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trically involved for the last three hundred years. The treaties and other agreements governing this relationship are "living law" no less than is the U.S. Constitution itself. The reciprocal impacts of tribal and neighboring non-Indian water resource management decision-making will continue to be felt for as long as we all inhabit the same continent. The quest for some "final solution" to these issues is illusory, like a lake-mirage on the desert horizon that continually lures us yet remains always just beyond our reach. Perhaps a more appropriate goal is the creation of durable arrangements for the cooperative management of this commonly used resource for generations to come, with an understanding that the quest for certainty and finality may in some respects be futile.

Lastly, since so much western water law is unique to the history, geography, and politics of the American West, researchers tend to think of issues raised by American Indian tribal claims as also unique. However, it is worth noting that *Indian Water in the New West* was published in the year that the United Nations General Assembly declared to be the "International Year of Indigenous Peoples." Tribal efforts to perfect legal claims to, and exercise more control over, water are wholly in keeping with similar activities by other indigenous peoples throughout the Americas and the entire Pacific Rim, as they attempt to assert sovereign control over the resources on which their future economic well-being depends. While the geographic and cultural circumstances of each American Indian water rights case may have some unique features, they also have more in common with the ongoing efforts of other indigenous people to reclaim their environmental birthright through principles of international law and U.N. diplomacy than most opponents of American Indian water rights claims would care to admit.

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K'äuroondak: Behind the Willows. By Richard Martin, as told to Bill Pfisterer. Fairbanks, Alaska: Center for Cross-Cultural Studies, University of Alaska. 306 pages. \$20.00 paper.

This lovely book contributes to a growing body of literature from subarctic Athabascan oral storytellers. In recent years, a number

of elders from Alaska and northwestern Canada have worked with linguists, anthropologists, and folklorists to record life stories, reflections, and accounts of changing circumstances so that some of the stories "behind the willows" will remain after those who remember them are gone.

Richard Martin, a Gwich'in man born in 1914, made his home along the Porcupine River and its tributaries for seventy-two years. Bill Pfisterer has worked closely with Martin to produce this book, and he tells us that the Gwich'in term *K'auiroondak*, "something behind the willows," refers to willow growth obscuring areas of former human occupation. Settlements may flourish for years on northern rivers, but, if they are abandoned, former village sites rapidly become overgrown and soon become invisible to someone unfamiliar with the area. Thanks to Martin and Pfisterer, to Katherine Peter, who translated and transcribed sections told in the Gwich'in language, and to Sandy Jamieson, whose subtle illustrations enhance the narratives, some of these stories from behind the willows remain even though Richard Martin is no longer living to tell them himself.

The narratives, recorded verbatim as they were told, are meant to be read aloud. When they are, the cadence and intonation of Gwich'in-English establishes a relationship between Martin and his audience. Although Pfisterer discusses only briefly the series of decisions he made about format and style, anyone who has struggled to translate oral narratives into written text will appreciate his sensitivity and will recognize how much effort he has taken to render his own contribution invisible.

Part of the pleasure of hearing these narratives comes from the wide range of topics they cover. There are, for example, detailed and precise descriptions of snaring principles, which apply as readily to the trapping of small animals like muskrat as to the snaring of large animals such as moose or caribou. There is an account of Martin's struggle to learn to read—his childhood memory of staring night after night at the pattern on the roof of his sleeping tent, "T-E-N-T 10 x 12"; his excitement at the sudden recognition of what it meant; and his later use of the Sears Roebuck catalog as his "dictionary" to improve his reading skills. Martin also relates the harrowing experience of being alone in the bush and seriously injuring himself when his axe slipped and his foot was nearly severed; his account is gripping because it includes the familiar shock of realization that an instant of inattention can put one's life at risk. Such personal reminiscences are

juxtaposed with stories well known in communities all along the Porcupine and Yukon rivers about "Grass Pants," "The Woman Turned to Stone," "Brushmen," and others.

What may make *K'aüroondak* especially appealing to readers is the way it crosses boundaries. The book defies classification: It is a work of both ethnopoetics and ethnoscience. Martin weaves metaphor with precise observations about living on the land; thus he makes the book equally valuable for students of poetic form and students of subarctic land use. Lyrical descriptions of people and places stand next to detailed and unsentimental accounts of bush life. Further, it crosses territorial boundaries. The Porcupine River rises in the Canadian Yukon Territory and drains to the Yukon River in central Alaska; the creation of the international boundary that bisects it meant little to Gwich'in inhabitants. Yet the boundary had consequences: After it was established in 1868, the Hudson's Bay Company had to move twice before it was securely located in Canadian territory at Rampart House, and settlement patterns were realigned to accommodate the trading post. Some years later, between 1910 and 1913, the International Boundary Commission cut a sixty-foot swath through Gwich'in territory to demarcate this line firmly. For the Gwich'in inhabitants, though, the river remained the axis connecting people living between Old Crow and Fort Yukon; in these stories, we learn how events continue to link named people with named places. The book challenges temporal categories that suggest that "traditional" and "modern" boundaries can be fixed in any meaningful way. In Martin's stories, snares, steamboats, and army life all play a part, and one does not displace another.

The twenty-eight narratives in this book establish Richard Martin's ethnographic authority, but there is a dialogue here at more than one level, indicated by Pfisterer's questions and comments inserted in a different type face. Martin speaks eloquently of what he knows, and like other northern elders he resolutely refuses to speculate when he is not sure. "By golly I don't know!" he responds more than once to a question from Pfisterer, then carefully spells out just what he does know. And sometimes the dialogue works at two levels, as in the section "Disappearances," when Martin names individuals who disappeared inexplicably in the past, possibly in accidents, while Pfisterer has in mind the broader topic of how settlements disappeared from a river once teeming with human habitation as people were relocated in incorporated villages.

Photographs from the International Boundary Commission and from the Dan Cadzow Collection (both 1910–1913), supplemented by Pfisterer's own photographs from a trip he made with Richard Martin in 1983 and by Jamieson's fine illustrations, give us a sense of just how much human activity once occurred on this river, how intimately all the creeks and sloughs were known, and how firmly it remains in memory. Increasingly, rivers like the Porcupine are referred to as "wilderness rivers," yet we can see here how these same rivers were once the highways used to travel from place to place prior to road construction.

One final narrative told in Gwich'in by Myra Moses, transcribed by Katherine Peter and translated by Richard Martin, reminds us that, in the best of worlds, these stories would continue to be told and understood in the original language. Gwich'in is one Athapaskan language that is currently being taught in three distinct educational jurisdictions—in Alaska, in the Yukon Territory, and in the Northwest Territories—so there are young people in communities like Fort Yukon, Old Crow, and Fort McPherson who will be able to appreciate the labor that has gone into transcribing this narrative. With the growing interest in recording oral narratives, some of these students may use it as a model for work with their own grandparents.

This book will be of interest to students of Native American literature and sub-Arctic ethnohistory, to indigenous people from the Yukon and Alaska, and to general readers who love to hear good stories well told. It will be a fine addition to any library.

Julie Cruikshank
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Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance. By Gerald Vizenor. Hanover, New Hampshire: Wesleyan University Press, 1994. 191 pages. \$30.00 cloth; \$13.95 paper.

Gerald Vizenor's *Manifest Manners* is a book one can love to hate. It combines the very worst of postmodernism's vernacular-driven plunge into cliquish obscurantism with its author's already hyperinflated sense of self-importance. The result is largely sterile where it is not opaque to the point of sheer meaninglessness.