



Now I Know Only So Far: Essays in Ethnopoetics

By Dell Hymes

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In *Now I Know Only So Far*, sociolinguist and ethnopoetic scholar Dell Hymes examines the power and significance of Native North American literatures and how they can best be approached and appreciated. Such narratives, Hymes argues, are ways of making sense of the world. To truly comprehend the importance and durability of these narratives, one must investigate the ways of thinking expressed in these texts—the cultural sensibilities also deeply affected by storytellers' particular experiences and mastery of form.

Included here are seminal overviews and reflections on the history and potential of the field of ethnopoetics. Native North American stories from areas ranging from the Northwest Coast to the Southwest take center stage in this book, which features careful scrutiny of different realizations and tellings of the same story or related stories. Such narratives are illuminated through a series of verse analyses in which patterned relations of lines throw into relief differences in emphasis, shape, and interpretation. A final group of essays sheds light on the often misunderstood and always controversial role of editing and interpreting texts. *Now I Know Only So Far* provides penetrating discussions and absorbing insights into stories and worlds, both traditional and new.

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Editorial Review

Review

"In stressing the lessons to be learned from Amerindian texts, this author reminds us that sociolinguistics must pay attention to language in action in all verbal exchanges. By examining Amerindian texts, the author points up how they differ from more familiar texts and at the same time teases us with hints about universal principles of language."-Leonard R. N. Ashley, *Geolinguistics* -- Leonard R. N. Ashley * *Geolinguistics* *

From the Inside Flap

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About the Author

Dell Hymes is professor emeritus of anthropology and English at the University of Virginia. He is the author of many books, including *In Vain I Tried to Tell You: Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics* and *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*.

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