bring readers up to the present with respect to land use planning and the issues with which it is associated. For those with longer involvements in northern affairs, it brings together a diversity of views of land use planning not found elsewhere.

The editors have succeeded quite well in elucidating both the development of land use planning and the issues that are raised by such an initiative.

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FACTORS INFLUENCING KAMIK PRODUCTION IN ARCTIC BAY, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES. By JILL E. OAKES. Mercury Series, Canadian Ethnology Service Paper No. 107. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1987. 54 p., illus., photos. Softbound. Cdn$4.00.

During the recent Canadian International Fur Fair in Montreal, fashion writer Iona Monahan wrote an unusually enthusiastic column. She urged furriers to visit the McCord Museum's new exhibit: "Ivalu — Traditions of Inuit Clothing." The Inuit, she wrote, "were centuries ahead in fur and skin design" (*Gazette*, 26 April 1988).

As examples of Inuit fur savvy, Monahan cites the use of dropped shoulders and other techniques to move seams away from areas of stress. Designs incorporated natural qualities of the fur — head skin for hoods, supple shoulder and back fur to cover human shoulders, rumps for trousers and tough leg skins to make mitts and boots. Tight stitching kept out wind and water. Current fashion techniques like the alternation of dark and light colours or fur worked in decorative mosaics were developed by Inuit seamstresses long ago.

Jill Oakes's detailed monograph on skin boot production today in one northern Baffin Island community shows that the survival and evolution of traditional design and handicraft skills are influenced by a complex web of social, economic and environment factors.

The resettlement of Inuit in larger communities thirty years ago and the availability of alternative footwear from the outside have reduced the need for, and sometimes the suitability of, kamiks. Meanwhile, changing lifestyles and the possibility of wage employment redefine the significance of time as a "cost" in the production (and maintenance) of traditional clothing. In Arctic Bay, resettlement marks a clear turning point:

> Women ten years or older at the time of this major change in lifestyles, remain active kamik sewers today. Younger females have grown up with little interest in kamik production skills [p. 49].

The factors at play behind this deceptively simple statement are, as Oakes shows, often ambiguous. The influence of Catholic and Anglican missions brings skin preparation and sewing to a halt on Sundays. But Christmas and Easter have become occasions for the production and wearing of new kamiks. More significantly, resettlement changed the channels through which skills are transmitted:

> Traditionally, girls were taught to sew by their mothers or grandmothers. . . . Steps were demonstrated and handed to the student to try. When the student ran into difficulty the teacher would work over the difficult portion and pass it back to the student. Consequently, the first kamik was made well enough to be worn. Today, girls are taught in a course called "Culture" at school. . . . The first pair of kamiks often contain many errors and are generally thrown into the garbage. Rarely does the student attempt a second pair [p. 47].

Oakes has an advantage over earlier observers since she actually sewed with the women whose skills she documents. Her admiration for their work is apparent when she describes the subtle art of using the wearer's "hand-span" to develop kamik patterns or the painstaking techniques of waterproof stitching. She comments insightfully on why more difficult techniques are sometimes avoided by individual sewers.

While threatened, traditional crafts demonstrate tenacious adaptability. Sections of formica counter tops discarded after installing modern sinks are salvaged as scraping boards for cleaning sealskins. We also learn that extra-soft, creamy-white leather may be produced by smearing pelts with "Mr. Clean." (Ad agencies take note.)

Oakes's hands-on approach results in some interesting exchanges. Younger women, she finds, fear that chewing seal hides (to prepare them for kamik production) might damage their teeth. Oakes's use of a wringer washing machine to soften soles (a technique she learned from a woman from Chesterfield Inlet) is watched with keen interest.

Another process developed by her friend in Chesterfield Inlet is revealed with the sympathetic and understated humour that pops up here and there to brighten what could easily have become a comprehensive but lifeless report:

> Once the skin is pliable she dips it into a bowl of warm water mixed with a bit of salt and dish detergent, rubs the skin with lard or goose fat, wraps it in a plastic bag and puts it under a sofa cushion overnight. It is not certain why this is done [p. 34].

When all is said, making kamiks is hard work — physically difficult, time-consuming and requiring considerable skill. Meanwhile, the hunting culture in which it played such an important role is under siege by forces still largely beyond Inuit control. In Arctic Bay, for example,

> The Nanisivick mine ships lead and zinc in early June, six to eight weeks before the ice normally breaks up. Early shipping speeds up the annual ice break-up, disrupting floe-edge hunting of narwhales and seals. . . . Shortened ice hunting seasons reduce the need for kamiks to protect hunters' feet and reduce the number and variety of skins returned to sewers [p. 46].

The ability of Inuit across the Arctic to finance their hunting activities has, meanwhile, been seriously eroded by the recent collapse of world markets for sealskins, orchestrated by "animal-rights" campaigners.

The future for traditional crafts in this context is uncertain. Oakes notes that in the late 1950s and early 1960s women began using nylon fabric for the upper portion of kamiks, to reduce their use of sealskins, which were then selling for high prices in the international market. The drop in prices after the first wave of anti-sealing protests, in 1964, resulted in a return to sealskin uppers for kamiks. Today, "more time and materials are used to create exquisitely hand crafted kamiks" (p. 48).

Still, Oakes ends her book with a plea for more research in the fields of Inuit skin preparation, design and construction of all types of skin clothing, which "must be documented before they are forgotten." Her own contribution to this recording effort will no doubt be appreciated by ethnologists, northern educators and museum curators, as suggested in her abstract.

For less specialized readers (like this reviewer), Oakes's book suggests a different order of question: are the skills she describes necessarily doomed to the dustbin of history?

To someone raised close to the Montreal fur-garment manufacturing industry, Oakes's description of the knowledge, skill and sensitivity with which Inuit women handle and sew furs sounds a familiar chord. Greenlanders are now successfully producing and marketing their own sealskin garments. With the craft skills that Canadian Inuit women obviously possess, surely some similar project could be initiated on Baffin Island?

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POSTGLACIAL VEGETATION OF CANADA. By J.C. RITCHIE. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987. 151 p., appendix, refs., index. Hardbound. US$70.00.

J.C. Ritchie has, in his usual clear, concise and comprehensive manner, produced a book that will be an asset for all those involved in