

qui ne signifient pas nécessairement un bonheur accru.

A la fin, après avoir refusé le chemin vers l'or, Claude connaît enfin: “. . . une joie qu'il n'aurait pas su définir, un contentement de soi, la sensation d'avoir aperçu le monde tel qu'il était vraiment . . . ” (p. 119).

C'est bien ce que Yves Thériault a montré: “le monde tel qu'il était vraiment”, le monde où les enfants ne sont pas coupés de leurs racines ancestrales par des parents qui brisent la chaîne, mais plutôt un monde où les enfants apprennent qu'ils sont un des maillons d'une chaîne qui s'agrandira et sera d'autant plus forte qu'ils seront forts à leur tour comme leurs parents et grand'parents. Les parents de Claude avaient brisé la chaîne et lancé leur fils à la dérive, mais ils l'ont rattachée avant qu'il ne soit trop tard.

Kuanuten donnera peut-être le goût aux jeunes d'aller affronter le vent d'est et de connaître la vie de plein air.

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A TRAIL WELL TRODDEN

People of the buffalo, Maria Campbell. Illus. Douglas Tait and Shannon Two Feathers. Douglas and McIntyre, 1976. 47 pp. \$8.95 cloth. ISBN 0-88894-089-0.

People of the ice, Heather Smith Siska. Illus. Ian Bateson. Douglas and McIntyre, 1980. 47 pp. \$8.95 cloth. ISBN 0-88894-287-7.

People of the trail, Robin and Jillian Ridington. Illus. Ian Bateson. Douglas and McIntyre, 1978. 41 pp. cloth. ISBN 0-88894-221-4.

The Red Ochre people, Ingeborg Marshall. Illus. Martin Springett. J.J. Douglas Ltd., 1977. 48 pp. \$8.95 cloth. ISBN 0-88894-157-9.

Riel's people, Maria Campbell. Illus. David Maclagan. Douglas and McIntyre, 1978. 47 pp. \$8.95 cloth. ISBN 0-88894-222-2.

Sea and cedar, Lois McConkey. Illus. Douglas Tait. J.J. Douglas Ltd., 1973. 32 pp. \$8.95 cloth. ISBN 0-88894-042-4.

The first six volumes in the Douglas and McIntyre series *How they lived in Canada*, published between 1973 and 1980, attempt to convey to young readers a sense of the culture and accomplishments of the country's original inhabitants. Each volume deals with a distinct group. This may be a culture area — the Plains Indians, the Inuit, the Pacific Coast People, the Algonkians; a single tribe — the Beothuck; or a non-status group — the Métis.

The authors are well-qualified for their topics. Maria Campbell is a Métis writer who vividly described her childhood in her autobiography, *Halfbreed* (McClelland and Stewart Limited, Toronto: 1973). In this earlier work, she brings to bear a sensitivity to Métis and Plains culture that is at times agonizing in its intensity. In this series, Campbell tackles such delicate subjects as the role of girls in Plains society, and discusses menstruation and exclusion with

a straightforward and commonsense approach that is rare in any book, let alone a book designed for young readers.

The other authors all have particular competence in their subject area. They know the material extremely well, and the research has been painstakingly thorough.

The books convey a good sense of the values of Indian, Inuit, and Métis cultures, but this is often lost amid the plethora of detail concerning the material culture. This detail will be of considerable value to anyone who is working on a school project or essay, but it tends to drown out the more important questions: why did the author find this particular group of people worthy of study? Why should anyone be interested in a prehistoric way of life that is now dead and gone? What does all of this research into the past reveal about Canada in the 1980s? These philosophical questions are admittedly difficult to answer adequately for young children, but the writers, most notably Maria Campbell, have the literary talent and insight needed to give us an emotionally satisfying answer to these questions.

In addition to the fastidious research, these books have a number of good qualities. The artwork is beautifully detailed; the page layout is generous in its use of space and illustration. The typeface is easy to read. The bindings are of good durability and printed in full colour.

And yet, this series of books does not really break any new ground. The organization follows the pattern set by earlier writers on the subject. Diamond Jenness in *Indians of Canada*, and more notably Douglas Leechman in *Native tribes of Canada*, both used this organization of the material, and it has been followed more recently in the Royal Ontario Museum monographs and Ginn Studies in Canadian History.

The material is presented in a compartmentalized fashion, with sections dealing with "housing," "religion," and so forth. The illustrations are often presented in "museum" style, showing frontal or profile views of artifacts or costumes, and often lacking evidence of human connections. The overall effect is dry and repetitious. This might be less of a problem if one were to read only a single volume, rather than the entire set, but the concept seems jaded even on opening the first volume. I began with *Riel's people*, and subsequently read *The Red Ochre people*, and noted little variation in the authors' approaches to these two radically different cultures.

There are a number of minor problems which will possibly not interfere with the enjoyment of the average reader, but which become irritants when repeated. There are very few typographical errors ("moccasins" is spelled two different ways in *People of the trail*) but occasionally there appear to be sequencing problems, as in *People of the ice*, where the word *agloo* is used on page 29 but first defined on page 30.

The use of units of measurement is very confusing, since the books skip back and forth from metric to American units without any apparent consistency.

Careful editing might have eliminated this problem by adopting metric units throughout the series, with or without the American equivalents being given in parentheses.

One could not quibble about these minor faults if the series had outstanding features to distract the reader, but such is not the case. This entire series could have been produced as a single volume, with the resulting book much improved by compactness and the use of colour. As it stands now, the books are priced at \$8.95 each, or almost \$54 for the set. A single volume of much higher quality could surely have been produced for a much smaller price, resulting in better sales and a greater exposure. It is difficult to conceive of many readers paying \$54 for the series, although individual volumes might easily fall into the price range acceptable to most people. Nonetheless, some of the volumes have only thirty pages, and nine dollars for a thirty-page, black-and-white, bound pamphlet seems somewhat steep.

One may well ask how this series could have been handled more imaginatively. It is difficult to come up with something innovative when previous writers and editors have explored the subject so thoroughly, and in some cases, so well. Perhaps a first-person style, written from the viewpoint of a young girl or boy in the group being considered, would have livened things up somewhat. Perhaps use of colour in the illustrations, and making more of them complete portrayals of some aspect of daily *life* (as opposed to views of artifacts) would have better exposed the reader to the realities of life in the precontact period. A less fragmented approach to both the material and spiritual cultures might have led youngsters to an understanding of the whole individual and how he or she shares in the humanity of modern Canada.

Taken altogether, the strengths of this series are outweighed by the weaknesses. It would be no small challenge to eliminate these weaknesses, and yet that is the task that would have to be taken in order to produce a series that was less of a catalogue and more of a living history.

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TRoublesome INdIAN TALES

The trouble with adventurers, Christie Harris. Illus. by Douglas Tait. McClelland and Stewart, 1982. 162 pp. \$12.95 cloth. ISBN 0-7710-4028-8.

At a conference in 1980, Christie Harris said that her recently published collection of Northwest Coast tales, *The trouble with princesses*, was her best book. Certainly, she had more reason for pride than an author's natural fondness for her latest work. In *The trouble with princesses*, Harris had performed rather