topic in recent years.

She describes in detail the history of relations between the Garden River Ojibwa, business interests and the colonial government: a history of

repeated attempts to win recognition of Aboriginal rights to land and resources from a reticent government and self-interested resource developers. Although initially limited in nature, Native successes eventually included the Robinson treaties, continued political and economic autonomy, and in the 20th century, increasing governmental recognition of the Band's capacity for organized resource exploitation. General readers may find Chute's brief discussions of ethnographic theory and literature somewhat inaccessible. But the book's synthesis of diverse sources of evidence, and the intriguing narration of events should more than compensate, making this a worthwhile and informative read.

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Cruikshank, Julie: *The Social Life of Stories: Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory*. Vancouver, UBC Press, 1998, ISBN 0-7748-0648-6 Cloth CDN \$75.00.

This book is about how people in the southern Yukon use stories, especially stories of the past, to talk about the present in such a way that issues of identity and belonging, very often the most divisive and corrosive aspects of social life, are smoothed over. Common ground emerges in the stories not only to accommodate individual strategies of social positioning and definition of self, but also to accommodate shared desires to communicate, to belong and to differ. Such stories, as Cruikshank points out, are not merely the expression of an underlying cultural dynamic but also a means of creating such underlying dimensions (p.2). The contemporary anthropological enterprise, says Cruikshank, differs substantially from history or other social sciences that are sometimes said to have influenced the discipline: anthropologists now look at history as a thought field that uses ideologically-sanctioned notions of the past to encapsulate or legitimate particular dimensions of present relationships. In this sense, Cruikshank's is a Durkheimian position: the sacred is not Sacred because it somehow addresses the transcendental, and history is not History because the past shapes the present. Instead, both are aspects of the social self in the present (arguably, the sacred looks to the future and the historical looks to the past).

Cruikshank is quick to point out in the first chapter that the presence of Whites at certain junctures in southern Yukon Native history (for example, the Klondike gold rush, and another fifty years later during the construction of the Alaska highway) not only may have induced negative reactions among Native peoples. These events also furnished people with elements that became ironic in contemporary storytelling as people came to use these story elements in innovative ways in order to deal with current crises. In other words, "tradition" (and Cruikshank is in general careful to avoid this word), "traditional knowledge" and "traditional stories" are not recounted and valued in themselves merely because the past in some way induces psychological security by providing an identity blanket under which people hide. The past, suggests Cruikshank and her informants, is alive within the stories of today in order to express continuity with a future that must remain ineluctable. Issues of a notion of time and narration are implied here, although Cruikshank's comments are thoughtfully suggestive rather than theoretically programmatic. As she points out in the epilogue, theory can open new horizons to enquiry but also constrain vision and deafen us to other voices. This book is a fine example of threading a fine line that establishes an equilibrium between these tendencies.

Her arguments are a major contribution to anthropological discourse about Native peoples and provide an innovative outlook that finally puts paid to the naïve defence of the role of tradition in First Nations' cultures that sometimes hides a paternalistic tone while reproducing the innate hierarchy by reifying the narratives of others and subjectivising their authors: Natives are crippled and bereft when cut off from "tradition" and so must be protected from drastic change. The subtexts here are subtle and various: Whites, however, thrive in change; Native cultures change little, European cultures continue to evolve; any move by a Native towards a Western model of action or thought weakens and threatens the authenticity of Native cultures. Cruikshank builds on the subtle approach to localised knowledge she developed in her previous contributions (especially *Life Lived Like a Story*, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1990): she very quietly puts forth a major theoretical (and human) point with a minimum of academic fanfare using limited but apposite academic references (Bourdieu figures prominently) and sensitive ethnographic details.

When attempting to give voice to others, anthropologists must confront the narratological quality of the transcriptions. Sometimes accused of transforming Native narrative styles into White middle class English as a means of cultural appropriation, anthropologists in the past had the excuse that they were engaged in a necessary act of translation if any meaning was to emerge for their non-Native audiences. It has become increasingly clear,

however, that anthropologists often fell into the trap of treating their translations as canonical texts when each was in fact one of the many possible versions. By ignoring the audience's interpretation the transcriber often ignored the speaker's intentionality. As more White researchers work in Native communities where English is commonly spoken and as more members of First Nations become familiar with anthropological canons, anthropologists must become increasingly aware of the politics of the narrative and rhetorical strategies they will use in transcribing their informants' stories. Based on the long Native tradition of multilingualism in the region, Cruikshank concludes that English is just another Native language and opts (p.16) to be faithful to the quality of English spoken by her storytellers even if it occasionally appears non-grammatical and formally uneducated. As she points out, many older storytellers speak in English, not a testimony to the dominance of English but as a *de facto* recognition that English is one of the languages of the future among the First Nations of the southern Yukon, and if stories of the past are to be relevant to the future, then the storytellers will use English with a First Nations voice. While not the only way of granting legitimacy to informants' voices (see, for example, Dominique Legros' *Tommy McGinty's Northern Tutchone Story of Crow*, Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilisation, 1999, esp. pp.210-215), the texts here are certainly cast in a viable and readable narrative form and are testimony to Cruikshank's commitment to her Yukon teachers. Cruikshank's presentation is based on her belief the meaning is context-sensitive at the most basic level: these Elder storytellers are teachers, and they are trying to engage a younger audience whose multilingual skills may not include a full or even partial knowledge of their grandparent's languages. Her work, which contextualises the tales for what must be a largely context-insensitive public (mostly other anthropologists not familiar with the southern Yukon), is not merely an academic comment on the stories but part of the ongoing story-telling process. Cruikshank is careful not to overstep the bounds of authority established by her teachers. Many of her comments are not about the tales themselves but about academic reactions to similar tales, which is of course a way to respect the tales and her audience's competencies at the same time.

Cruikshank calls attention to the different content and sensibilities of the historical dimension of southern Yukon lives. Southern Yukon people view history as the preparation of the world for human beings. History is not about objective facts or the unfolding of impersonal forces but concerned with human relationships as explored in stories. Stories, like myth, are about events that imply human agency (p.47): they are not "about" humans any more than they are about natural events. Both nature and culture are

components but not the subject of the truths being explored in the stories. Thus, in the third chapter ("Yukon Arcadia", dealing with the White appropriation of Native ecological knowledge) Cruikshank emphatically refutes the manipulation of local knowledge by those who would attribute primeval, atavistic, and more moral quality to it as being another example of ideological appropriation by the West, whether this be in the guise of contemporary clarion calls to respect the reified (mother) earth or attempts to force local knowledge into more conventional categories of folk, tradition, and so on. Cruikshank makes a valuable point when she argues that Native knowledge of the environment cannot be described by reducing it to measurable categories separated from human agency without risking serious consequences for White understanding and for Native use—any such attempt by bureaucrats and scientists disembodies meaning from the context that constituted it and the praxis that gives it form. The result is to mask the reality that Natives are usually in a subordinate position vis-a-vis central governments and their agencies despite some attempts to give them a voice. The problem is ontological: Yukon knowledge is composed of words and thoughts put into their own enabling categories. Take the words and leave the context out and one can easily and mistakenly reduce Native knowledge about the environment to New Age porridge.

But if our analytical and academic objects of knowledge have a hidden agenda of control, as Foucault and Bourdieu would have it, so do southern Yukon categories. There are many references in the book to people needing to establish their social legitimacy vis-a-vis rival claimants before their stories can be told, and hints (especially in the last chapter, dealing with the Yukon International Storytelling Festival) that such disputes can actualise competing claims between Nations as land rights legislation approaches finalisation. I would suggest that if there is one weakness in this book it is Cruikshank's reluctance to explicate what are obviously issues of hierarchy and power in southern Yukon societies. The right to tell stories in the southern Yukon is explicitly linked to moiety membership but there would seem to be more dimensions involved. Indeed, it would be surprising if there were not: these aspects involve political status, gender-specific social spaces, and perhaps even "ethnic" or tribal affiliation. For example, I would argue that at least a few northern British Columbian neighbours of the southern Yukon people believe in the existence of objective and impersonal forces in the universe, and some of that knowledge is gender specific. Because this knowledge describes impersonal forces, the male view of history as a thought category in their region can sometimes resemble more conventional White views in form if not in content (life is a struggle for control), while women have a very different outlook that seems to resemble

that of southern Yukon women (though, admittedly, as a man my first-hand knowledge of these women's views is very limited). Although Cruikshank is generally very careful not to over-interpret the stories by using "White" anthropological categories, I think that local issues of power are one dimension to the problem that could have been treated in a more explicit fashion without necessarily shifting the weight of the authorship from the Elders' camp to Cruikshank's.

As an example, I can cite Cruikshank's treatment (in Chapter Four) of gold rush stories, in particular, of Native accounts of the discovery of Klondike gold and the murder of a White prospector as contrasted with "official" accounts. Drawing on Harold Innis's well-known ideas of intellectual imperialism of centres of power at the expense of the margins they create through economics, Cruikshank argues that there is a contrast in the socialised world view of the Natives and the individualised world view of the prospectors and of various government agents. Here she seems to attribute blanket motivations to everyone: the miners' "prototype was Horatio Alger" (p.92), extolling "individualism and plucky self-reliance", while the Native mistakenly placed all the newcomers into the same "clan" and exacted revenge in the traditional manner (responsibility for actions is not individual but shared among clan members, so vengeance can be exacted against any member of the offending clan) for an incident in which some Natives apparently thought that the arsenic (used by the White prospectors for the refining of gold) that they found or were given was baking powder.

First, it is doubtful that all the miners were inspired by Horatio Alger. Some were probably illiterate and most uneducated. Second, not all Natives would have placed all Whites into the same "clan", and if they did so it is as much evidence of the insensitivity to White categories as the later trial and execution of the shooters is evidence of White insensitivity to Native ideas of balance between moieties and a view of the individual rooted in a social context rather than in an abstract ontology. My point is that while Cruikshank uses metaphors here to convey a suggestive message that people often fall victim to the rhetorics of their cultures of origin, by using these images of Horatio Alger and "traditional" social organisation, she is guilty of the same decontextualisation of knowledge as she denounces in the rest of the book. The fact seems to be that four young men, the oldest being perhaps only twenty, were ignorant of White social organisation and possibly of some aspects of their own cultural processes. Such revenge killings were probably sanctioned by clan Elders, not sixteen and seventeen year olds, and were probably a last resort after negotiations with the offending clan failed. The judicial accounts of the Natives' stories cited by Cruikshank made no mention of attempted negotiations, only that the four

Natives and their two victims got along for a few days before the shooting. In fact, Legros describes [*ibid.*:200] an elaborate four-day peace ceremony following a tragic accident in 1916 involving members from two clans. These events could be an example of the local dynamics of power becoming unhinged for any number of reasons: for example, people moved about more as a result of the deadly influenza epidemic inadvertently introduced by the arriving Whites and so there was no opportunity to consult other clan members; or too many Elders had died and the young men were left bereft of guidance; or the fact that one of the parties was White and not Native could have sparked greater hostility than if the same incident had involved two Natives; or perhaps the arsenic was blamed for the deaths from the influenza epidemic. Stories told by women, however, do not mention or hint at the possibility of revenge. But Cruikshank has mentioned many times that the point of the stories is integration, not division. Surely it is possible that these particular stories leave out or even change certain issues in order to accomplish their aims. As Cruikshank states when referring to the judicial process, "facts get established by enacting silences" (p.95), which evokes Renan's famous observation that history is more about forgetting than remembering. Could this statement also apply to the Native stories? Cruikshank admits, in Chapter Six (which deals with attempts to reconcile local prophetic traditions and world faiths and belief systems) that men and women probably have very different attitudes to constituting knowledge: men value knowledge constituted in praxis, while women's knowledge and legitimacy claims derive from direct experience and from oral histories largely passed on by other women (p.136). Given such a fundamental difference, which is understood by the fact that women's experiences are generally different from men's, I think it is unfortunate that this issue emerges more clearly towards the end of the book rather than at the beginning.

Although no one today would dispute Cruikshank's assertions that meaning derives from and is conditioned by context, which includes the intended audience for the message, I would say it is more likely that in southern Yukon stories it is a meaning that emerges from a particular context in which tales are told and from which knowledge is constituted at *that* moment. Other contexts, same stories, different meanings. Other storytellers, same stories, different meanings.

Despite this criticism, I think that *The Social Life of Stories* is an indispensable book for anyone concerned with the survival of Indigenous cultures, with the meaning of tradition and storytelling, and with ontologies and definitions of the social self. Based on solid, long-term research, it is a well-written, theoretical challenge to many prevailing notions of tradition and

deserves a wide audience of specialists from many fields and not just anthropology. I hope that Cruikshank will be appreciated as a leading scholar who has helped transform anthropological and popular views of tradition as a trash can full of odds and ends for which scholars fail to identify a practical use or reify into a paralysing weight whose hegemonic chokehold on the individual must be resisted. This book successfully challenges the artificial division between ideas and action that has crippled anthropology for over a century.

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Jonaitis, Aldona (Editor): *Looking North: Art from the University of Alaska Museum*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press for the University of Alaska Museum, 1998, ISBN 0-295-97694-2 Paper CDN \$52.95.

In the Prologue to his magical memoir, *The Way to Rainy Mountain* (1969), N. Scott Momaday writes that the migration of his Kiowa ancestors to the southern Plains was an expression of the wonder and delight in human spirit. Such wonder and delight permeates publication of Alaskan art. Both a sampler and celebration of the University of Alaska Museum's extensive collection of archaeological, ethnographic and fine arts holdings, the book examines a wide range of aesthetic responses to a harsh and majestic environment over a three thousand year period. With more than one hundred images reproduced in colour, the book is a visual feast. From the ancient ivory carving of the "Okvik Madonna" (p.51), to the early 20th century paintings of Mt. McKinley by Sydney Laurence (pp.64, 184), to Charles Janda's elegant black and white photographs of Glacier Bay (p.52), the objects are compelling and evocative. Each, in its own way, has helped shape the current image and understanding of the Alaskan experience, for both residents and non-residents alike.

The breadth of the museum's collection as well as the book's philosophical thrust are both hinted at on the dustjacket. The dominant image, Myron Wright's stunningly beautiful photograph of Lake George bathing in blue midwinter light, captures perfectly the solitary grandeur of the land-

scape that inspires much of the art. Collaged across the bottom of the dustjacket, in the manner of a patchwork quilt, are several smaller images of artworks in the book. They play off each other in a rich diversity of styles and media: an inlaid silver figurine seems to spring from a weathered Inupiaq mask, a Robert Bateman polar bear inspects a painted Tlingit totem pole, a guitar-playing Eskimo girl serenades a fur-clad wooden doll, a woven Chilkat blanket anchors an engraved ivory tusk and an acrylic forest scene, and so on. The juxtapositions are deliberate, and reflect the museum's commitment to the non-hierarchical tenets of the New Art History which defines "art" more broadly and more inclusively than in the past. All the works in this book are given equal aesthetic attention, regardless of media or cultural pedigree. One need look no further than Barry McWayne's sumptuous photographs of Aleut and Tlingit basketry for proof of this.

In her introductory essay, editor Aldona Jonaitis, director of the University of Alaska Museum, affirms her belief in a more expansive understanding of art history as well as her commitment to a more inclusive practice of museology. The latter is evident in the structure and content of the book's engaging text. Replacing the customary linear, institutional interpretations of objects and images is a running conversation among several informed individuals who bring a range of personal insights and professional perspectives to the art. This is especially valuable for demonstrating how readers and viewers might make connections between the artworks and their own lived experiences. The need to establish such connections is voiced by several of the participants. Their commentaries are complemented by a set of captions that, along with the requisite technical data, often include intriguing stories and anecdotes. These too help situate the artworks in the lives of real people.

On several occasions readers are encouraged to take note of the humour in the art. It is frequently an ironic humour contrasting historic and contemporary symbols. Examples include Brian Allen's photograph, "Pizza Hut" (p.29), depicting a dog team rushing past a Pizza Hut restaurant, and Charles Mason's "American Gothic, 1985" (p.134) a wry portrait of an elderly tourist couple standing outside their satellite-dish equipped motor-home. A darker humour can be found in Ronald Senungetuk's carved and painted panel, "Two Spirits" (p.107), with its double-edged title and its subtle incorporation of Budweiser beer cans into the image of a masked figure. Created in response to "A People in Peril," a 1988 series of newspaper articles chronicling the many tragic problems afflicting Alaskan Native communities, it is arguably the most disquieting image in the book, suggesting the terrible price paid by Alaska's Native population for sharing with

newcomers this land of wonder and delight. This message, however, is not considered a topic to dwell on here.

This is my only real criticism of the book. The contemporary socio-aesthetic landscape seems a little *too* wonderful, a little *too* delightful. A little balance is needed. There are no gritty scenes of social reality, no distressing images of inter-cultural conflict fuelled by rage or indignation. There is little that could be construed as political, from either Native or non-Native creators. At a time when Aboriginal artists in Canada and other parts of the United States are creating some truly memorable and provocative works, it is puzzling that such expression is all but absent from this book, and one assumes, from the museum's art collection as well. If Native peoples perceive any downside to urban settlement, the influx of southern tourism or being Native in Alaska today, it appears not to be the stuff of good art. Or at least art worth collecting by the University of Alaska Museum. And that's unfortunate, for such art documents and validates contemporary Native Alaska experience. More important, it provides a valuable insider's view.

It's hard to explain the absence from this book of the noted Inupiaq artist Susie Bevins Qimmiqsak, except that her work might be considered too critical or too political. After all, she was the galvanizing force behind the hard-hitting exhibition, "Artists Respond: A People in Peril," that featured Senungetuk's piece, "Two Spirits" (Stahlecker, 1988). In the present context, this piece appears in the chapter, "Images of Natives," yet scarcely any of the images are work of contemporary Alaskan Native artists. One is left to ponder what such images might look like, and how much wonder and delight they might reflect.

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MacDonald, John, *The Arctic Sky: Inuit Astronomy, Star Lore, and Legend*. Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum and Iqaluit; Northwest Territories: Nunavut Research Institute, 1998, ISBN 0-8885-4427-8 Paper CDN \$29.95.

As one may expect from a Royal Ontario Museum publication, this is a beautiful book laced with drawings and photographs, several in full color. But it is much more than a pleasing item to be placed on a coffee table to be admired. It is a treasure trove of information.

MacDonald states, in the Preface, that his goal originally was to learn more about the perception of stars in his adopted home of Igloolik. Thinking he would match Inuit star names with European ones, he was led by his consultants instead into constellations, asterisms, individual stars, their usages and functions in the past as well as today, and the narratives that pertained to people's perceptions of the celestial vault in addition to how the sky was used, along with earth features, for land and sea navigational purposes. To the delight of the reader, he also did his scholarly homework by comparing and contrasting Igloolik information to that of previous researchers who also worked with Arctic people. Thus, the book is truly a compendium of contemporary and previous Inuit star lore, whether from published literature or MacDonald's own fieldwork. As such, it is invaluable for any whose interests encompass Native American astronomy, anthropology, or folklore. To anticipate my conclusion, if you don't already own the book, buy it.

The Introduction clearly lays out the methodology used for gaining the information presented, choices concerning validity and authenticity and presentation of data, and rationale for including non-Igloolik data. I would have liked to have seen a statement concerning the choices of visual material (e.g., carvings) and why there is seldom a textual statement relating to the visual presentations. However, this is quite a minor point that does not at all detract from the textual information.

The book proper begins with Chapter 1, The North Sky. 65° N latitude is usually considered the far north. It is difficult to those of us who live in the more temperate zones to conceptualize the differences in star patterns and movement at the Equator or within the Arctic Circle. Igloolik lies at 69° N, making further demands upon our mental visualization. MacDonald helps us by presenting, in general, the appearance of the sun, moon, and thirty-three individual stars with additional constellations and one nebula that are visible from Igloolik. He describes the appearance of celestial objects at various times of the year. And he deals in a general way with the

importance of myths, legends, and other narratives in informing people of how celestial phenomena came to be and are to be used.

The Universe, Chapter 2, centers a reader on the Earth, and considers Inuit perceptions and understandings of how Earth came to be. There is further discussion of the sky itself and of what MacDonald calls The Environment—*Sila* or *Silarjuaq*. Through the discussion of *Sila* (pp.35-37), one learns that the environment includes weather, rainbows, the *Aurora Borealis*, and other natural phenomena. In addition, there are brief discussions of shamans and their complex relationships to earth and sky.

Chapter 3, Stars, Constellations, and Planets, begins with the core of the book. Pages 40-43 contain 360° views of the sky at Igloolik at various times during the winter solstice from the perspective of a Native person, on the left side pages, and the same views with Native-recognized and named asterisms, constellations, and individual stars indicated on the right side pages. This technique is particularly effective in giving one with no experience in the far north a feeling for movement and what is deemed essential to the people of Igloolik. There then follows what I found to be the most useful of all in the book: drawings of the night sky showing an individual star, asterism, or constellation with its Igloolik name; next there is text that includes alternative names (from various places in the Arctic collected by different people in several time periods), the identification of the phenomenon in European terms, related narratives, and the similarities and differences among the reports of various of his consultants. While it is not necessarily easy reading or writing that flows with elegant style, the sheer amount of information presented is marvellous. There are 18 different representations in this section, followed by a brief section on the planets before moving to Chapter 4.

Sun, Moon, and Eclipses are the concern of Chapter 4. This section, as might be expected, covers the sun, its disappearance for a time, and its return, as well as the phases of the moon and narratives about each. The relationship of string figures and string games to these celestial phenomena is also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 5 deals with The Atmosphere, but this includes meteors and shooting-stars as well as atmospheric conditions, including the *Aurora*, sun dogs, sun spots, and rainbows. As is usual for MacDonald, he includes wherever possible data from previous investigators among other Inuit people alongside his own findings.

Navigation, the subject of Chapter 6, is the chapter that most appealed to my students in a course on Native American ethnoastronomy. They were fascinated with the information in this chapter, since it united both earth and sky and demonstrated the vast knowledge Inuit have of their environment

and the close observational skills necessary to successful navigation in an area most non-Inuit think is almost devoid of "landmarks," or other markers of position, direction, speed, and duration of travel. Again, in this chapter, the importance of both sun and stars is emphasized. The virtual uselessness of Polaris as a guide (because of its height in the sky and stillness) also struck my students, since in their latitude Polaris is thought of as an essential marker and organizer of other information. Currents, snowdrifts, and wind all bear on Igloolik navigation and were equally fascinating to my students.

Chapter 7, Time, was poignant for me as it discussed the loss of knowledge, as Igloolik people rely more and more on radios, calendars, snowmobiles, and other EuroAmerican items to construct their understandings of their world. It is the old problem of traditional, time-tested, practices giving way to the quick-fix of Western cultural modes. No one wants Igloolik, or other Native people, to be caught in a time warp of unchangingness; yet, it seems sad that so much alternative knowledge is simply disappearing from lack of use, as the Western models and modes of understanding take precedence. The Western modes are discussed most completely in sub-sections called "The New Time," "Calendars," and "Clocks."

Of interest to folklorists and other who find narratives captivating, Igloolik Legends form the subject matter of Chapter 8. While some of these narratives seem to recall past times, others combine Christian and Western elements on an older base.

Yet the book is not without its flaws. I do not understand the placement of Chapter 9 (Inuktitut Transcriptions) and Chapter 10 (Selected Legends). It seems to me that Chapter 10 should have been included in Chapter 8, while Chapter 9 should have been an Appendix. Further, the book simply ends with no concluding chapter or summary. There is an extensive Notes section, but these need to be read in association with the related pages for the Notes often contain important information. These, however, are minor quibbles.

While I am enthusiastic about the book and its contents, I do have a small bone to pick with the graphic designer(s). Too often text is overlain on visual material, making both difficult to assay. For example, page 42 has a "Stars and Constellations" table listing 18 items with the Igloolik name, the European counterpart, and the principal star(s). This is an important table. However, it is overlain onto what appears to be a Native drawing of the sky, the sea, and someone's village. I really would have liked to see the drawing better and know who did it and what Native exegesis had been brought to bear on it. Similarly, charts on pages 196-198 are overlain on

drawings, both of which—charts and drawings—are obscured by the presence of the other.

Finally, as a non-Igloolik speaker, I would have appreciated either a guide to orthography or a phonetic equivalent guide for pronunciation .

But my complaints are few and are far outweighed by the value of the book as a whole. I learned a great deal from the book: about perceptions of the sky of those above 65° N latitude; about the ways in which stars and snow drifts or ice ridges combine for navigational purposes in the minds of savvy readers of the natural universe; of the enabling narratives; of comparative astronomies; and even of Inuit art. MacDonald has done all of us a favor and I can't imagine a proper Native library, whether in one's home or favorite institution, without a copy of this elegant and informative book.

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Ray, Arthur J.: *Indians in the Fur Trade: Their Role as Trappers, Hunters, and Middlemen in the Lands Southwest of Hudson Bay, 1660-1870*, (with a new introduction). Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998. ISBN-0-8020-7980-6 Paper CDN \$21.95; Cloth 0-8020-41337 CDN \$50.00.

Native Studies came into its own in the late 20th century with the development of a body of literature dealing with the historical, archaeological, anthropological, sociological, economic and geographic dimensions of Native Canadian lifeways. These years have witnessed the infamous White Paper on Indian affairs, the initiation of modern-day land claims negotiations, open conflict at Oka and elsewhere, acknowledgement of residential school abuses, and the rekindling of Native identity. The works of Arthur J. Ray have contributed substantially to the foundation on which Native Studies has developed. Whether it be his research on the early contact period (1974, 1975), the utility of archival sources (1976), or the industrial age as it relates to the fur trade (1990), his publications have made a major contribution to our understanding of the evolving roles of Native Canadians as they relate to the fur trade of the Canadian interior.

The 1998 republication of his seminal 1974 book, *Indians in the Fur Trade: Their Role as Trappers, Hunters, and Middlemen in the Lands Southwest of Hudson Bay, 1660-1879* is a welcome addition for those of us involved in Native/Fur Trade Studies. The 1998 volume includes the 1974 publication in its entirety, plus a new 22 page introduction/bibliography which locates the book in the evolving theoretical realm of historical geography.

Ray begins by acknowledging the influence of his graduate supervisor, Andrew H. Clark, who conceived "historical geography as being primarily the study of the geography of change" (p.xii) and David Baerreis, who demonstrated the utility of fur trader's account books as a data source on economic change. In the cultural ecology conceived by Julian Stewart, Fredrik Barth and the Clark-Sauer school of historical-cultural-geography, Ray found primary data which permitted him to document "how Aboriginal people's involvement in the fur trade and their migration to new ecological settings affected their ways of life and material cultures" (p.xiii). Ray suggests that his 1974 publication "diverged from traditional historical and anthropological approaches to the study of North American Native groups in several key respects" (p.xiii). He notes that he abandoned the frontier perspective, focused the research on the Parkland ecotone between the Plains and Subarctic culture areas, and included all Aboriginal nations who had used this region from early contact time through the 19th century.

Ray notes that the issues raised in the original *Indians in the Fur Trade* continue to be explored by many scholars including himself; furthermore, they can be linked to contemporary social issues. His own work with the many account books preserved in the HBCA enabled him to show that "the early fur trade was a complex business... and that Aboriginal participants were adaptable and shrewd clients who encouraged competitive fur buying" (p.xviii). Consequently school room texts have been rewritten to acknowledge the active role of Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history. Population relocation, another theme of the 1974 book, has been clearly demonstrated historically and archaeologically in Western Canada, and is seen as a cause of the social problems at Davis Inlet and Grassy Narrows. Ray notes that since the publication of his book, the social dimension of Native history has emerged as a scholarly concern in the works of Jennifer Brown (1980) and Sylvia Van Kirk (1980) and he predicts that additional research in this vein will be undertaken. Finally, as Ray notes, "Aboriginal claims-oriented research has been an increasingly important catalyst for Native history research" (p.xxiii). Ray himself has undertaken background research for the Gitksan-Wet'suet'en Tribal council in north-central British Columbia.

Indians in the Fur Trade was a catalyst for subsequent research through its cultural ecological perspective, its use of Hudson's Bay Company documents, and its focus on the adaptation of diverse cultural groups to a specific region. The new introduction and selected bibliography in the 1998 edition place the original book within the context of evolving research perspectives and contemporary social issues, and for these reasons it is a welcome addition to the shelves of libraries, large and small.

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