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When You Sing It Now, Just Like New: First Nations Poetics, Voices, and Representations. By Robin Ridington and Jillian Ridington.

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relations pervasive today in communities underlies the honor granted women as Aboriginal authors such as Taiaiake Alfred argue for the regulation of mothering on the grounds that women have more obligations in reproduction than men in matrilineal societies. The collection also falls prey to easy dichotomization of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal and in doing so fails to take into account the complex political stances on mothering taken up by women of the dominant society. In particular, the range of ideologies that honor and idealize mothering in Western society have more in common with positions on Aboriginal mothering than this collection suggests. This, however, may well be the topic of future works that explore Aboriginal mothering in comparative contexts.

This collection will be welcomed in many spheres. It will easily find its way into undergraduate classes in indigenous studies and women's studies, and be a compelling addition to courses in the "helping" professions and education. Although the writing varies in theoretical sophistication, graduate classes will also find much that is useful and challenging as the conventional discourses of feminism are applied, adapted, and critiqued.

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**When You Sing It Now, Just Like New: First Nations Poetics, Voices, and Representations.** By Robin Ridington and Jillian Ridington. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006. 345 pages. \$49.95 cloth; \$24.95 paper.

Robin Ridington and Jillian Ridington have written a book about time, listening, and people. *When You Sing It Now, Just Like New* is at times an insightful set of ruminations on Dane-zaa (Northern Athabaskan-speaking peoples who live in the Doig River First Nation Reserve, Canada) singers and storytellers. It is also something more. Combined with the digital recordings housed at the University of Nebraska Press, of which the book provides the relevant linking Web address and a thoroughgoing discussion regarding the files, it is also an auditory documentation of the Dane-zaa's changing soundscape. As the authors explain, "taken together, the essays show how the ethnographic enterprise combines listening, reading, and writing" (1).

*When You Sing It Now, Just Like New* is a collection of sixteen essays. Six essays were either authored by Jillian Ridington, or they were coauthored with Robin Ridington (all in part 1). Robin Ridington authored the other ten essays. This book builds on previous work by Robin Ridington that concerns the Dane-zaa. Those familiar with Ridington's work will note the change in spelling from Dunne-za to Dane-zaa. This was done, according to the Ridingtons, at the request of Dane-zaa linguist Billy Attachie. Such a change suggests the sensitivity and respect that the Ridingtons bring to the ethnographic project, though, inexplicably, Robin Ridington writes *Navaho* when the preferred form is *Navajo* and *Cuna* when the current form is *Kuna* (144). In both works that he cites, the authors (Gary Witherspoon and Joel Sherzer) use the current forms (Navajo and Kuna).

The book is separated into three parts. Part 1 concerns “actualities” and is interwoven with the digital audio files. Actualities are the audio recordings and photographs that Robin Ridington, in collaboration with others, has been compiling since the 1960s. Part 2 takes up the issues of “poetics and narrative technology,” and part 3 concerns “Re-Creation in First Nations Literature”; both parts were written entirely by Robin Ridington.

Robin and Jillian Ridington had worked with “audio documentarian” Howard Broomfield since 1978. Broomfield had studied under R. Murray Schafer and worked on Schafer’s World Soundscape Project. Broomfield was given the nickname “Soundman” by the Dane-zaa. After Broomfield died, “they named in his honor a place where he had camped with them. Broomfield Creek is now a storied place in Dane-Zaa cultural geography” (28). In many ways the first part of this book, which is really a primer for listening to the soundscapes, is a testament to the work of Broomfield. It is hoped that future anthropologists will return to the use and importance of soundscape documentation.

*When You Sing It Now, Just Like New* contains much more in regards to place-names. In a story, Billy Attachie tells how a particular place came to have the name Shadeli “aan” echi (44–45). One can hear Attachie’s story in the digital sound files. Although Keith Basso (*Wisdom Sits in Places* [1996]), among others, has shown how Western Apache (a related Southern Athabaskan language) place-names can evoke mental pictures, the place-name that Attachie describes evokes an auditory soundscape. The Beaver place-name glosses as “Shadeli said ‘aan’ there” (44). The onomatopoeia “aan” is associated with the cry of an eagle. It was at this place that Shadeli heard an eagle cry, and then repeated that cry. The place-name evokes a story and the sounds of that place. This compares with what I have recently noted for Navajo (another Southern Athabaskan language) place-names, which can be composed of sound symbols or ideophones (Anthony K. Webster, “‘To Give an Imagination to the Listener’: The Neglected Poetics of Navajo Ideophony,” in *Semiotica*, forthcoming). For example, *Tséé’ dóhdoon* (Rumbling Rock) is composed of two ideophones *dóh* (rumbling) and *doon* (booming), and thus evokes the sounds of the place being described. More work regarding the evocation of sounds in place-names seems warranted.

The soundscape files offer an acoustically vibrant way to engage with Dane-zaa storytellers. The Ridingtons argue that “one purpose in recording everyday conversations as we do is to document the poetics of Indian English as First Nations literature. It is a beautiful form of speech and will never be heard again after this generation of storytellers passes on. . . . Each benefits from having heard and participated in a lifetime of conversations in Beaver and English. The stories their elders told them live again as these storytellers give them voice” (39). In some ways, this is the heart of the matter for the Ridingtons. First, Dane-zaa English is an endangered expressive form. In the rush to document the last speakers of dying indigenous languages, we have overlooked the Englishes that they spoke and the ways that such Englishes were informed by listening to the elders. Both Beaver and Dane-zaa English are important and should be documented because they have aided in the

ways that the Dane-zaa orient to the world. Second, it is in the performances of these stories, the tellings of them, that the elders “live again.” The telling of stories is the elders’ revoicing. Such revoicings become clear as one listens to the digital files.

A theory of language that respects difference is embedded in this work as well. As the Ridingtons write, “English is one of the languages that habitually nominalizes experiences into things.” And later in the same discussion, “Sounds are meaningful because we know how to contextualize them. Listening is an act of creative intelligence” (16). The importance of language to listening and orienting to the world runs through the entire book and finds expression in the chapter on Benjamin Lee Whorf (chapter 8). Robin Ridington focuses on the poetic aspects of language in use (discourse). In his most inventive move, Ridington rearranges Whorf’s own writings to highlight their poetic forms. Ultimately, Ridington calls for a greater recognition of “the power of poetic imagery” (146). This poetic imagery is found not just in the Dane-zaa’s words but also in the writings of anthropologists. One might disagree, however, that the discourses that Native peoples create in English are “a window into Indian thought-world[s],” but instead view such discourses as constitutive of those thought worlds (146). This would shift the emphasis from discourse as being just *about* culture to discourse *as* culture (it moves beyond content to look at form as well).

Chapters 10, 11, and 12 stand out for their discussion of contemporary Dane-zaa music, poetics, and narrative technology. Central to these three chapters is the idea that “contemporary Dane-zaa maintain the spirit of traditional practices, while adapting to allow participation in a world system” (172). Among the Dane-zaa, songs are divided into two general categories: Ma-Yine (*ma* “his, her, its” + *yine* “song”) and Naachene-Yine (*naachene* “dreamers” + *yine* “song”). Ma-Yine are personal songs, “private communication between a person and the source of that person’s power” (176). Naachene-Yine “express . . . shared knowledge” (187). When people dance together for the Naachene-Yine, Ridington argues that they “empower an entire community” (187). It is in this way that “traditional practices” continue to have constitutive power among the Dane-zaa. Such aesthetic traditions (discourses) are not just about community but also are constitutive of community. The Naachene-Yine songs are associated with the culture hero Saya, who in English is referred to as Santa Claus “because he travels through the sky and decorates the trees with new leaves” (175). Such are the ways that people actively engage with the world.

Ridington’s concern with narrative technology, that narratives provide guides for ways of living, is a theme he has repeatedly written about. One key example concerns the term *atu-ze* (cartridge belts). Charlie Yahey told of how the “white people” have a paper-based society, and that this paper technology is a part of the world’s “ecological imbalance” (199). But *atu-ze* was one of the original pieces of Dane-zaa technology. As Ridington notes, “‘*atu*’ means ‘arrow’ and ‘*ze*’ means ‘real, proper to, or belonging to’” (200). Yet such forms, as Ridington argues, are “adaptability” examples of Dane-zaa people. As Ridington states, “Culture provides a context within which individuals are empowered to take meaningful action. Culture is also being constantly

redefined" (220). This is culture, aesthetic practices, as empowering. Narratives, which are based on aesthetic practices and told by creative individuals, then become a way for Dane-zaa to reckon their place in the world. This reckoning is creative and an ongoing practice, a narrative technology.

According to the Ridingtons, it is through cultural practices such as singing, storytelling, and dancing that the Dane-zaa are able to negotiate a changing world. Poetic forms such as these provide the "narrative technology" needed to adapt to new ideas, mediums, and objects. As Robin Ridington writes, "in performance, Dane-zaa singers and storytellers re-create rather than reproduce material from their cultural traditions" (221). This is the evocative power of aesthetic practices, the ways that aesthetic practices can transcend the moment and re-create "tradition." These performances are always grounded in real voices, the voices of Charlie Yahey, Tommy Attachie, Joyce Achla, or Billie Attachie, and in the poetics of Dane-zaa English and Beaver.

There is much more to *When You Sing It Now, Just Like New*. It is engagingly written and provides a great deal of ethnographic detail and critical reflections about issues that concern "representation." The first two parts critically engage the ways that poetic and aesthetic practices need to be fronted in studies that concern, for lack of a better turn of phrase, persistence and change among Northern Athabaskans. Part 3, which focuses on contemporary Native American literature, is less ethnographic and, for me, less evocative of Northern Athabaskan soundscapes, though Ridington does note that written literature is like Northern Athabaskan oral literature in that it creates what Billy Attachie calls "wise stories" (314). The University of Nebraska Press is to be commended for providing the digital audio files Web page. The digital audio files only add to this book and truly aid in the evocation of a changing soundscape through time (from Beaver to Dane-zaa English to newer forms of Indian English). The Ridingtons' concern and respect with the Dane-zaa English spoken in the Doig River First Nation Reserve is to be commended. It is hoped that future works will continue in this trend, not only in the respect for the voices of others but also in the respect for the soundscapes of others. Finally, as Robin Ridington notes, "the world of nature is still alive with meanings."

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**The Witches of Abiquiu: The Governor, the Priest, the Genízaro Indians, and the Devil.** By Malcolm Ebright and Rick Hendricks with illustrations by Glen Strock. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006. 344 pages. \$34.95 cloth; \$21.95 paper.

In July 1760, Fray Juan José Toledo, resident priest of the *genízaro* settlement of Santo Tomás de Abiquiú, located on the northern frontier of Spanish colonial New Mexico, sent Governor Francisco Antonio Marín del Valle the first of a series of shocking reports that detailed an outbreak of illnesses and deaths