

Americans' suffering and that this forms a basis for identification. There are, however, major differences. Christ, being Jewish, had knowledge of his ethnic, cultural history. He also had a spoken and written language. The African-American only had the culture, language and history of the enslaver.

Mention should have been made of African-Americans during slavery, men such as Absalom Jones, the first black ordained Episcopal priest in the United States, and Richard Allen, who was born a slave and later became the originator of the African Methodist Church. By providing vivid examples of Christian Africans and African-Americans and their accomplishments, the author might have achieved one of his aims.

In conclusion, although *The Color of God* is an interesting and well written philosophical, theoretical and theological discourse on the fundamentals of black Christianity and may provide the black theologians with inspirations, it seems to fall short of inspiring self-worth to the average African-American.

—Ivan Ainyette  
College of New Rochelle

**Ruth Kirk. *Tradition and Change on the Northwest Coast: The Makah, Nuuchahnulth, Southern Kwakiutl, and Nuxalk.* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986) 256 pp., \$19.95 paper.**

Much has been written about the traditional social organization, art, and technology of the Northwest Coast Indians whose settlements stretch from the state of Washington, through British Columbia, and into southern Alaska. In this volume, writer-photographer Ruth Kirk summarizes the historic and present-day culture of four native groups in the southern part of this region: the Makah, Southern Kwakiutl, and people who call themselves Nuuchahnulth and Nuxalk. Until recently, the latter two groups were referred to, respectively, as the Nootka and the Bella Coola. Kirk's task, undertaken with the sponsorship of the Royal British Columbia Museum, was to update information in older publications and present it in a popular format for the general public. In addition to utilizing previously published data, Kirk drew upon the expertise of contemporary linguists, ethnologists, archaeologists, and—most importantly—many native elders. Kirk emphasizes that the elders bring a “sense of place and past” to our understanding since these people are a “bridge across time.” Numerous first-person accounts and portraits of living individuals bring an exciting and dynamic dimension to this

book which is handsomely illustrated with copious photographs, line drawings, and color plates. Specialists may be disappointed that there are no footnotes or citations within the text; there is, however, a selected, topical, bibliography which will allow the non-specialist to delve further into the rich literature on the subject.

As indicated in the book's title, Kirk focuses in on cultural traditions and change. There have been, indeed, rapid and significant changes in Northwest Coast Indian culture. The author illustrates this fact by showing an Edward Curtis photograph of a woman dressed in woven cedar bark clothing and carrying a large burden basket with a tumpline. Juxtaposed is a photograph of that woman's great-granddaughter who recently graduated from the University of British Columbia Law School. The latter woman is dressed in a fashionable slack suit and carries a large purse. Kirk comments, "The route from posing in cedar bark to finishing law school has taken about seventy years." The forte of this book, however, is its emphasis on cultural continuity over long periods of time. Many of these cultural traditions go back centuries if not millennia as documented in the archaeological excavations at the Ozette site, an ancient settlement of the Makah Indians. This matter is of particular interest to those involved in the study of ethnic groups and the diachronic processes of ethnicity. Many Northwest Coast cultural traditions have persisted in spite of the tendency of all societies to change and, in this case, the attempts at forced assimilation by the dominant white population. For example, even though the potlatch was officially outlawed, the practice continues today in a good deal of its earlier social and material contexts. At one point, native children were punished if they spoke their own language in school. Today, one elder recalls that fact and adds that when he taught linguistics at the University of Victoria, he did not allow English to be spoken until the end of the lesson. He comments, albeit with bitter humor, "That gave me a great deal of satisfaction." A number of vignettes deal, instructively and often poignantly, with a variety of cultural facets including puberty observances, private ownership of songs, basketry technology, importance of the names of chiefs, why salmon bones are returned to the river, and modern controversies regarding fishing rights.

This book should be in all public libraries as a resource for teachers dealing with American Indian topics in their classes. The text is well written, the illustrations inviting, and the emphasis is on American Indians in contemporary society as opposed to the past tense in which they are, all too often, represented.

—David M. Gradwohl  
Iowa State University