

considering them as having lived tragic lives, victims of European greed" (8).

This is not your average historical biography, however. Allen warns us from the beginning that she will create a narrative based on Native oral tradition that encompasses magic, stories from other Nations, and ways of knowing that we seldom have access to in more academic writing. What happens is that the biography unfolds like a story woven with facts and figures from history, while encouraging the reader to use her imagination.

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Rock, Ghost, Willow, Deer: A Story of Survival.

Allison Adelle Hedge Coke. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2004; illustrations; ISBN 0-8032-1527-4; 198 pages; \$24.95 US.

When the phrase "truth is stranger than fiction" was coined, they could have had this book in mind. Hedge Coke is truly a resilient soul who endured more hardships than any one person should have to, and has survived to write about those experiences today. This heartbreaking memoir includes surviving a household where her mother was schizophrenic and her brother was a bully; repeated rapings; drug and alcohol addictions; physical and sexual abuse by her husbands; and enduring life threatening health issues. Hedge Coke writes an honest, straightforward account as she retells the stories of how she got to be where she is today and the strength she drew from her family and herself to survive.

The actions of Hedge Coke's mother had catastrophic effects on her children, including forcing Allison to start staying away from home by the age of nine. She said the one stabilizing factor in her life was her father, who created a normal home life for his family and instilled them with stories of their Tsala-gi heritage. These people and their stories are what kept Hedge Coke alive.

This book examines some very tough subjects, such as domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and rape. Through each episode Hedge Coke recounts the facts simply, truthfully, without embellishment, and with just enough emotion to allow the reader to be there, feeling her pain, yet without recounting all the horrors that would cause the reader to abandon the book without finishing it. Once accused by her sister Pumpkin of being uneducated and backward because her language was not sophisticated enough, Hedge Coke here does an excellent job of keeping the language real and accessible.

Although the atrocities faced by Hedge Coke seemed insurmountable at times, she persevered

nonetheless, earned an MFA, raised two sons, and worked as an activist for many Native-related causes. This book takes a hard look at how police and other authorities fail to respond to women and to Native people's concerns by ignoring what has happened or making light of what has taken place. Hedge Coke provided examples of how people don't listen to women, such as giving her Novocain for dental work, and the near-death results she suffered because of others' refusal to listen.

Hedge Coke tells her life like it was. No stranger to hard work, she writes in depth about being poor, working as a migrant laborer, handling horses, trolling for fish, and making something out of nothing. Her family was an important support system, but mainly she relied on herself. This memoir stands as an inspiration to others who have lead a hard life and shows that if you have a determination to survive, you can overcome just about every obstacle.

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Skins: Contemporary Indigenous Writing.

Compiled and edited by Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm & Josie Douglas. Cape Croker Reserve, Ontario & Australia: Kegeдонce Press and Jukurpa Books, 2000; ISBN 1-86465-032-X; vix + 172 pges; \$24.95.

There were times I sat with Dora Rouge in the little room with the antlers and turtle shell rattles and the box I snooped in. We would breathe together the way wolves do with their kith and kin, the way they nurture relations by breathing. This breath was alive. It joined us as we were joined in so many other ways.

This passage into American Indian author Linda Hogan's "Dora Rouge's Bones" emphasizes and describes the Indigenous experience in this collection of stories from 19 Indigenous authors from Canada, the USA, Australia and New Zealand.

Compiled and edited by one of Canada's recognized Indigenous authors, Kateri Akewenzie-Damm and Josie Douglas, coordinator of the Australian collection, the book introduces a stimulating and riveting collection of short stories that can be appreciated by the student, the novice, and seasoned reader and would be especially relevant in Indigenous studies programs. Under the soft burnt-umber cover is a rich collection of short stories pulsing with action, drama, romance, tragedy and humor.