

U.S. currency revaluation on British Columbia. Certainly the efforts of Shearer, Young and Munro have set a protective and excellent setting for these tasks.

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Indian Families of the Northwest Coast: The Impact of Change, by Claudia Lewis. University of Chicago Press, 1970, 220 pp.

My first reaction on receiving Claudia Lewis' book was to cheer. Here at last was a study of a contemporary Salish community to recommend to students and the ever growing public which wants to understand Indians. While the book begins to meet the need for studies of Northwest Coast Indians outside the relatively well covered Kwakiutl area, my second thoughts were less positive.

The book is based upon research conducted for a doctoral dissertation nearly twenty years ago and is already dated. The addition of an epilogue after a return visit in 1968 doesn't succeed in bringing it up to date or in illuminating the changes which have taken place. The epilogue bogs down in anecdotal account. One has, at times, a feeling that publication was delayed too long.

More serious and irritating is the thin fiction of anonymity with which the author attempts to conceal the identity of the community being studied. As details are unveiled, the "Camas" Indians, "... a large band ... on a reserve adjacent to one of the island's small prosperous municipalities, a few miles north of Victoria" become obviously identifiable to anyone with a superficial knowledge of British Columbia's geography and Indian settlements. Not only this, but families and individuals stand forth clearly, to those who know the community. The pseudonyms don't hide anything from those in the know and for students on the other side of the continent pseudonyms are at best irrelevant and likely to confuse. One will search bibliographies in vain for further data on the "Camas" unless, God forbid, that, too, becomes a catalogue heading.

The only justification for the use of this sort of concealment is that it may help the individuals described maintain a fiction of anonymity — to say to themselves that the readers will never know with certainty who is being talked about. But given the universal interest humans have in gossip — especially in small communities — it seems to me quite unlikely that those directly concerned will allow, let alone support, such anonymity

when reading the book. In my view, no secrets would be revealed and much confusion averted had we been told that the book was about the Cowichans.

The title of the book is also misleading for it deals exclusively with one band of Coast Salish people and not with the whole Northwest Coast culture area, and it isn't simply a study of family life. Its much closer to being a rather conventional community study, with chapters on the cultural and historical background, an overview of the physical setting, the local economy, and so on. In picturing the life of the "Camas" special attention is indeed given to family structure, childrearing and the constitution of households, but this is necessary in any culture where so much of the activity is hung on the framework of kinship. One cannot write about Salish culture without writing about family life. Claudia Lewis does give us a view of this but it isn't a full study of kinship and family.

On the other hand she doesn't describe the full round of modern Salish life either. Her fieldwork was done during summer months when children are out of school and seasonal employment, worker and family mobility at their peaks. She wasn't able to observe life during the winter when a markedly different set of institutions and seasonal activities present a different "community." She can only offer us tantalizing allusions to the winter spirit-dancing and feasting and we end up with a summer view of the community.

It's also, properly, a woman's view. We are told vividly what people look like, how they dress, what the inside and outside of houses are like. The results of her unstructured, open-ended interviews allow us to sit in on conversations with women — we hear some of their hopes, what they think of their menfolk, children and neighbours. We hear what Claudia Lewis was allowed to hear — and therein lies another limitation of the work. The author was sympathetic and hard working but she never had the chance to get behind the "front" which the Indians presented. She sees and writes of things in her own terms, not the Indians'. This is most evident in the significance which tidiness and cleanliness assume as attributes of three types or stages of households she uses to illustrate the continuum of acculturation. Old fashioned households are dirtier and more untidy than progressive households patterned after the white man's ways. There is truth in this kind of ingenuous illustration. Many whites and Indians conceptualize their differences in something like these terms. But an anthropological study which would assist us in unravelling the complexities and roots of Indian life-styles has got to go more deeply than dirt.

In spite of these negative comments *Indian Families of the Northwest Coast* is easily read and worth reading. Throughout the book the hand and heart of the author are apparent. Her biases are obvious, so too is her humanity. And this has made the difference — she openly shares with us what she saw and heard and what she thinks.

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When Russia was in America, by Mykhaylo Huculak. Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1971. 149 pp. \$6.95.

In 1799 the newly chartered Russian American Company was granted monopoly rights to all Russian territory in North America north of 55° latitude and authorization to extend its control as far south as possible without violating the already established rights of other nations. Under Governor Alexander Baranov, Sitka was established and the Russian flag was planted at Fort Ross in Spanish California. Between the two plantations lay the vast Oregon Country, claimed by both the United States and Great Britain. The vigorous Baranov developed a thriving fur empire the prosperity of which might be measured by the 80,000 sea otters and 1,493,626 fur seals procured between 1797 and 1818. This lucrative trade was threatened by American ships which coasted Russian America, trading directly with the natives. The Russians countered the American encroachment in 1821 by publishing an Imperial ukase which established a *cordon sanitaire* around Russian Alaska for 100 miles from the coastline and reaching as far south as 51° (northern tip of Vancouver Island). The object was to forbid American traders the approaches to the much-prized Russian peltry areas.

Mr. Huculak's detailed research is chiefly concerned with the negotiations which followed the protests of both Great Britain and the United States. As joint occupants of the Oregon Country they vigorously disputed both the Russian territorial claims and the commercial and maritime restrictions of the ukase, but it was abundantly clear to all disputants that no party was in a bellicose mood and that flexibility of approach would be exercised by the two great powers, who had bigger fish to fry in the European theater, and by the new republic, which was busy consolidating an empire in Louisiana.

The amicable working out of an acceptable solution was largely the