peoples, even as "agents of the state," only worked towards the oppression of Aboriginal peoples and their communities. In chapter 5, for example, they explore how Simon Dawson, a Dominion Lands Surveyor and federal treaty representative eventually elected to the Ontario legislature and then to the Canadian parliament, worked closely with Aboriginal peoples, advocating an admiration of Aboriginal culture and protection of their land. Chute and Knight explore how Dawson worked selflessly for the recognition of Aboriginal and title rights, even petitioning that Aboriginal peoples be given the right to vote without losing their status under the *Indian Act*, an amazing effort considering Aboriginal peoples were not granted the right to vote in Canada until 1960.

Wendy Wickwire's excellent chapter on early 20th-century anthropologist James A. Teit is a welcome break from the intense anthro-bashing and disciplinary deconstruction many anthropologists have faced since the mid-1970s. Wickewire's examination of Teit's anthropological practices helps to contribute an alternative view of the foundations of anthropology's intellectual heritage in Canada. Readers discover that, contrary to the image of the oppressive anthropologist as "agent of state," Teit worked closely with Aboriginal people in British Columbia to address current issues related to land title, reserves, hunting and fishing rights, and government policies relating to dancing, doctoring and potlatching. Teit's "activist anthropology" was aimed at mobilizing a political and united Aboriginal leadership in an effort to combat the increasingly aggressive assimilationist agenda of the Department of Indian Affairs during the early 20th century. Wickwire's claim, however, that this form of activist anthropology during the early 20th century died with Teit in 1922 is questionable. My own work on the life and work of Frank Speck, one of Teit's colleagues, suggests that Teit was one of many anthropologists during the early 20th century who were engaged politically and worked collaboratively with Aboriginal peoples.

With Good Intentions is an excellent addition to the ever-growing scholarly and popular literature relating to the complex social and political history of Aboriginal–settler relations in Canada. While this volume has its shortcomings, it is successful in highlighting the often-overlooked complexities of Canadian history. While we tend to continue to re-scribe a history that was unjust, unique and fraught with difficulties, *With Good Intentions* recognizes those stories of friendships, collaborations and alliances, of good intentions gone awry and the attempts at building bridges across the cultural divide. Does this volume contribute, as the editors suggest, to a process of decolonization? I prefer to think of it as a positive and productive contribution to an ongoing dialogue of trying to understand who we are in relation to one another, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, how we have come to the current state of affairs and where we intend to go from here.

Louis Bird, *Telling Our Stories: Omushkego Legends and Histories from Hudson Bay*, Edited by Jennifer S.H. Brown, Paul W. DePasquale and Mark F. Ruml, Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2005, 269 pages.

Reviewer: *Toby Morantz*
McGill University

This is a remarkable book of oral tradition that brings to the non-Native reader a fuller understanding of Omushkego Cree cosmology, social history and just good stories. The narrator is Louis Bird, a member of Winisk First Nation from Peawanuck near the western shore of Hudson Bay. As we are told, and as is very evident, Louis Bird, today a professional storyteller, has been a student of Omushkego culture for most of his life. He was blessed with a grandmother, a maternal great uncle and his parents who, before him, also believed these stories were worth preserving and related them to him, as did other elders. He began recording these stories in 1975 and it is this collection upon which the book is based. As well, these stories and others are available in Cree and English on a website http://www.ourvoices.ca funded by Canadian Heritage which sponsored the digitization of his recordings. There are nine chapters to this book, each one addressing a distinct theme with a collection of stories accompanied by a preface written by each of the editors and three others (Anne Lindsay, Roland Bohr and Donna G. Sutherland). Here an academic touch is added by situating the stories or attempting to do so—not always possible and so speculation comes into play—as well as drawing in comparative material. However, Louis Bird, himself, can use footnotes with the best of them, not to mention dividing his stories into phases similar to those used by archaeologists: before contact, contact and modern (p. 225).

The strength of the book and its distinctiveness is that Louis Bird does not reproduce the stories as he must have heard them, using Cree narrative conventions that are difficult for non-Cree speakers to follow. Instead he has rendered them in a form and style familiar to the English Canadian reader. Even when he is presenting a myth or a legend, the reader is not left to ponder its significance or meaning but is given a full explanation. One example is that while telling the story of *The Giant Skunk*, he comments on how it demonstrates that his ancestors of long ago knew there were animals on earth before humans and animals as large as dinosaurs.

Within each of these stories the reader acquires a wealth of information about the Omushkego people that, again, is imparted through his commentary rather than the story line itself, for example, his stories centred on *mi-te-wi-win* or shamanism. As interesting and telling those stories are, so too is Louis Bird's discussion of how a child is chosen to become a shaman. Similarly, we learn in his account of the dream quest that women do not have one because they are already "gifted" (p. 97). Other themes in his stories cover first encounters, including shamanism versus Christianity, devastating diseases,

Cha-ka-pesh (usually known as the trickster–hero figure), and technology (the bow and arrow versus the gun).

In the last chapter, Louis Bird is no longer the story teller but more the philosopher deciding that rendering these stories in English rather than Cree is a necessity as "you might as well teach them in the language they're going to live with" (p. 233). He feels the language will soon be gone and the traditional culture is already lost. Nor is he hopeful that present and future generations of Omushkego people can be persuaded to maintain the language and culture; in modern times there are too many distractions.

There is nothing in the book to suggest what could have been done differently, although the editors might have explained why they have given so much weight to matching Cree stories of first encounters with those recorded by Europeans. The puzzling aspect is that these stories are meant to herald back to the time of Henry Hudson or somewhat later in the 1600s. Yet the Omushkego people, along with other Algonquian speaking peoples distinguish between *a-ta-noo-ka-nak*: "stories about events that happened so long ago that the personages are beyond living memory and take on powerful even mystical qualities" (p. 22) and *ti-pa-chi-moo-wi-nan*: "stories...of recent historical events [that] involve people known to or remembered by the storyteller" (p.25). Stories referring to events of 300-400 years ago would likely fall into the first category and take on mythical or mystical qualities. Additionally why would a first encounter with a white man be a significant event worth recording, especially since they did not remain in James or Hudson Bay until much later? A more plausible explanation of why the story is told as a *ti-pa-chi-moo-wi-nan* story is found in Trudel (1992:68) who was told by a Cree elder at Whapmagoostui (east coast of Hudson Bay) that he had been told the story by a Hudson's Bay Company clerk. However, the editors are right to point to the instructive qualities of Cree and European versions of first encounters in that they provide information about how strangers met and how they behaved under the circumstances.

Louis Bird is self-effacing, yet his appreciation of how to relate the stories and legends of his people surely merits academic attention and discussion. He notes that translation of a story is not sufficient and that "you still have to interpret every word, on almost every subject" (p. 243). How true this is and how evident after reading his exceptionally rich narratives combining the original story interwoven with his own learned commentaries. This is the first collection of Algonquian stories where the reader feels the vibrancy of the society and gains a good measure of understanding of the meaning of the stories. Undoubtedly it will serve the modern generation of Omushkego people in the same way.

References

Trudel, Pierre
1992 On découvre toujours l'amérique: l'arrivée des Européens selon des récits cris recueillis à Whapmagoostui. Recherches amérindiennes au Québec 22(2-3): 63-72.

Ira Bashkow, *The Meaning of Whitemen: Race and Modernity in the Orokaiva Cultural World*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2006, 329 pages.

Reviewer: *Wayne Fife*
Memorial University of Newfoundland

This is a good book, with one fairly serious flaw. First, the good part (which makes up 98% of the book). In this work, Bashkow provides us with thoughtful ruminations about the ongoing ways that racism is constructed and maintained in the contemporary world. He does this not through vague generalizations about how racism might work, but rather through a very specific reading of how the Orokaiva of Papua New Guinea have created racialized stereotypes about "whitemen" over the last several decades (men, because it has been almost exclusively "white" men and not women that have shared the Orkaiva world in the last 100 years or so). Along with a detailed consideration of raced thought and actions among the Orokaiva, the author also provides us with many comparisons of racism as found among other groups in Papua New Guinea and within the wider world. For me, a few chapters in particular stand out as examples of how we, as anthropologists, can pursue this thorny issue among the various peoples with whom we work.

In chapter 3, "The Lightness of Whitemen," Bashkow discusses how the social life of the Orokaiva and their cultural expectations regarding normal social relationships and interactions are used as a basis for them to try to understand whitemen. Seen as people who are not tied to specific pieces of land nor burdened with heavy social obligations regarding reciprocity, whitemen are thought to have a remarkable ability to project themselves and their influence across vast distances (p. 65). This creates their lightness, which can be compared to the heaviness of being Orokaiva. What are thought to be qualities of whiteness in this respect are both envied and ridiculed, depending on whether the speaker wishes to use them as an example to aspire to or in order to make a point about the superior ways of the Orokaiva. Therefore, whitemen and their actions end up occupying a morally ambivalent position in the Orokaiva cultural world. This ambivalence is further elaborated upon in chapter 4, "The Bodies of Whitemen," in which Bashkow explains that ideas concerning the lightness, softness, and brightness of whitemen are often coupled with the notion that these (positive and negative) qualities give whitemen the superior ability to achieve overall social harmony—a harmony that seems painfully absent from Orokaiva life (p. 143). This idea of social harmony is further tied to understandings concerning the success or failure of various forms of desired economic development on the part of the Orokaiva.

However, it is not principally in the body that racism among the Orokaiva is engendered or elaborated upon. Rather, if we wish to understand racism we also have to look outside of the body. Or, as Bashkow states: "In this book I have argued that race is constructed not only in persons and groups but