

time. It is unclear why, particularly since White argues so vigorously for the aesthetic vitality of these films, he would make this argument solely using text.

These issues, however, are not significant flaws in the text. Rather, they are two areas in need of improvement in a study that is otherwise inventive and fresh. *The Radio Eye* is necessary reading for anyone with an interest in the development of media in the North Atlantic region in the second half of the twentieth century.

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***The Sea Woman: Sedna in Inuit Shamanism and Art in the Eastern Arctic.* By Frédéric Laugrand and Jarich Oosten. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2008. 152 pp. 53 colour photographs and plates.**

Laugrand and Oosten have long been keepers of traditional Inuit oral storytelling and history and have an impressive resume of publications, including their well-known work *Inuit Shamanism and Christianity*. In *The Sea Woman*, they present us with an in-depth look at the role of Sedna in Inuit shamanism and art, with a focus on the Inuit of Nunavut, Canada.

The authors settle comfortably into their topic in the first two chapters, which deal with the mythology concerning the origins of Sedna and the origins of human beings and sea mammals. They explore how Sedna and Sedna-like entities, such as Nuliajuk, vary across regions often shifting in their definitions. The authors then turn to the creation of human beings. They explore origin stories of Inuit, *Qallunaat* (white people), and Natives, as well as the sea mammals, and the linkages between them.

In Chapters 3–5, we travel with the authors and their sources first down to Sedna's undersea dwelling, then through the veil which separates life and death, and finally back up—this time on Sedna's back as she ascends from her home. In these chapters, Laugrand and Oosten explore in great detail the shamanistic rituals associated with these journeys, the roles that they played, and the belief structures that contextualize Sedna and shamanism. The relationship of *tirigusuusiiit* (things people had to abstain from) to Sedna and the rituals involved with shamanistic appeasement are addressed throughout this section of the book and tie the other themes together nicely.

A further exploration of shifting boundaries, chapter six pulls together representations of half-human, half-animal beings and examines the nature of transformations in Inuit oral and artistic traditions. This section examines the details in artistic presentations of Sedna, including her clothing—or lack of it—and the common emphasis on her hair. The authors' concluding comments in Chapter 7 bring us to the end of the book too soon.

This is a fine book, but it would have been even better if it had stayed closer to its main purpose. The book does not quite meet its objectives. For example, at times the art work, while beautiful, seems superfluous to the text and not entirely integrated. It is also quite difficult to gather knowledge about contemporary Inuit belief structures and practices from a select population of elders in a culture which has undergone such dramatic and swift change in recent decades. A significant cultural gap exists between elders and youth in Inuit communities and the authors would have done well to keep this in mind when exploring contemporary issues. Lastly, in any study of a large geographical area, even when those in question are from the same ethnic group, regional diversity is a challenge. The authors had the privilege of using material from areas which are deeply traditional as well as from areas which have been in contact with Western culture for longer periods of time. More caution might have been exercised in making claims concerning contemporary culture. Elders from the Qivalliq region, for example, have had very different life experiences from Baffin Island elders and they may differ in what they pass on to the next generation (or to researchers, for that matter).

Laugrand and Oosten have done an admirable job, however, in finding a balance in their presentation of various local versions of these stories and in the overall compilation of local knowledge. The authors explore each local variation and then embed it in the larger context of the other stories in the book and in the larger body of literature on the topic. This is no easy feat.

There are two particular strengths of this book which must not go unacknowledged. Often the appeal of categorization, strict boundary definitions, and disciplined organization sway even the best scholars as they try to make sense of the traditional Inuit world. Laugrand and Oosten have resisted this appeal. Sedna is a complex idea to pin down. It would be all too easy to box her up in rigid categories and to present her along with a few pretty pictures as a tidy package. Instead, here we have Sedna in all her complex glory, presented to us complete with her nuances, her indistinct and convoluted history, and subtle shades, which make her what

she is and help explain the role she played in traditional shamanism and contemporary art. In this way, we come to know Sedna. Inuit traditions are too frequently relegated to the narrow confines of Western belief systems. Sedna and other spiritual beings, as the authors assert, are not, however, comparable to concepts of deities, God, or Mother Nature. The Inuit world is inhabited by different beings—animals, humans, and spiritual beings, all of which are interconnected. It is these interconnections—and their ephemeral qualities—which require our investigation. Fortunately, it is to this that the authors turn their attention. This is an approach both academic and respectful of Inuit traditions.

This respectful approach extends to include acknowledgment of the very real effects of the interplay between Inuit and Qallunaat on the representation of Sedna in contemporary art—art often no longer created by the elders with whom the authors conducted interviews, but by their children (now adults) who have strong beliefs of their own and who attempt to balance these beliefs with knowing the art market. In the introductory section we find the book's second notable strength: an honest discussion of the impact of colonization on the art work of contemporary Inuit.

The Sea Woman is well-organized and presented with beautiful and interesting slides. This is an excellent book for historians and anthropologists as well as for the non-specialists interested in Inuit studies. It is written in a scholarly fashion, yet remains accessible to all and includes engaging stories and explorations of the mysterious and multifaceted Sedna.

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***Navigating Neoliberalism: Self-Determination and the Mikisew Cree First Nation.* By Gabrielle Slowey. Vancouver and Toronto: UBC Press, 2008. 98 pages.**

In *Navigating Neoliberalism*, Gabrielle Slowey analyzes political and economic decisions facing the Mikisew Cree First Nation (MCFN) around Fort Chipewyan, Alberta in the context of global neo-liberalism. Largely focused on developments since the settlement of a specific land claim in 1986, her book includes sections on the social characteristics of the MCFN community, theories of neoliberal globalization, historical trajectories of Aboriginal self-determination, politics and economy in northern Alberta,