

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

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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

increasingly outweigh their cooperative labour value. At the same time, the national economic crisis after 1984 has driven up both living costs and production expenses so that cottage industries, such as weaving, *traje*, the traditional Indian costume, are no longer viable. Although some women are proving amazingly adaptive to the new economic conditions, the majority are losing control over their own production and that of their children, as the local market for traditional female-based goods and services declines. As a result, women are also losing ground in the male-female power equation, as Mayan mutually supportive partnerships give way to the domineering relationships characteristic of middle-class *ladino machismo*, where women are dependent on the male breadwinner for financial support.

This delicate topic of the impact of changing economic conditions on the evolution of gender relations is handled with particular insight and sensitivity. However, the strengths of the book are also its weaknesses. The anecdotal approach, while conveying empathy and immediacy, provides a somewhat disjointed framework such that important issues are sometimes "left hanging." The readability of the work is due in part to the decision to relegate much of the major theoretical discussion to footnotes, but this proves distracting to the reader intent on following the arguments.

An important and surprising limitation is the failure to relate local realities to the turmoil of the guerilla war that has afflicted Guatemala over the past 15 years. Ehlers reports that San Pedro has been left largely unscathed by the military attacks on the indigenous population which have been the norm in surrounding areas. Even so, it seems likely that at least some of her informants experienced significant disruption of their entrepreneurial activities and family lives, in view of the regional and national scale of their networks. Given Ehlers' obvious good judgment, these "horror stories" (p. 11) could have been discussed in keeping with anthropological ethics, insofar as they have a direct bearing on the processes under analysis. It seems something of a disservice to her informants and to this book that they were not.

### **Family and Gender in the Pacific: Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact**

Margaret Jolly and Martha Macintyre, eds.

New York, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989. xiii + 296 pp. \$49.50 (cloth)

*Reviewer:* Dorothy Counts  
University of Waterloo

The essays in this volume were originally papers for a conference on "Christianity, Colonialism, and the Family in the Pacific" held in Canberra, Australia, in December 1983. All of them deal with the impact of missionaries or mission policy on the condition of women, gender relations and family organization in Pacific communities from Polynesia (Hawaii and the Marquesas) to Melanesia (Papua New Guinea, the Solomons and Vanuatu) and Australia. Chapter authors are anthropologists and historians, and most provide a diachronic perspective. The chap-