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## **WHY REVIVE WHALE HUNTING?**

**'It defines who we are,' says Charlotte Coté, author of  
*Spirits of our Whaling Ancestors: Revitalizing Makah &  
Nuu-chah-nulth Traditions***

**Vancouver** - Following the removal of the gray whale from the Endangered Species list in 1994, the Makah tribe of northwest Washington State announced that they would revive their whale hunts; their relatives, the Nuu-chah-nulth Nation of British Columbia, shortly followed suit. Neither tribe had exercised their right to whale—in the case of the Makah, a right affirmed in their 1855 treaty with the federal government—since the gray whale had been hunted nearly to extinction by commercial whalers in the 1920s. The Makah whale hunt of 1999 was an event of international significance, connected to the worldwide struggle for aboriginal sovereignty and to the broader discourses of environmental sustainability, treaty rights, human rights, and animal rights. It was met with enthusiastic support and vehement opposition.

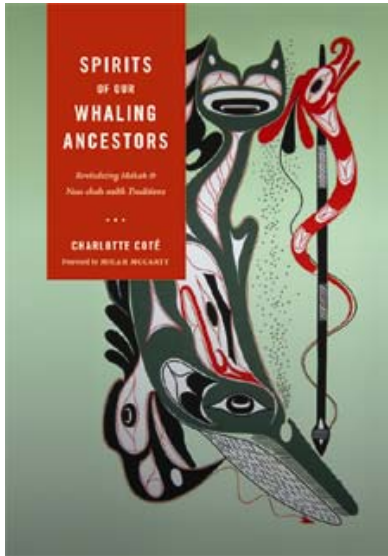
As a member of the Nuu-chah-nulth Nation, Charlotte Coté offers a valuable perspective on the issues surrounding indigenous whaling, past and present in her new book *Spirits of our Whaling Ancestors: Revitalizing Makah & Nuu-chah-nulth Traditions*. Whaling served important social, economic, and ritual functions that have been at the core of Makah and Nuu-chah-nulth societies throughout their histories. Her analysis includes major Native studies and contemporary Native rights issues, and addresses environmentalism, animal rights activism, anti-treaty conservatism, and the public's expectations about what it means to be "Indian." These thoughtful critiques are intertwined with the author's personal reflections, family stories, and information from indigenous, anthropological, and historical sources to provide a bridge between cultures.

**Charlotte Coté** is associate professor of American Indian studies at the University of Washington.

"An excellent and timely book that chronicles the revitalization of the honored whaling tradition among the Makah and Nuu-chah-nulth but also raises broader issues of eco-colonialism, identity, and self-determination within the cultural nexus and political ecology of modern environmentalism and indigenous hunting economies."

-Thomas Thornton, author of *Being and Place among the Tlingit*

**Charlotte Coté will be signing her book at the UBC Museum of Anthropology Giftshop, 6393 NW Marine Drive, during the World Art Market on Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at 2:30pm**



## Spirits of Our Whaling Ancestors

Revitalizing Makah and Nuu-chah-nulth Traditions

Charlotte Coté

Publication date: August 2010

A Capell Family Book

288 pp., 22 illus., 3 maps, notes, bibliog., index, 7 x 10 in.  
\$24.95 paper ISBN 978-0-7748-2053-0