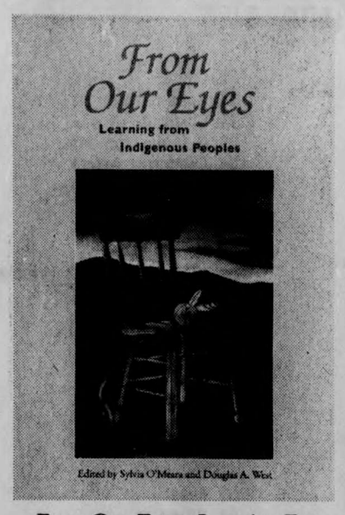
BOOKS

You have to laugh at yourself, because you'd cry your eyes out if you didn't.
- Indigo Girls



Compilation argues for aboriginal approaches to education

From Our Eyes: Learning From Indigenous Peoples
Editors Sylvia O'Meara and Douglas A. West

DANIELLE IRVING
THE BRUNSWICKAN

For centuries, indigenous people have been oppressed by Western colonizers who would like nothing more than to assimilate them into Western culture. Attempts at assimilation have taken many forms including education. Aboriginal peoples were removed from their communities and forced to spend their lives in residential schools. While residential schools are now a part of Canada's tainted history, education continues to be a predominant mechanism for assimilation. Native students are taught European history, Western philosophy, science, logic and art. All of their "lessons" are taught in the language of the colonizer.

From Our Eyes: Learning From Indigenous Peoples, edited by Sylvia O'Meara and Douglas A. West, was written as a response to this uneven balance in education. It's purpose is to show that indigenous people have their own philosophies and methods of education that allow for thr strengthening of aboriginal cultures. Indigenous knowledge and learning has continuously been absent from the halls of academia. This book gives aboriginal scholars, artists, healers, etc., a voice.

The book, a compilation of essays, achieves what the editors set out to do. *From Our Eyes* devotes chapters to the discussion of native philosophy, history, art, novels, traditional teachings, etc. After reading the book, one realizes that there is more than one world view and that our education system is biased. However, one would have to be brain dead or extremely right–wing (same thing) not to know this already.

I found the book to be very disappointing because it lacks a critique of political economy. This is important because the education system is a major institution within our society. *From Our Eyes* discusses the education system as if it is set apart from the rest of society. However, nothing is further from the truth; in fact, schools, universities, etc., serve as institutions that work to sustain the social relations of production. The book does not provide any answers as to why academic is assimilationist. In other words, the contributing authors (with the exception of one) do not trace the problem back to its source — the economy. Popular terms are thrown around: colonization, imperialism, etc. However, they are not linked to a theoretical perspective.

In lieu of a critique, *From Our Eyes*, gives legitimacy to the Western European educational insitutions. It appears as though most of the authors simply want a native perspective to be included into the system that has neglected aboriginal peoples for centuries. As previously mentioned, the book is devoid of analysis. It is not by accident that Aboriginal cultures, history, etc., are excluded from the Western system of education. This is done for the purpose of assimilating aboriginal peoples into dominant society. Educational institutions do not improve with aboriginal representation. Instead of aiding in the liberation of aboriginal peoples, native scholars have to tailor their material, thoughts, etc., to fit the Western institutions of education. To suggest otherwise is very idealistic. The contributors to the book argue that if native students could enroll in Western philosophy programs and make some changes, if history could be rewritten, if art and literature could be reclaimed, etc., everything would be better.

While I am not denying that reforms can make some advances for native peoples, reforms do no strike at the essence of the problem. Even John Snider, one contributor, who asserts that capitalism is the source of native oppression, does not have any solutions. Instead, he offers the utopian suggestion that people who have honour will return the stolen land.

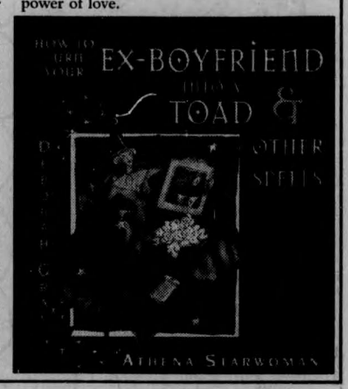
I do not recommend this book for students studying political economy and how it relates to aboriginal peoples. You will not encounter much analysis. However, if you are interested in a basic description of how native culture differs from Western European culture, you may want to pick up a copy of this book.

Magic spells offer hope for the love-plauged , the lovelorn and the vengeful

JENN BROWN
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Ha Ha revenge is sweet and here is a book to help you ensure it happens. *How to Turn Your Ex-Boyfriend into a Toad and Other Spells* is a clever little book full of spells to help believers accomplish the little necessities in life, like getting rid of someone you don't like or bringing romance your way. Deborah Gray and Athena Starwoman have collaborated to bring together ancient spells for modern times.

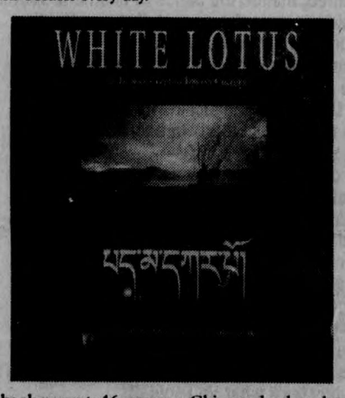
With 46 different spells, the book includes everything from spicing up your sex life to communicating with your cat. If you believe in magic, you will find renewed hope and if you aren't a believer you will find at least a good chuckle. Are you bitter and wanting to ensure that ex-boyfriend never has fun again without you? Are you a good little girl who just wants the best for her home and family? Well, there are spells for both. You can turn him into a toad or just make him love you forever. How seriously you take this book is up to you but in order for the spells to work the authors say you must believe in yourself and in the absolute power of love.



Tibetan plight chronicled in PBS documentary is subject of stunning companion book

KENT RAINVILLE
THE BRUNSWICKAN

When I first picked up this book, it was because I was impressed by the photos that were in it. As I flipped through the pages, admiring these photos, I thought to myself; how am I ever gonna' sit down and read this stuff? As it turned out, I not only managed to sit down and read it, but could not put it down. *White Lotus* is a stunning, if not shocking, portrayal of the plight of the Tibetan peoples to preserve their culture and traditions despite constant oppression from the hoards of Chinese that invade their borders every day.



The book details a 1988 expedition of five artists from three different countries, who travelled over 7,000 land miles visiting Tibetan communities, and returned with thousands of slide images, paintings, drawings, sketches and field recordings. From these materials, a PBS documentary was produced, and eventually the book was produced as a companion volume to the documentary. The book presents 16 essays, each written by an expert in the field, covering Tibetan life, art, literature, architecture and history.

The forward is written by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who has been living in exile in India since the Chinese invasion in 1950. China's invasion of Tibet continues even today. Under the guise of "peaceful liberation," the Peoples Republic of China has taken control of Tibet, and Tibetans have become a minority. During this "Cultural Revolution," over 6000 monasteries were destroyed, and over half of the Tibetan historic, philosophic and biographic literature was burned . In fact, over one million Tibetans, one sixth of the entire population, died as a direct result of Chinese occupation. Chinese leaders have apologized for the excesses of the Cultural Revolution, but even today, the threat to Tibet continues.

White Lotus provides an excellent introduction to Tibetan culture, and a shocking look at what happened in Tibet during the 1950's - while the world's eyes were on the Korean war.

Exposé of street life by the people who live it

Poetry and photography provide glimpse into the anguish of homeless life

Out in the Open
Photos by Bob Ballantyne
Text by street people of Victoria, B.C.
Northstone Publishing Inc.

DENNIS GERMAN
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Lives. These lives are human and they are real. One problem that society tends to overlook is that of homelessness. That's not to say that the contributors to this book don't have a home. They do. They exist on the streets in the same capacity as I would at home.

Unfortunately, this is where their problems occur. This is because they can function so well on the streets. It's not an easy life, but the homeless are chameleons. You adapt quickly when you're looking at a piece of food sitting in a garbage can and your belly is aching like there's no tomorrow. But, because the situation is not considered genocidal, it's overlooked.

So You Think This is Easy

So you think this is easy,
waking up on the cement at 3 a.m.,
the flop house is full again,
and you don't know where your kids are.

So you think this is easy,
waking up to the news
that another brother is dead.

So you think this is easy,
waking up to a sister sobbing,
her old man in jail,
no food in the house and the rent is due.

So you think this is easy,
asking for money from people
with disdain in their eyes,
so you can have one more meal in your belly.

So you think this is easy.
Come with me for one day
and see the life I choose,
then say this is easy.

By John.

Out in the Open delves into the lives of these people. The book consists of black and white photographs and poetry by people living on the streets. For a lot of the people on the streets there are no colours. Colours would signify joy. That's not to say that joy doesn't exist in their world. It does. However, when you're out on the streets and the rain is coming down, you're not necessarily worried about yourself getting wet . When you've got your child by your side, that's another story, and joy is the last thing that's on your mind.

Along with the photographs there are poetic commentaries. The commentaries are written by these people about themselves. They are snippets of their lives, of pain, love, death, hope and more pain.

I have hurt
(friends, family, loved ones).
I have used you.
I have forgotten you.
I have blamed you.

I have gone to jail -
to detox -
to long-term treatment.
Not once, not twice,
but time and time again,
one year following another.

But, alas, drugs are my only release.
I'm not to blame.
You are not to blame.

I am sick.
This substance that I inject into my body,
anyway I can,
as I often as I can,
as much as I can,
is in control.

It is like a fire burning inside me,
consuming all that I am,
It is like a cancer that the doctors
and specialists
have given up on.

In death, God will crucify
the sickness.
And in death,
only then,
will I find rest
in God's bosom.

By Mary Miller

In reprinting these poems and photos, my hope is to convey the anguish felt by these people, not to perpetuate the myth that "street people" are drug addicts or jail birds. We all know that this is not true – the wealthiest of people can be drug addicts or convicts.

The beauty in this book lies not in it's layout or even the photographs, but in the people themselves. The photographer, Bob Ballantyne, is also a street person and he has captured these people in their surroundings. The photographs have a gritty look to them -- the kind you won't find in fashion magazine. Although beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and black and white photos of "street people" may not be everybody's taste, however, if you could forget who you are for just a while and look past the "rough" exteriors you'll realize that these people are real. Just as real as you and I.

I recommend this book for two reasons. First, reading this lets us, the outsider, look in on a world that is for the main part shrouded in darkness and despair. This makes us realize that we may not have the new Nike Airs but at least we've got shoes on our feet. Second, when buying this book you can walk away with a smile knowing that a part of the proceeds from its sale go towards the Open Door Inner City Ministry in Victoria, B.C.

NBTel Trivia

Name: _____
Student ID#: _____ Tel#: _____

1. Call-Me ™ service is:
   a. a time saver when placing long-distance calls
   b. a telephone dating service
   c. a way to stay in touch with family and loved ones
2. Feature Creature ™ is:
   a. orange
   b. the Practical Functions Mascot
   c. the NBTel Long Distance Mascot
3. Which feature works like an invisible answering machine:
   a. TalkMail ™
   b. Call Forwarding
   c. *Call Answer*

Q. Are you currently an NBTel long-distance user?
A. _____
Q. Are you familiar with NBTel's Vista* 350?
A. _____
Q. What NBTel feature do you use the most?
A. _____

Ballot Boxes located in The Paper Trail and at The Cellar

NBTel

*TM - New North Media Inc., - NBTel Registered User
* - Northern Telecom Canada Limited - NBTel Registered User

NBTel Trivia

Fill out this Ballot correctly for a chance to win
a $1,500 Travel Voucher
to be drawn at
The Last Class Bash Skydigger's concert
at The Cellar (April 11th)
Additional ballots can be obtained from your
NBTel Rep at the following events:
March 21- Local Band @ The Cellar
March 26 - Big Sugar @ the cafeteria
April 4 - Local Band @ The Cellar
PRIZES WILL BE GIVEN AWAY NIGHTLY

NBTel