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James D. Ford
Department of Geography
McGill University
Montreal, Quebec H3A 2K6, Canada
james.ford@mcgill.ca

ISUMA: INUIT VIDEO ART. By MICHAEL ROBERT EVANS. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008. ISBN 978-0773533783 (paper). xiv + 236 p., glossary, notes, references, index. Softbound. Cdn\$32.95; US\$29.95.

In 2001, the Canadian feature film *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* dazzled global audiences with its stunning portrayal of Inuit folklore brought to life. The first dramatic film ever made that was produced, directed, and acted by Inuit, it won awards around the world, including the prestigious Camera d'Or award at the Cannes International Film Festival. While this groundbreaking film deserved all the accolades it received, the bigger story belongs to the company behind it: Igloolik Isuma Productions. In his book, *Isuma: Inuit Video Art*, Michael Evans takes an in-depth look at the founders of this fascinating company and uncovers their politics and circumstances as they battle for nothing less than the survival of Inuit culture.

Since the first Europeans set foot in the Arctic, Canada's North has been viewed largely through the words, pictures, and films of people from the South. Films such as the 1922 "documentary" *Nanook of the North* were filled with inaccuracies and misconceptions, yet they influenced the opinions of people around the world. Like other indigenous groups, Inuit were simply ethnographic subjects to be studied and

interpreted by those who did not live in the North; Inuit lives were consistently viewed as just one long struggle for survival in a harsh land. What happens however, when the indigenous group steps behind the camera to observe and interpret its own culture? This is the central question Michael Evans works diligently to answer throughout the book.

Evans begins *Isuma* with an abbreviated history of Inuit art and how it has evolved through the ages. As a nomadic people, the Inuit found it difficult to create art for art's sake as they could not carry non-essential items with them. Instead, they expressed their creativity through elaborate decorations on day-to-day items, such as carved knife handles and embroidered clothing. These embellishments reflected their deep connection to nature and their beliefs about the world. Once the whalers arrived in the 1700s, the Inuit began making carvings for trade. In the 1940s to 1960s, carvings and other artwork took on even more commercial importance when Inuit families were pressured to settle in permanent communities where paid work was virtually non-existent. Today, the world recognizes Inuit carvings and prints as among the best in the world. Inuit art is still evolving and now includes video as a relatively new art form. Michael Evans argues that the video art of today's Inuit, just like their carvings and prints, belongs on the world stage.

In a culture with no written language, storytelling was an important part of Inuit life as a means to pass on folklore and knowledge. Video was only a natural extension of this storytelling, but it quickly took on political tones when it came to broadcasting. Just as Canadians feared that the dominance of American programming on our television sets would diminish Canadian culture, so too did the "North" fear that "Southern" programming would have negative effects on Inuit culture. The Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (IBC) was created by the Canadian government to help counteract these fears. While there was a production centre for Native programming in Igloolik, the IBC's head office remained under Southern control, sparking criticisms that the IBC was simply "a colonial enterprise...with a Native face" (p. 123). At issue was the power over who got to tell the stories and control how they were made. It was under these conditions that *Isuma* was born.

Evans devotes several pages to each of *Isuma*'s principal founders—Zacharias Kunuk, Paul Apak, Pauloosie Qulitalik, and Norman Cohn—outlining their backgrounds and the circumstances that led them to form *Isuma*. Kunuk was the driving member behind the formation of *Isuma*, which means "thought" in Inuktitut. Born in a sod house in 1957, Kunuk spent his childhood living in a relatively traditional way, but was sent away for school when he was nine. There he developed a love for carving and for movies. He sold his carvings to pay for his video equipment and taught himself filmmaking. In 1982, he was hired as a producer for IBC and shortly afterwards, he met Norman Cohn, a Montreal-based video artist who shared many of his beliefs. By 1990, Kunuk had grown tired of the politics of funding inherent in the IBC, and he formed *Isuma* with Cohn, Qulitalik, and Apak.

The singular goal behind Igloolik Isuma Productions was to promote Inuit culture and allow Inuit to tell stories in their own way. They wanted the world to see Inuit not just as a people who merely survived, but as a people with a thriving culture—a people who had hopes and dreams and lived lives as rich as any around the world. They also wanted to record as much of the old ways as possible to preserve them. As Evans puts it, “Isuma stands against the colonial impulse that drove Canada to conquer the Arctic not with armies but with schools, settlements and the Mounted Police. Isuma advances its position by holding up Inuit life and culture, both past and present, as models for the rest of the world” (p. 30). The creation of Isuma was basically an act of defiance in the face of cultural imperialism from the South.

At 236 pages with 11 chapters, the book covers many facets of Isuma Productions and the politics of storytelling. Many interesting details give insight into the company, as well as life in the North. For example, Isuma is run with more Inuit sensibilities, and time and deadlines don’t have the same urgency as in companies in the South. The importance of community in the North is also apparent in Isuma. Evans describes each of Isuma’s projects and goes into great detail on the background and behind the scenes of *Atanarjuat*, which was largely a community effort. While it employed many locals, the filming of *Atanarjuat* was also an opportunity for many people to practice little-used skills like sewing traditional clothing or building igloos. The book also gives some insight into how films are made in Canada and the difficulties of obtaining funding in the North. It also makes it clear that the Inuit are a diverse group, and no single company speaks for the whole.

Overall, *Isuma: Inuit Video Art* was an interesting read and gave great insight into Isuma Productions, as well as into life and culture in the North. In the end, Michael Evans succeeds in answering the question he sets out for himself in the beginning. I would recommend this easily accessible book to students of film, journalism, and northern studies, or to anyone with an interest in how media and culture interact.

Sandra Tober
Karvonen Films Ltd.
2001–91 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T6P 1L1, Canada
films@karvonenfilms.com

INTERNATIONAL HANDBOOK OF RESEARCH ON INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIP. Edited by LEO-PAUL DANA and ROBERT B. ANDERSON. Northampton, Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2007. ISBN 978-1-84376-834-0. xiv + 620 p., b&w illus., 50 contributors, references, index. Hardbound. US\$315.00.

Recognizing the often poor living conditions of the world’s indigenous peoples, Dana and Anderson have pulled together authors and case studies from around the world,

reflecting the often creative tension between culture and economy, indigenous livelihood and entrepreneurship. In Canada’s case, Robert B. Anderson, Scott McGillivray and Robert J. Giberson note the “abysmal socioeconomic conditions of aboriginal peoples” (Chapter 27:338–339); high rates of unemployment and welfare dependency, especially on reserves; and a growing and young population needing work. They report estimates of the economic cost of underdevelopment at \$7.5B in 1996, rising to more than \$11B by 2016. Ana Maria Peredo, writing about Quechua communities in Peru (Chapter 34), wrote that people are caught on the horns of a dilemma: they can choose to remain on the land and eke out a subsistence-level existence where social services are limited or non-existent, or move to towns and cities where crime and unemployment are rife, but some possibilities for income exist. Her analysis is probably equally true, in one degree or another, for indigenous peoples in Canada and around the world.

A part of the solution may lie in smarter, more appropriate development opportunities for aboriginal peoples, including supports for entrepreneurship. Sections in the book describe experiences from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Americas, and the South Pacific. Of specific interest to northernists are the chapters on Greenland and Nunavut; Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Russia; and Alaska and the Yukon, as well as examples from aboriginal communities in Canada’s provinces. However, complementary experiences shared by indigenous peoples in other parts of the world add to the overall understanding of patterns in aboriginal community development, and to the development of a theory of aboriginal entrepreneurship, which is one of Dana and Anderson’s goals.

In Chapter 29, Léo-Paul Dana, Teresa E. Dana, and Robert B. Anderson refer to Huntington’s statement that globalization has neither standardized societies nor produced a homogeneous world culture: indigenous cultures are truly heterogeneous. This book attempts to portray the variety of ways that indigenous communities and entrepreneurs have found to address their economic needs within the context of cultural and social acceptability, and the larger global influences upon them. It is clear from the cases presented that some themes are shared by indigenous communities in many places. These include an attachment to place and the need to have certain ownership and management rights over land and resources; a preference for communally based or cooperative-type enterprise; the desire to respect ties to land and culture; the opportunities presented by smart blending of economy and culture; the need to generate income in order to support social programs and capacity development; and often, the need to deal with the “baggage” of history and colonization or conflict.

Many chapters are fairly descriptive and historical, with only short sections for analysis or discussion of the field observations that are presented. Theory, which is addressed briefly in three introductory chapters and one final one, focuses on the frequent incompatibility of indigenous cultural values with mainstream assumptions. Indigenous