

Throughout the text Wilder has scattered ethnographic gems. I particularly enjoyed her anecdotes of the elderly Inupiat trapping ground squirrels on the tundra, the taboo restricting children from playing with balls until a hunter in the community was successful at harpooning a seal in the nose, and the status of hunters being displayed by their parka ruffs.

Much of the material in this book, however, deals with southern materials including commercially tanned skins of calf, sheep, raccoon, badger, domestic rabbit, and synthetic furs. More detail is given to the description of acid tanning than to the traditional Inupiat tanning techniques. The step-by-step descriptions in this book are primarily for beginner projects, such as beaded souvenir ornaments, baby booties, slippers, a trapper's hat, canvas mukluks, and simple dolls. There are discussions of some traditional clothing items and even a few photos, however, insufficient information is provided for intermediate level seamstresses who wishes to tackle these more advanced projects. For example, there are two photos of Inupiat crimped-soled mukluks but no patterns: "You can make your own mukluks patterns. Look at other mukluks or at photographs to get ideas, and design the shape and style you want." A reader wishing to learn more about traditional Inupiat sewing would find drawings and descriptions of traditional stitches, including the waterproof stitch, very useful, rather than the blunt advice to "Use any stitch that you are familiar with." Likewise, a section describing traditional hand measurements would have been interesting.

While discussing Native patterns, Wilder mentions "Many books on Native Alaskan art and culture have been published in recent years. Some are well illustrated with historic and contemporary photographs and can provide ideas for traditional garment designs and styles." Unfortunately, there is no bibliography containing these sources. By neglecting to describe in detail the complex traditional clothing, the author fails to make the reader aware of the extraordinary skills and talents of the Inupiat seamstresses.

This book is intended as a "How To" book for novice seamstresses interested in learning to sew with leather, and furs with an Eskimo flare; it is not an ethnographic treatise on Inupiat sewing techniques.

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Haa Aaní, Our Land, Tlingit and Haida Land Rights and Use by Walter R. Goldschmidt and Theodore H. Haas and edited by Thomas F. Thornton. Seattle and London/Juneau: University of Washington Press/Sealaska Heritage Foundation, 1998. viii, 219pp.,

photographs, appendices, charts, maps, bibliography, index. ISBN 0-295-97639-X (pb). \$35.00 US. Reviewed by Douglas K. Mertz.

In 1971, the United States Congress approved the most extensive settlement of Native American land claims in U.S. history, the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). Alaskan Natives were granted title to over 44 million acres of land in Alaska and almost a billion dollars, as compensation for their aboriginal land claims. ANCSA settled the Native land claims without creating reservations for Native peoples, indeed eliminating all but one of the previously existing reservations in Alaska. This has been a two-edged sword—while Alaskan Natives have been given title to large areas of land and significant funds, they do not have reservation like those of many Native American tribes in the Lower 48 states, areas of officially recognized “Indian country” in which tribes can operate their own governments with direct authority over the use of their land and its resources.

The United States agreed to this unprecedented settlement for many reasons, including the fact that some groups of Alaskan Natives were pressing claims to legal title to most of the State of Alaska, including the rich oil-bearing lands of the North Slope. Historians may debate whether the court claims would have succeeded—the U.S. has had a long history of expropriating Native American lands without compensation—but politically, the timing was right for a sweeping resolution of land claims.

One of the factors that made ANCSA possible was that some Native Alaskans had a clear written record of aboriginal land title and of harvest rights to fish and game. This remarkable record was compiled in 1946 by two government researchers, Walter R. Goldschmidt and Theodore H. Haas, who traveled throughout Alaska’s Southeast Panhandle interviewing and recording statements from Tlingit and Haida elders. Their field report was a unique compilation of information on aboriginal rights as seen by the Native people of the region themselves—rights to occupy territory, and rights to fish, hunt and gather in specific subregions.

The report has now been reissued with commentary by anthropologist Thomas F. Thornton, of the University of Alaska in Juneau. The book-length report remains valuable as an historical document and also as a resource for present-day delineation of traditional rights to harvest resources. Professor Thornton has reprinted the text of the original report, consisting of summaries of title and usage claims by geographical area and user group, with the authors’ conclusions on the “possessory rights” of each Native community. The original testimony from Native elders is included as an appendix. This edition adds a helpful essay by Professor Thornton putting the testimony of the Native elders in the context of the political debates since 1946. Professor Goldschmidt, who is now a retired professor of anthropology at UCLA, adds a new retrospective essay. The book also contains an updated bibliography and many helpful maps.

The statements of the elders are a unique contribution to the oral history of the region. At the time this new edition was published, only two of the dozens of Natives interviewed by Goldschmidt and Haas were still living. The persons interviewed were among the last generation of Tlingit and Haida with first-hand knowledge of traditional land uses and territorial claims before significant European American encroachment. Their testimony gives a valuable insight into the world of traditional Native culture often obscure to non-Natives, and even to some Natives today. What is most striking about the testimony is that the individual Natives had no hesitation naming what bays, what streams, what village sites belonged to which groups. The highly developed social structure of traditional Tlingit and Haida is reflected in an equally well developed sense of ownership and proprietorship in the resources of the land.

In his introductory essay, Professor Goldschmidt notes that he and Haas were well aware of racism among the whites in the communities of Southeast Alaska. Their documentation of Native territorial and usage rights was useful when first issued against the bias that Native peoples did not own land and harvest rights and so were not owed compensation when their lands were taken and their rights violated. Many non-Natives in government believed that either the aboriginal inhabitants did not have property rights in the Western sense, or voluntarily yielded their rights as non-Natives entered Alaska and took possession—sometimes exclusive possession—of fisheries and hunting and gathering areas. The Goldschmidt and Haas report, with its repeated testimonies that specific Native clans and other social groups had territorial claims and rights to fishing and hunting, was prime evidence that this sophisticated Native society had an equally well-developed system of ownership and use rights over territories and the fruits of the land. This evidence made it more difficult to sweep aside Native lands claims as somehow involving rights for which no compensation was due.

The report continues to be valuable today, because federal law provides for limited rights to continue traditional fishing, hunting, and gathering for subsistence purposes. Goldschmidt's and Haas's documentation of traditional usage patterns for each community is a key part of the evidence needed in the regulatory process of allocating opportunities to hunt, gather, and fish today. It has proved useful to the people of communities such as Hoonah, who for generations have obtained a large part of their sustenance from the area now within Glacier Bay National Park, in arguing for a continuation of those traditional practices. The report may enable the Tlingit and Haida to counter the trend in U.S. law to consider Native peoples—at least those who, like Alaskan Natives, do not have reservations—who have been assimilated or absorbed into the majority culture by default.

Equally important, the report can be a resource for Tlingit and Haida themselves to maintain the cultural ways and interconnections of their clans and communities. As a snapshot of Tlingit and Haida social structures and their uses of the land in the first part

of the 20th Century, *Haa Aaní* should serve the Native peoples of Southeast Alaska for many more years in this new edition.

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The Spruces by Rex Holmes. Prince George, British Columbia: Caitlin Press, 1999. 192 pp., ISBN0-920576-79-6 (pb). \$15.95 CDN. Reviewed by Steve Roe.

In her essay "True North," Margaret Atwood discusses a cautionary motif in northern stories, noting that "maybe it's not so good to get too close to nature." Atwood's comment wryly modifies dictums of Northrop Frye's "garrison mentality": "I have long been impressed in Canadian poetry," Frye writes, "by a tone of deep terror in regard to nature . . . It is not a terror of the dangers or discomforts or even the mysteries of nature, but a terror of the soul at something that these things manifest." For Frye, "The vast unconsciousness of nature" denies human values, so that people must garrison themselves in tiny pockets of civilization: culture versus nature. Although such comments may sound very human-centred to those familiar with the tenets of ecological awareness, wilderness as capricious and desolate otherness haunts our national literature. In *The Spruces*, Rex Holmes gives fresh expression to a view of nature as a foreboding, deterministic presence.

Holmes' novel is about two young homesteaders who travel from Toronto to the British Columbia Peace River country in Depression-era Canada. Kevin McCormack is dreamy, proud, and unknowing; Joanne, his wife, is determined, yet frail. In the amoral universe of the novel, the two are doomed from the outset, a fact made evident by the author's foreshadowing. "Barring any dirty trick of fate, I believe yez are goin' t' make a go of her," a friend promises the couple, but the antics of nearby birds cast aspersions on such leaps of faith. Tricks of fate are in the offing.

Rex Holmes has experienced the hardships of which he writes. In 1929, at the age of six, he moved with his mother, brothers, and sisters to a homestead two-and-a-half miles outside Pouce Coupe, in northeastern BC. "If you're going to be poor," his mother said, "be poor where no one can see you." Rather than clearing land and planting wheat, the family produced saw machinery and several years later moved farther into the bush southwest of Pouce. Holmes remembers being out skating with his older brother, then walking home in the near darkness of a late afternoon and sitting down to a dinner of boiled turnips. At seventeen, Holmes enlisted in the Canadian army and went overseas. In the early sixties, during a career in business, he began writing nonfictional stories about his earlier life in the Peace region. These essays were collected and published by Baxter House as *The Last Summer* (1965). Shortly thereafter, Holmes began writing