
The Same as Yesterday: The Lillooet Chronicle the Theft of Their Lands and Resources

Joanne Drake-Terry

Lillooet, British Columbia: Lillooet Tribal Council, 1989. xviii + 341 pp. \$29.95 (paper)

Reviewer: Robin Ridington
University of British Columbia

This is a remarkable book in that it touches on the entire history of European trade and settlement in North America from the perspective of one aboriginal nation. Chapters 1 and 2 tell about the *Royal Proclamation* of 1763; the journeys of MacKenzie, Fraser and Thompson; the resistance of Eastern Indians led by Tecumseh; and the complex trade relations in which Lillooet people were already engaged when the first Europeans passed through their territories. Later chapters document how the foreigners who created the governments of Canada and British Columbia systematically excluded aboriginal people from the political process. The book gives encyclopedic detail about events that the Lillooet people experienced as Europeans had the nerve to claim aboriginal lands as their own.

Drake-Terry explains clearly how dominion and provincial governments managed to avoid responsibility for negotiating treaties with Indian nations. She tells how this avoidance (neatly achieved through Article 13 of the terms of union) continues to energize both levels of government in their costly legal resistance to aboriginal title and government. She exposes men such as colonial land commissioner (later Lieutenant Governor) Joseph Trutch for implementing racist policies that excluded the majority aboriginal population during and after the time of Confederation. Similar thinking continues to exclude aboriginal people from discussions such as the attempted *Meech Lake Accord*.

This Indian history of the Indian presence within land claimed by British Columbia is most clearly focussed through a remarkable document, the "Declaration of the Lillooet Tribe" of May 10, 1911, signed by 17 Lillooet chiefs representing about 1400 people. Each chapter of the book begins with an appropriate passage from the declaration. The chiefs of 1911 had a better understanding of British Columbian history than today's apologists for the status quo. They made the simple and obvious observation "that we are the rightful owners of our tribal territory, and everything pertaining thereto. We have always lived in our country; at no time have we ever deserted it, or left it to others. . . . We are aware the B.C. government claims our country, like all other Indian territories in B.C.; but we deny their right to it" (p. 268).

The government of British Columbia has continued to deny an Indian polity within its borders since the time of Joseph Trutch. At great expense, it repeated Trutch's views in its defense against a 1987 suit by 54 Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en chiefs. At the same time, it encourages clear-cut logging of precious heritage lands such as those of the Stein Valley in Lillooet territory.

Each chapter is easy to scan because of topic headings such as "Dishonesty Increases, Dominion of Canada Born, Indian Nations Not Consulted." Points of information are well footnoted. There is a good bibliography, numerous maps, pow-

erful archival photographs and detailed colonial-period engravings from the *Illustrated London News*. An epilogue chronicles events since the 1911 declaration, and an appendix reprints an extract from the *Royal Proclamation of 1763*.

This book should be required reading for any student of Canadian or British Columbia history. The Lillooet Tribal Council and Joanne Drake-Terry must be congratulated for telling this aboriginal history in an objective and professional manner. The book provides essential information for courses at the high school or university level dealing with First Nations, their lands, and their contemporary legal and political activities. More generally, the information it provides may not be available in more conventionally Eurocentric histories. In telling about the theft of their lands, the Lillooet people have taught us all an important lesson about what it means to live in Indian country.

Silent Looms: Women and Production in a Guatemalan Town

Tracy Bachrach Ehlers

Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1990. xiv + 165 pp. \$27.50 (paper)

Reviewer: Marilyn Gates

Simon Fraser University

In her preface to this book, June Nash refers to the powerful method that Ehlers is developing as "an ethnography of engagement" (p. xi). Indeed, this is a highly "engaging" portrait of Mayan women and social change in an upland Guatemalan town, both in terms of the author's intimate involvement with her informants and in her unassuming and direct writing style. This combination makes for a book which is, at the same time, "new ethnography" and plain old-fashioned anthropology. Ehlers reminds us that ethnography is alive and well and is a very human, if sometimes frustrating and saddening, experience. The study will convey the essence of anthropology to undergraduates as well as make an important methodological and theoretical contribution to research on women and development.

Primarily through a series of vignettes derived from interviews with dozens of women in and around the town of San Pedro Sacatepequez from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, Ehlers shows the differential effects of entry into a modern consumer economy on status and gender relations. San Pedro is an anomaly, a "highland oasis" (p. 47) where an expanding market economy has offered the local Indian population sufficient opportunities to support their families, without resorting to the seasonal migratory labour necessary elsewhere. The relative economic success of these *Sampedranos* has been sustained largely by the initiative and unceasing labours of the entrepreneurial women, who operate the "female family business," a system of cottage industry and trade which has supported highland Indian families for generations, while allowing women productive autonomy and some degree of discretion over family budgets. However, these traditional domestic enterprises are being eroded by the shift to piecework and to employment as factory workers, store clerks, secretaries and teachers, as changing values, as well as economic modernization, modify generational occupational patterns. In particular, mothers want daughters to be educated, even though their labour then will be lost from the family business, since the prestige of upward mobility and monetary contributions