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Author

Smelcer, John E.

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Our Voices: Native Stories of Alaska and the Yukon. Edited by James Ruppert and John W. Bernet. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001. 409 pages. \$25.00 paper.

I knew this book was in the making almost fifteen years ago. In 1987, I was a student in John “Jack” Bernet’s “Alaska Native Oral Narrative Literature” undergraduate course at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. As an enrolled Alaska Native Indian, with two full-blood Ahtna Athabaskan grandmothers, I had grown up knowing many of the traditional stories not only from my own tribe, the Ahtna Athabaskan Indians of the Copper River region of south-central Alaska, but I had also heard many stories from elders in other villages where I briefly lived as far away as Nulato on the Yukon River and Kaktovik on the Arctic Sea. That summer, my wife, six months pregnant with my daughter, and I worked for Professor Bernet painting his home in Fairbanks. Even back then, he talked about compiling such a collection.

Our Voices: Native Stories of Alaska and the Yukon is an important contribution to the printed record of Alaska Native myths and oral narratives, but it is by no means new or original. Indeed, almost every single narrative comes directly from previously published sources. As the editors state in the preface, there are many books readily available and still in print which showcase stories from a particular region or language. There are numerous collections containing narratives from the Eyak or Tlingit, the Haida or the Tsimshian, the Koyukon Athabaskan or the Ahtna Athabaskan. Many of these volumes are quite popular to tourists each summer. While the editors suggest that this may be the first book to combine so many stories representative of almost every Alaska Native peoples, it is not.

Indeed, what surprised me most was the lack of reference to more contemporary books in the field, many of which were written, edited, or compiled by Alaska Natives themselves. The University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Bookstore and Rasmusson Library both have numerous recent publications on their shelves, including four of my own best-selling collections which were not cited or mentioned altogether, although I am a Native writer who wrote those collections with the aid and support of my Native corporation (tribe). Most of the stories and collections of stories cited in *Our Voices* were published more than a decade ago and almost entirely by the Alaska Native Language Center (or in affiliation with the ANLC). While certainly a scholarly linguistic research institution, it is not operated or funded by Alaska Native tribal corporations or their nonprofits. At a time when Native Americans are trying to reclaim and preserve their own culture and identity without the intervention of Western European-American scholars, too many bibliographies fail to cite our publication and research efforts, thereby depreciating their validity and value.

Indeed, *The Raven and the Totem: Traditional Alaska Native Myths and Tales* (1991), now in its tenth edition, is extremely similar to *Our Voices* and contains almost exactly the same number of stories representative of every Alaska Native group except Aleut (which, incidentally, was also left out of this collection). Also like *Our Voices*, all proceeds from royalties went to scholarships for Alaska

Native students. The year it came out, *ALASKA Magazine* named *The Raven and the Totem* "Editor's Choice for Books in Print on Alaska." Although the editors "borrow" stories from my tribe (stories told by my relatives to ANLC linguist James Kari), they cite narratives documented decades ago. From January 1996 until May 1998, I was the tribally elected executive director of the Ahtna Foundation, the nonprofit arm of my tribe dedicated to documenting and preserving our culture, language, and stories. In my two-and-a-half years as our "culture bearer," I edited and published a dictionary of our nouns with a pronunciation guide, several oral history books, language workbooks and posters, and *In the Shadows of Mountains* (1998), a collection of twenty traditional stories as told by elders, many of which have never appeared in print elsewhere. Pulitzer Prize winner Gary Snyder wrote the introduction and Barre Toelken, one of the most influential folklorists in the nation, penned the back cover. It even garnered a wonderful review in *Parabola: The Magazine of Myth and Meaning*. For my work, I was nominated for the Alaska Governor's Award for the Preservation of Alaska Native Cultures. Yet these books and many more recently published works are ignored in *Our Voices*. In fact, *In the Shadows of Mountains* is not even mentioned in the "Suggestions for Further Readings" section under Ahtna. Considering that there are only a few published collections of our myths and traditional stories in existence, this is a serious oversight and makes me question what contemporary works by Alaska Native storytellers or scholars are being ignored in the sections on other Alaska Native peoples.

However, the thirty-seven page introduction to *Our Voices* is the best in print to date, and would, as well as the editors' note in the preface, make a fine textbook for a course in the field or just for general interest reading. Ruppert and Bernet have assembled a judicious and balanced representation of traditional narratives from across Native Alaska, and the stories have been well-edited and -presented for reader accessibility.

Several years ago, *ALASKA Magazine* stopped reviewing new collections of Alaska Native myths and stories, because Bill Hunt, their reviewer and himself a historian, wrote that there were already too many such books on the market. He was wrong. There is still much work to be done on Alaska Native studies, and this book is one more important piece of the total picture. As Barre Toelken wrote in *In the Shadows of Mountains*, if we are to know these cultures more fully, "it will be through stories such as these."

John E. Smelcer

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Power and Place: Indian Education in America. By Vine Deloria Jr. and Daniel R. Wildcat. Golden: Fulcrum Resources, 2001. 168 pages. \$17.95 paper.

Authors Vine Deloria Jr. and Daniel R. Wildcat present fifteen thought-provoking essays on the development of Native American education in the United States. What sets this book apart from others of the same topic is the