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Stories in a New Skin: Approaches to Inuit Literature. By Keavy Martin.

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such leakage, such as the development of a tribal member-owned bank on the Turtle Mountain reservation in North Dakota.

*Reservation "Capitalism"* is worth reading for the opening chapters alone, but the author also analyzes modern reservation economies, covering a range of tribes from throughout Indian country with detailed examination of specific tribes in Oregon, California, and Oklahoma. Miller also provides a thorough recitation of the rise of Indian gaming as an economic powerhouse.

While many of the reasons for the deplorable economic conditions in Indian country are exogenous, the author highlights certain areas under tribal control that also contribute to the challenging economic situation. In his chapters that discuss attracting capital, Indian entrepreneurship, and creating reservation economies, Miller details several opportunities for tribes to make a substantial difference in their own economic situations that are entirely within their power.

Although not a legal text, Miller provides an excellent synopsis of the legal history and background necessary to understand the impediments to tribal economic development. Miller also identifies instances where modern federal and state governments impede the development of self-sustaining reservation economies and provides suggestions for either change or at least minimization of their negative impacts.

My only complaint about this excellent book is that I wish it were longer and had more footnotes, but that is because it is really the first significant effort to fill a space desperate for books such as his. Although his book is accessible to the casual reader, I plan on using his book for an introductory courses on tribal economic development.

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**Stories in a New Skin: Approaches to Inuit Literature.** By Keavy Martin. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2012. 264 pages. \$31.95 paper.

The concept of indigenous literary nationalism informs this discussion of Inuit oral narratives and song, although the work is not focused on a dialogue with or an elaboration of that field of thought. Rather, indigenous literary nationalism forms a foundation that orients the author's analysis. The four chapters of Martin's book concern historical narratives, traditional oral narratives of transformation, published songs, and contemporary life histories of a people (Tuniit) who inhabited Inuit land when they arrived.

As a starting point, Martin cites the documents produced by the Inuit Circumpolar Conference as central to a concept of nationhood that is present

in the widely differentiated communities that make up the Inuit people. Then she reads the contact stories between Tuniit and Inuit as defining underlying senses of peoplehood. The author's suggestions about the sense of self that these stories create may not be well-developed, but nonetheless she reveals many noteworthy insights as she uses Inuit values and perceptions to complicate and enrich an appreciation of these narratives as literature and their function to help create "imagined communities," insights that will prove useful in discussing other forms of Inuit contact narratives.

To illustrate the telling of stories "to define Inuitness by raising the spectre of Otherness," Martin uses an analysis of a contemporary short story entitled "Skraeling" by Rachel Qitsualik (36). But as a basis for thinking about the origins of nationalist literary studies, her discussion of traditional narratives is much more compelling. It is more likely that this contemporary work of fiction should be considered the result of the aesthetics she is outlining rather than a contribution to an understanding of the structural principles of these traditional narratives. To enlarge this basis for Inuit literary tradition, she discusses a traditional narrative, "Angusugjak and the Polar Bears," told by Kusugak. She finds the trope of transformation to be a significant way to understand the non-rigid sense of Inuit interpretation, but she is even more interested in how Inuit values are embedded in the tale. Reminding us that these are not cultural artifacts, but an interaction between a storyteller and an audience, she champions the storyteller's creativity even as she or he may draw on a body of shared values, such as, for example, the importance of following instructions from people with greater knowledge or spirit power than oneself.

The Inuit stories that she mentions have many analogues with stories from Alaska, though here they draw deeply on shamanistic lore. Martin does not introduce anthropological insights that might enhance her literary focus. Picking up on the nationalistic theme, she suggests that storytellers may use these narratives to comment on contemporary political and cultural experiences in a way that Julie Cruikshank refers to as the social life of stories (1992) and Karl Kroeber sees as social and political acts (1992). While Martin explains that discussions of these stories should require readers to come to their own "conclusions about the moral of the story" and offer them "the freedom of the range of interpretations" (62), she does not give us enough of the cognitive framework necessary to create an epistemology or schema of interpretations.

Her discussion of Inuit song is centered in the songs collected by Knud Rasmusson. Martin is critical of previous presentations of Inuit song (a number are given in the appendix). When presented as freestanding lyric poems, they tend to reinforce stereotypes of readers in southern Canada, and most translations and visual presentations lose the mystery of the words and eliminate "the aesthetic of the fragment" (77). Martin chides many editors

and translators for not understanding the Inuit tradition of recycling songs or being able to discern if the song draws on a riddle or was traded. Emphasizing the importance of a particular genre of songs that have had changes made to them, she worries that without an understanding of genre expectations readers may miss “the reality that adaptation and change have a place within Inuit song tradition” (85). Centrally, a literary aesthetic of song that grows out of Inuit values and perceptions is realized from a communal context of reciprocity. Even though some presentations wrench the song from that context, she does not feel it is completely inappropriate to publish the songs; rather, she believes that readers in the Canadian south have not found a way to create reciprocity with the songs. Their attitude is that of the hoarder, a stance that is abhorrent to Inuit and other Native peoples. Hence, the job of the reader has just begun.

In the final chapter on life histories, Martin’s thesis that Inuit literary texts readily adopt “new labels systems or frameworks—when strategically useful,” or “new skins,” becomes more fully developed (99). Arguing against seeing these works as transitional text or writings on the way to a higher goal of literature, she sees them in the same light as other political and cultural adaptations, as part of a long narrative tradition. Her argument illuminates how storytellers adapt the telling so that, in addition to transmitting wisdom, even life histories comment on the process of the creation of the narrative. Moreover, the importance of speaking from personal experience becomes paramount in these narratives. Martin’s contention is that personal experience is a central tenet of Inuit epistemology, and throughout her book Martin strives to bring her own personal experience into her discussions so as to reflect the basis of Inuit wisdom and the source of much traditional value.

As a salient contribution to the study of Inuit literature with significant implications for the study of Inupiat and Yupik literatures in Alaska, I was very impressed by this book. Much of Martin’s insight will inform my future discussions of Alaska Native oral narratives. Her focus on an Inuit perspective is necessary if we are to progress in our understandings. I wish she had more fully developed the book to include more examples, provide a fuller sense of the makeup of Inuit literary structures, and extend its discussion into anthropological, linguistic, and literary perspectives. While *Stories in a New Skin: Approaches to Inuit Literature* is not a definitive work, Martin’s contribution is clearly on target.

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