that avoid analysis and satisfying conclusions. Alexie is not suggesting that a disclosure ceremony or the novel itself can solve everything. The Dene will continue to live with painful memories, their lives will continue to be difficult, and there will be tragic and sad days ahead, both in the novel and in the lives of the Gwich'in Dene. The importance of *Porcupines and China Dolls* is that the story of the residential schools and their destruction of Native culture has been made public. In the tradition of oral storytelling Alexie offers no solutions to his People's troubles, but like James, his hero, he has travelled to the edge and broken a silence that has gone on too long.

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***Chasing the Dark: Perspectives on Place, History and Alaska Native Land Claims*. Edited by K.P. Pratt. Anchorage, AK: United States Department of Interior. 2009.**

The process of settling Aboriginal[1] land claims in what we now call North America is highly political, involving the surrender and often extinguishment of existing Aboriginal claims in exchange for defined parcels of land and other rights. In both Canada and the United States, this process often involves the collection of vast amounts of Aboriginal land use and occupancy information by governments in order to verify the transaction. This information is more than just administrative data, however; it represents a wealth of knowledge about the history and geography of the land and the story of its original peoples from pre-colonial times to the present. *Chasing the Dark: Perspectives on Place, History and Alaska Native Land Claims* represents a worthy attempt by the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to make some of this information, collected under the auspices of section 14(h)(1) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), accessible to the general public.

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act was passed into law in 1971. The Act conveyed 44,000,000 acres and nearly $1 billion to Native Alaskans in return for extinguishment of Aboriginal title. In addition, section 14(h)(1) of the Act calls on the federal government to transfer lands deemed to be "historic and cemetery sites" to Alaska Native corporations upon request, provided the land is available for selection.[2] Since 1978, staff from the BIA have been involved in extensive field work to verify the significance of over 2,000 historical places or cemetery sites across Alaska, and to certify that the land on which those sites rest should be transferred to Native corporations. In carrying out this work, government researchers conducted archeological

surveys, produced maps and "narrative feature descriptions," photographed sites and cultural artifacts and, where possible, recorded oral histories of these sites by local residents. Most of this valuable information is available only in the BIA office in Anchorage, accessible on a case-by-case basis to those who have been granted access by BIA staff.[3] Hence the purpose of this publication.

Chasing the Dark is a tastefully assembled collection that situates approximately forty Native Alaskan historical places or cemetery sites in the context of Alaskan geography, history, and culture. Each site was investigated as part of the ANCSA 14(h)(1) program. The pages are full of photographs, illustrations, and maps that complement and sometimes outshine the written work. Holding the book in her lap, the reader will be tempted to browse its glossy, colourful pages before finding a picture or heading that will inevitably draw her in further. A minor catch is the absence of a large map of Alaska to help the uninitiated locate the sites in the broader Alaskan geography. For the most part, however, the design of *Chasing the Dark* will be successful in attracting the attention of readers from all walks of life.

The content of the collection is eclectic. Each of the forty historical places or cemetery sites has its own chapter written by a different author associated with the ANCSA program. The authors were free to contribute according to their interests, tastes, and styles, and so the content and presentation varies from article to article—an approach the editor believed was "an ideal way to illustrate the program's rich history and the wide range of applications its associated records can support" (xii). The strength of this approach is that the reader is quickly immersed in a smorgasbord of historical narratives, oral history transcriptions, legends, and academic analysis firmly grounded in Alaska's stunning geography. Topics range from accounts of historical warfare between Alaskan Inupiat and their Siberian counterparts, to detailed descriptions of caribou-corralling techniques, to intimate portraits of community transformations in the wake of early modern globalization and colonization. In chapter after chapter we develop an ever-broadening sense of Alaskan history and geography, and learn how the relationship between Native Alaskans and their lands has become increasingly affected by the arrival of first Russian, then American, settlers.

At the same time, however, the eclectic nature of the collection is not without its drawbacks. Stylistically, the flow between articles can feel choppy. Some chapters are highly academic, detracting significantly from the book's general accessibility, while others are more conversational in nature. The breadth of styles likely reflects the diversity of voices present in the work: we hear mostly from professional researchers, Native Corporation

officials, and government officials who worked on the ANCSA 14(h)(1) program. The perspectives of community members and those who provided information to the BIA researchers are often brought out through the writings of professionals, or in stand-alone direct transcriptions from recorded oral histories.

Such an approach must be handled with care. It demands an explanation of how permission to publish the information was obtained from Native Alaskans. Permission should have been sought and given. If this was not possible because of the length of time between the collection of information and its publication, then ethical alternatives to direct consent should have been explored and justified. In the absense of a clear editorial stance on permission, the reader herself is left in a difficult ethical position.

This issue is resolved commendably in one particular contribution. In a lengthy excerpt from an interview with Frieda Roberts, the elder relays her experience of traditional abstinence practice to a young Yup'ik interviewer. In a postscript, the editor acknowledges that including the account could be considered controversial and admirably provides a rationale for his decision. Ms. Roberts had been asked whether she wished to have restrictions placed on her interview, and the interviewers were consulted on the eventual publication of the material. On balance, it was the educational value of the material that led to the inclusion of the interview. More explicit discussion of how these kinds of considerations were accounted for in the editorial policy would have been desirable.

Another helpful contribution by the editor relates to the methodological challenges involved in the process of implementing ANCSA 14(h)(1). In the introduction to *Chasing the Dark*, Pratt testifies to the early and ongoing challenges of implementing ANCSA 14(h)(1) from his perspective as a BIA official. These include conflict between Native individuals and corporations over regional ownership of ancestral sites, and frustratingly slow and ineffective government administration in certain instances. According to the author, early on "the question of what amount of research and on-ground survey is necessary to satisfy the regulations … was a source of debate …" (16). This meant that site investigation methodologies evolved through a process of trial-and-error, with some errors not being corrected until long after they had been made. Challenges to data collection methodologies included the appropriate use of survey and boundary mapping techniques, as well as limitations in conducting, recording, and reporting on oral histories. Thus, we find a general discussion of the field work process and the procedures in place to meet bureaucratic standards of accuracy and validity. However, a thorough discussion of data validation procedures as they were

implemented by field workers in the course of research would have been a useful addition to the text.

Chasing the Dark is about getting researchers, government, and the broader public interested in the ANCSA 14(h)(1) collection. Its aim is to prevent the loss of cultural knowledge, since "information in written formats, recorded on film, or contained within discrete physical objects can also be lost … often due to lack of public awareness, poor management or simply neglect" (31). One can only hope this publication will be seen as an opportunity to advance our collective understanding of the Alaskan past, and our place within it.

Notes

1. The term "Aboriginal" is here applied broadly to the original people of North America. To be consistent with the terminology used in *Chasing the Dark*, I will use the term "Native" to refer to the original inhabitants of what is now Alaska.

2. Available land means federal land that is "vacant, unreserved, and unappropriated" (7).

3. Pratt, K. (2010). Selected research and management problems related to the ANCSA 14(h)(1) collection. *Newspoke,* 23(4), 1.

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***Inuit Education and Schools in the Eastern Arctic.* By Heather E. McGregor. Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, 2010. 220 pp. Illustrations, reference notes, bibliography, and index.**

Inuit Education and Schools in the Eastern Arctic explores the history of Inuit education and effects of changing power relationships. Its sensitivity to cultural nuances might be attributed to the fact that author Heather McGregor, although a *Qallunaaq* (non-Inuit person) by Inuit definition, was born in Yellowknife and spent most of her childhood and youth in Iqaluit where she still resides.

In the first two chapters, McGregor outlines her objectives and carefully explains her research methodology, sources of information, and various counter-arguments in this well-documented examination of an important and timely issue. She then divides the history of Inuit education chronologically into four distinct periods under the headings of "Traditional," "Colonial," "Territorial," and "Local." The chapter on the traditional years sets the stage for subsequent periods by describing the manner of educating young children before any prolonged Inuit contact with the "white man," when it