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of humans as an excuse for superiority. Your elite justify their positions by pointing out the failings of the masses" (120).

The approach taken in *Two Families: Treaties and Government* threatens power relations precisely because of the traditions that form the base of Johnson's treaty knowledge. From Johnson's perspective, treaties were not articles of conquest but were sacred agreements mutually agreed on for the benefit of all participants. It is to this sentiment that Johnson continually returns for the sake of restoring the fundamental principles agreed on by Cree participants. Occasionally, when this continual return finds its way into the Canadian justice system, for example, when the commissioner investigating the death of an unarmed protestor states unequivocally that "we are all treaty people," it is a great benefit for all when a book such as *Two Families: Treaties and Government* is there to say what this means.

Rick Fehr

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"Until Our Hearts Are on the Ground": Aboriginal Mothering, Oppression, Resistance and Rebirth. Edited by D. Memee Lavell-Harvard and Jeanette Corbiere Lavell. Toronto: Demeter Press, 2006. 249 pages. \$29.95 paper.

Rarely does the title of an edited collection of writings drawn from personal experience, the social sciences, and literary criticism capture fairly the essence of its full contents. Even more rarely do we find this in a collection gathered internationally. *Until Our Hearts Are on the Ground* is one of these rare exceptions. Organized into four distinct sections, the collection moves seamlessly from self-reflections on personal journeys of becoming an Aboriginal mother, through indigenous conceptions of mothering, to state intrusions into the lives of mothers, to close with critical essays on literary representations of mothering. Authors come from across Canada, the United States, Ghana, and Australia and represent a number of distinct cultural groups in each country.

Lavell-Harvard and Corbiere Lavell have drawn together a selection of texts founded in feminist concepts—patriarchy, gender, oppression, liberation, and resistance—and enriched by framing the political economic context in discourses of colonialism/neocolonialism, repression, and domination. In their introductory chapter they lay out a schema for the reader to understand the experiential grounding of their collection and to appreciate the individual works' pedagogical power in relation to one another as each in its unique manner speaks from a position of marginalization, exploitation, or violation. They frame mothering in holistic terms that stress its spiritual, social, and cultural dimensions. Aboriginal mothering is positioned in opposition to the practices and ideologies of the dominant society: Aboriginal mothering is not only "different from" the dominant society's mothering, but also it is "often fundamentally opposed to the dominant society" (2). Three themes unite the works: an emphasis on community and ceremony; racial and sexist consequences of state domination; and resistance and revitalization.

The oft-repeated maxim, “it takes a community to raise a child,” is not only illustrated in the personal experiences of authors Kim Anderson, Joanne Arnott, and Leanne Simpson, but also is set out in the cultural terms of the Haudensaunee and Anishinabbe-kwe of Canada and the Ga of Ghana. Collective identity and well-being are understood through ceremony and the traditional teaching experienced throughout pregnancy, birth, and child rearing. Through personal transformation undergone during pregnancy and birthing, Anderson and Simpson come to a fuller spiritual self-awareness that they link to community resurgence which reclaims the traditional honor accorded mothers. Renée Elizabeth Mzinegiizhigo-kwe Bédard describes Anishinabee ideology of mothering that links nurture to Mother Earth and to community responsibility, a theme also taken up by Jan Noel. The Ga grandmothers, as described by Brenda McGadney-Douglass, Nana Araba Apt, and Richard Douglass, exemplify collectivism common to indigenous mothering that “defies the lasting effects of colonial powers, overlords or conquerors . . . through the defiant protection and nurture of their children” (107). They argue that Aboriginal values transcend national and continental boundaries; these give rise to collective leadership of grandmothers in an ongoing struggle for cultural survival. Joanne Arnott’s tale of traditional parenting illustrates the potential of collectivism that transcends cultural uniqueness. Caught in a crisis she turns not to grandmothers but to urban social agencies that offer traditional parenting skills. The facilitators’ and coclients’ skills and social support lead her to embrace mothering as acts of resistance and strength. In contrast, Joanne Whitley-Rogers, Josephine Etowa, and Joan Evans document the loss of cultural knowledge and describe barriers Mi’kmaq women face as they give birth in a context of health practices and expectations that marginalize and denigrate them. Whitley-Rogers and her coauthors place the onus on the dominant professional community’s members to provide culturally appropriate contexts for Aboriginal mothers and their infants.

State domination is understood by Lavell-Harvard and Corbiere Lavell to shape the “performance” of Aboriginal mothering. Oppressive state actions, whether by omission or commission, intrude into women’s lives in myriad ways that shape not only women’s consciousness as Aboriginal mothers but also the minutiae of daily life in which mothering is carried out. In Canada, no greater state intrusion has been felt than the Indian Act and its pernicious membership and registration regulations that have at various times forced women from their home communities through “marrying-out” and now restricts children’s rights to community in consequence of mixed parentage. In response, grandmothers now adopt grandchildren in order to provide an identity congruent with state definitions that allow transfer of rights and entitlements. Although several other authors in the book’s opening and closing sections stop short of analyzing the complexities of state engagement in favor of seeking redress in cultural practices, Lavell-Harvard and Corbiere Lavell delve into the need for consistent and concentrated political action. In their chapter “Aboriginal Women vs. Canada: The Struggle for Our Mothers to Remain Aboriginal,” they address the need to balance state powers to protect human rights and powers of self-government. Writing from their positions as mother and grandmother they conclude their

analysis of the impact of state interventions into Aboriginal identity with recognition that Aboriginal motherhood can not only be difficult, due to health risks, poverty, and discrimination within and external to their communities, it can be dangerous. Although Canada is clearly responsible for the onset of racial/gender discrimination that is now felt, through human rights protection it is also a potential source of remedy.

Articles by Randi Cull and Cheryl Gosselin show how colonial legacies of racism and sexism inherent to the Indian Act resonate with the powers of surveillance wielded by courts, police, and social workers. Cull writes an eloquent overview of these interrelations of power as she delineates the historic unfolding of stereotypes that mark Aboriginal mothers as “unfit” and render children vulnerable to apprehension. In a more intimate discourse, Gosselin traces the experiences of one mother in Quebec as she challenges the state’s right to take her children. Gosselin unpacks the legal and moral discourses used to construct the mother as one who let her “kids run wild” and in doing so reveals the discursive appeal of juxtaposing French language and collective rights against the individual rights of an Aboriginal mother. An article on residential schools by Rosalyn Ing further underscores the aptness of framing the state as the “big mother” against which Aboriginal women continuously struggle for their children’s and communities’ futures.

The final section of the book, “Literary Representations of Aboriginal Mothering,” offers an antidote to racial and sexist stereotyping. The three chapters, one each by Debra Bruch, Roxanne Harde, and Hilary Emmet, draw on various threads of literary criticism to unveil complex nuances of literature that restore dignity and courage to Aboriginal mothers as they struggle in positions of social powerlessness. Like the pieces on ideology and culture in the early sections, each stresses that “mother” signifies a relationship and role that extends beyond the biological to the social and political. Bruch stresses the strength of Australian Aboriginal mothering as a means to restore the Dreamtime heritage and self-identity. Harde works with the novels of Louise Erdrich and finds new strengths in mothering practices as generations of women emerge who can ground themselves in their heritage even as they effectively live with and within the dominant society. Emmett closes the book with a chapter that juxtaposes the Australian encyclopedic report’s narrative on “the stolen generations”—which locates Aboriginal mothering within fractured family structures—to literary narratives that mourn these fractures while they celebrate mothering.

Emmett introduces the term “natal alienation” to represent the assimilationist strategies that have undermined Aboriginal mothers. It is a term that speaks well to the themes of the collection, while the collection itself stands as a political gesture that simultaneously contests colonial legacies and honors Aboriginal mothers. The editors are to be commended for assembling a well-balanced collection. And yet a caveat is in order. In their own work and lives, Lavell-Harvard and Corbiere Lavell have not failed to address the complex consequences of patriarchy within their own communities. They unflinchingly challenge the idealized visions of the past and present; the same cannot be said for all their contributors. A willingness to turn a blind eye to the power

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).