

representation" that confront us every day. Although Ruggles describes most of the HBC maps as unremarkable in cartographic design, drafting technique, and innovative quality, and characterizes them as "sketch maps" compiled for reference, the overarching lesson of this recent literature is that documents (such as maps) are never neutral. To view the HBC maps through the lenses of discourse analysis, to pay more attention to their unregarded details, and to broach questions of intertextuality, metaphor, and rhetoric in relation to these documents would surely open the way to fresh and fascinating perspectives on several facets of the Canadian past. Contemplating them, I am led to remark, as Hudson Bay man Edward Smith did to the London Committee of the Company in 1825, "what a field to face the imagination, what a number of ideas rushes in at once, all for the means to investigate a Country so interesting," for there is no doubt that Ruggles' book will be an invaluable companion on that enticing journey of exploration and interpretation.

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*Life Lived Like a Story*, by Julie Cruikshank in collaboration with Angela Sidney, Kitty Smith, and Annie Ned. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990. xvi, 405 pp. Illus. \$50.00 cloth; \$14.95 paper.

*Life Lived Like a Story* is the result of a unique collaboration carried out over a number of years between anthropologist Julie Cruikshank and three native women of Athapaskan and Tlingit ancestry: Angela Sidney, Kitty Smith, and Annie Ned. The written narratives presented in the book do not correspond with our usual notion of a life history or autobiography. Indeed, Cruikshank explicitly deals with the extent to which the Western life history/autobiography genre is appropriate for rendering these native women's life experiences.

As Cruikshank worked with her collaborators — all residents of the Yukon territory — she gradually shifted her research focus from documenting their lives and the changes that had taken place in the Yukon to examining the actual way they talked about, remembered, and interpreted their lives. In doing so, she also considers the larger question of what is history and what is myth. Each life history consists of from nine to seventeen segments which include not only stretches of familiar personal narrative (such as stories about getting married and travel) but also

mythological tales, clan histories, songs, and personal and place name information. Woven together, the segments become the fabric of each woman's life. The recurring theme is "connection," both to other people and to nature.

Despite the far-reaching changes that have taken place in the Yukon during the course of these women's lives, many of the stories they tell are formal stories that originated generations ago. These stories continue to be told because they continue to fulfil needs in people's lives. "An ultimate value of oral tradition," Cruikshank reminds us, "was to recreate a situation for someone who had not lived through it so that the listener could *benefit* directly from the narrator's experience [my emphasis]." (p. 340) To native Indians and many other "traditional" people, stories teach. They are part of their intellectual tradition and, therefore, part of their everyday lives. It should not surprise us that Angela Sidney, Kitty Smith, and Annie Ned recount these important stories for Cruikshank, treating them as part of their personal narratives.

Cruikshank draws a number of interesting and important conclusions from her collaborators' lives. For example, she points out that much of the behaviour and concerns which outsiders classify as "practical" and associate with native women are in fact enmeshed with the "spiritual" activities of men and are no more practical (or less spiritual) than men's activities from the native point of view.

One value of this well-written and assembled book lies in the fact that it gives a wide readership access to three native women's thoughts and lives, at the same time providing a native view of historical events in the Yukon. As a graceful treatment not only of these women's lives but also of their indigenous way of imparting knowledge, it is also a special gift to the people of the Yukon. For fieldworkers and students the book provides a valuable model of how collaboration between an anthropologist or oral historian and their native teachers can work — and does work, it seems to me, more often in the Canadian and Alaskan north than elsewhere. The book is also a cautionary reminder of the limitations of the conventional life history or autobiographical form when applied to people outside the Western tradition.