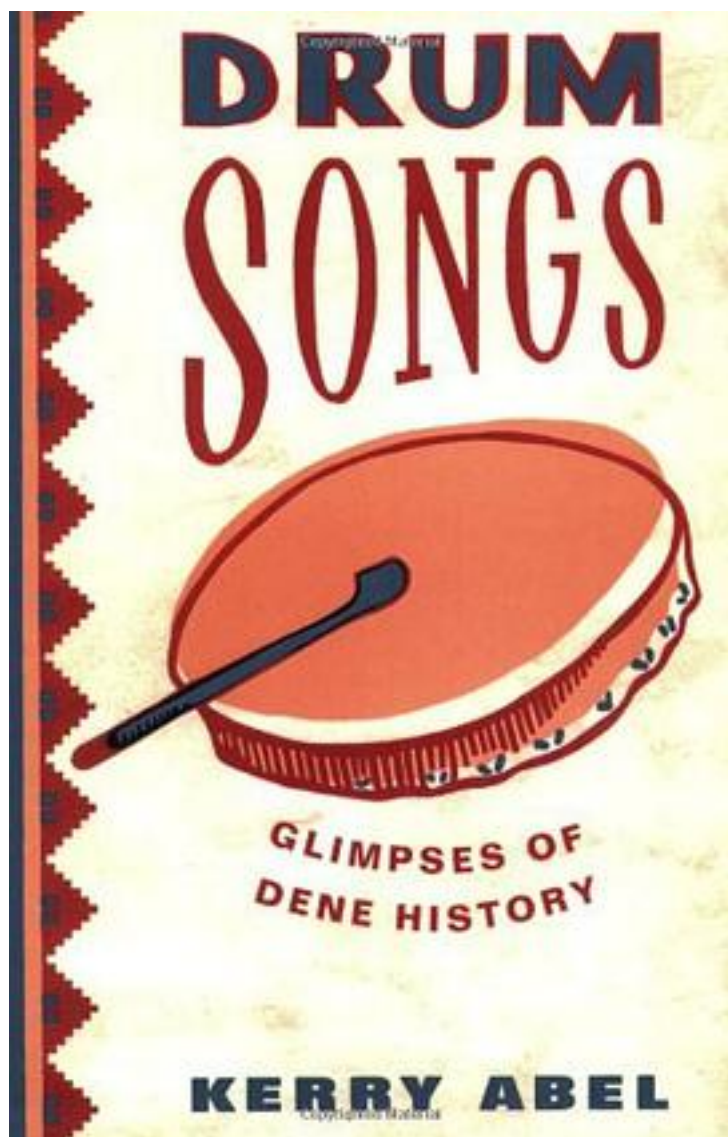


# Drum Songs



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著者:Abel, Kerry M.

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The Dene nation consists of twelve thousand people speaking five distinct languages spread over 1.8 million square kilometres in the Canadian subarctic. In the 1970s and 1980s, the campaign against the Mackenzie Valley pipeline, support for the leadership of Georges Erasmus in the Assembly of First Nations, and land claim negotiations put the Dene on the leading edge of Canada's native rights movement. *Drum Songs* reconstructs important moments in Dene history, offering a sympathetic treatment of their past, the impact of the fur trade, their interaction with Christian missionaries, and evolving relations with the Canadian federal government. Using a wide range of sources, including archival documents, oral testimony, archaeological findings, linguistic studies, and folk traditions, Kerry Abel shows that previous ethnocentric interpretations of Canadian history have been excessively narrow. She demonstrates that the Dene were able to maintain a sense of cultural distinctiveness in the face of overwhelming economic, political, and cultural pressures from European newcomers. Abel's classic text questions the standard perception that aboriginal peoples in Canada have been passive victims in the colonization process. A new introduction discusses Dene experience since the first edition of the book and suggests how the approach of scholars in this field is changing.

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