

## Culture



# John GODDARD, Last Stand Of The Lubicon Cree, Vancouver, BC: Douglas and McIntyre Ltd, 1991; hard cover: \$26.95 in book stores, \$20 from the Lubicon Cree Nation

Joan Ryan

Volume 12, numéro 1, 1992

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1081570ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1081570ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

### Éditeur(s)

Canadian Anthropology Society / Société Canadienne d'Anthropologie (CASCA), formerly/anciennement Canadian Ethnology Society / Société Canadienne d'Ethnologie

### ISSN

0229-009X (imprimé)

2563-710X (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

### Citer ce compte rendu

Ryan, J. (1992). Compte rendu de [John GODDARD, Last Stand Of The Lubicon Cree, Vancouver, BC: Douglas and McIntyre Ltd, 1991; hard cover: \$26.95 in book stores, \$20 from the Lubicon Cree Nation]. *Culture*, 12(1), 98–99. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1081570ar>

Tous droits réservés © Canadian Anthropology Society / Société Canadienne d'Anthropologie (CASCA), formerly/anciennement Canadian Ethnology Society / Société Canadienne d'Ethnologie, 1992

Ce document est protégé par la loi sur le droit d'auteur. L'utilisation des services d'Érudit (y compris la reproduction) est assujettie à sa politique d'utilisation que vous pouvez consulter en ligne.

<https://apropos.erudit.org/fr/usagers/politique-dutilisation/>

**é**rudit

Cet article est diffusé et préservé par Érudit.

Érudit est un consortium interuniversitaire sans but lucratif composé de l'Université de Montréal, l'Université Laval et l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Il a pour mission la promotion et la valorisation de la recherche.

<https://www.erudit.org/fr/>

elles conscientes ou inconscientes, ont-elles un sens? Quelques auteurs se sont attaqués à ce problème en comparant les régularités trouvées dans leur matériel avec une simulation faite pour établir des récurrences laissées statistiquement au hasard. Ceci est des plus stimulant mais n'épuise pas toujours le problème puisqu'il reste quelquefois celui du sens des résultats à élucider. Bref, le livre nous donne un état de la question qui se termine par des questions. Il intéressera certainement les incondtionnels de la parenté mais il risque de faire sourciller les autres car il donne souvent l'impression d'être le résultat des cogitations des membres d'un club fermé ou d'une tribune pour initiés qui dialoguent entre eux, au détriment du lecteur "généraliste", ce qui est dommage.

John GODDARD, *Last Stand Of The Lubicon Cree*, Vancouver, BC: Douglas and McIntyre Ltd, 1991; hard cover: \$26.95 in book stores, \$20 from the Lubicon Cree Nation.

by Joan Ryan,

Arctic Institute of North America.

No one unassociated with the Lubicons could appreciate fully the fine job Goddard has done in presenting the details in his book with clarity and enviable simplicity. Written in a direct style, Goddard unfolds a tapestry of many colours, catching the hues, as the description carries us from the historical context of the Lubicon situation, through the immediate past and into the present. Generations of researchers to come will thank and acknowledge him for the gargantuan task he undertook and accomplished well. I am very grateful to have this work to cite.

Students of history, race relations, native studies, anthropology, law and political science, among the few, will have something concrete, accurate and understandable to read. One of the criticisms will be that it does not include "everything", a criticism which must be ignored if literary sanity is to prevail. No one book on the Lubicon could include "everything". It would have been useful, as a methodological point of interest, if Goddard had provided some personal notes to indicate how he selected materials and events upon which to report and how he set his priorities to limit his task.

The chronicle of benign colonialism, of deceitful administration, of promises for land made and forgotten, of justice systems which failed, of company greed and of a new reserve created by acrimony are hardly counterbalanced by the compelling account of a desperate but strong small group of Crees fighting for their lands and their lives. Likely, the story will strike some readers as too appalling to be believed. [The Alberta Report reviewer titled his submission "Manufacture of the Lubicon Myth"; for gallows humour try reading it and remaining calm (January 27, 1992). After all, we have the Charter, and we have the Human Rights Commission which tells us all is not well in South Africa, Cuba, and Mexico. Then how could this happen in Canada; how can it still continue? How can Canada get away with it?

The facts, as set out by Goddard, are facts. Readers will have to rely on the integrity of the author and believe them, indeed ponder at length over them. The genocidal consequences of the events are painfully laid out, like a petit point—stitch by stitch for all to see. Think of the hands that made those stitches: generations of Indian Affairs Ministers and bureaucrats, bulldozer operators, judges, men of the cloth, provincial bureaucrats with sleazy ministers, multinational presidents of oil and gas companies and their crews in the field, their lawyers, and their political pals in power and behind the scenes—all men.

All men! The male perspective in this book is overwhelming even though it is understandable that the author who spent his time in the field with men should write primarily about men. Nor is it unusual in our discipline. However, that unitary perspective is painful to read because we know that the elderly and middle-aged women of Lubicon continue to hold that society in a fragile balance—like holding a piece of worn cloth lest it fray completely into a mass of disconnected threads. Few of them are mentioned and fewer still are named. Non-native women don't fare much better, for example, there is no mention of Rosemary Brown's excellent documentation of the tragic impacts of major resource development on women and children [MA Thesis, UC, 1990], nor of her major role as coordinator of the Committee Against Racism, the key Lubicon support group in Calgary. Hopefully, we will see her work in print in the near future.

Simple explanations come to mind: the leaders were men; the perpetrators were men; men met together; the police were men; men rode in trucks

together; men hunted and trapped together; men talked to each other; the lawyers were men. But, women were there too — on the traplines, doing hides, doing meat; they were at the barricades and stood together in the dark awaiting the arrival of the Olympic torch and they were in Europe, in the courts and at home. They were the stabilizers and the encouragers; they continued to maintain family daily life when men couldn't. It is unfortunate, therefore, to see them rendered invisible.

In the Last Stand of the Lubicon, despite its jacket announcement that Goddard "points the way to solutions", there are missed opportunities for explanatory and critical analyses, which is disappointing. A question which haunts most of us concerns the lack of meaningful explanations for the duplicity, cruelty and hatred with which Canadian government officials, both federal and provincial at the highest levels, have sought to destroy the Lubicon people and society—and continue to do so. Perhaps others interested in publishing on the Lubicon situation can provide the insights and analyses into government and legal behaviours masked in the cloak of "policy and practice."

It is difficult not to expect too much from the first book out on the Lubicon. The book is an excellent documentary of key events which have been critical in the destruction of the way of life of the Lubicon Cree Nation. I recommend it for general reading, for courses, and for the basis of action because it's not over yet. We owe Goddard a great deal for condensing the complicated and extensive materials from the archives, government documents, the courts, and personal interviews into something we all can read and understand. It must have been a task that was overwhelming and depressing at many points. Give the book to everyone you know!

Gerald POCIUS, *A Place to Belong: Community and Order in Everyday Space in Calvert, Newfoundland*. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1991, 350 pp.

Gerald POCIUS, *Living in a Material World: Canadian and American Approaches to Material Culture*, St. John's: Institute of Social & Economic Research, 1991, 290 pp.

by Brian Rusted

University of Calgary

In the penultimate essay of *Living in a Material World*, Gerald Pocius says that the study of material culture is "a distinct, if little unified, discipline." Both volumes under consideration here—one edited by and the other authored by Pocius—provide ample evidence of what makes material cultural research distinct. By implication, they also provide good reasons for a lack of unity.

Pocius has been researching aspects of material culture in Newfoundland and contributing to the field in both Canada and the United States since the 1970's. *A Place to Belong* is a culmination of his Newfoundland research, while *Living in a Material World* samples the richness and variety of scholarship from across North America. *Living in a Material World* is one in a series of "social and economic papers" published by Newfoundland's Institute of Social and Economic Research. The book is made to be held. ISER has a longstanding reputation for research, and publications like this will only enhance it. *A Place to Belong* is positively sumptuous. Replete with maps, diagrams, figures and photographs, the page design has an openness that places the reader in a landscape all its own.

The essays in *Living in a Material World* are from a 1986 conference on "North American Material Culture Research: New Objectives, New Theories" hosted jointly by Delaware's Winterthur Museum and ISER. Perhaps as a consequence, the papers themselves are uneven in quality: some are substantial scholarly pieces, while others are brief, often programmatic statements with little field research or theory development to support their claims. The latter may have force in a conference setting, but not when translated to the page; the former can be tedious when compressed into a paper session, but in published form they assume a defiant pose that supports the researcher.