



Crow Is My Boss: The Oral Life History of a Tanacross Athabaskan Elder

Kenny Thomas Sr., Craig Mishler

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Born in 1922, Kenny Thomas Sr. has been a trapper, firefighter, road builder, river-freight hauler, and soldier. Today he is a respected elder and member of a northern Athabaskan tribal group residing in Tanacross, Alaska. As a song and dance leader for the Tanacross community, Thomas has been teaching village traditions at an annual culture camp for more than twenty years. Over a three-year period, folklorist Craig Mishler conducted a series of interviews with Thomas about his life experiences. *Crow Is My Boss* is the fascinating result of this collaboration.

Written in a style that reflects the dialogue between Thomas and Mishler, *Crow Is My Boss* retains the authenticity of Thomas's voice, capturing his honesty and humor. Thomas reveals biographical details, performs and explains traditional folktales and the potlatch tradition, and discusses ghosts and medicine people. One folktale is presented in both English and Tanacross, Thomas's native language. A compelling personal story, *Crow Is My Boss* provides insight into the traditional and contemporary culture of Tanacross Athabaskans in Alaska.

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