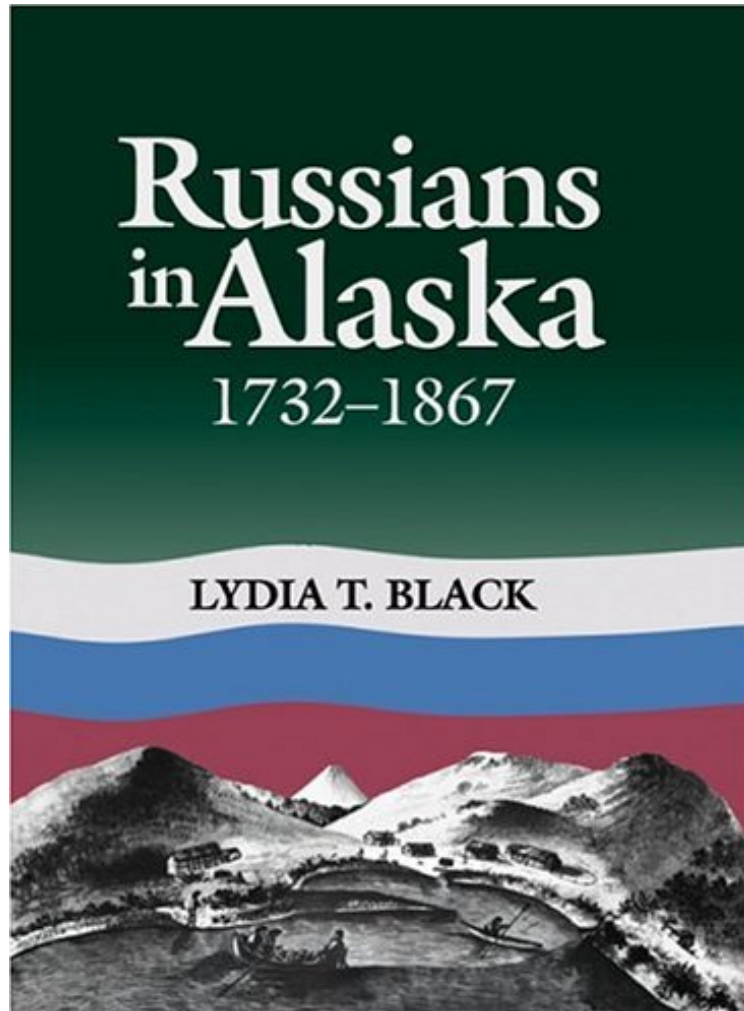


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Russians in Alaska: 1732-1867

Lydia Black

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Lydia Black : Russians in Alaska: 1732-1867 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Russians in Alaska: 1732-1867:

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Definitive history of Russians in AlaskaBy gthorgaardI bought this book and began reading it while visiting Kodiak, where the author died in 2007 and where the history of Russians in Alaska seems very real. The book is an information-dense one and consequently sometimes does not flow as easily for the reader as it otherwise might. The author was born in Kiev before coming to America and her language skills allowed her to access many resources on Russian America which had previously been unavailable. I really appreciated her willingness to express her opinions and so identify them. Some people commonly praised were downgraded in her estimation and others rose. The overall picture that she presents is that the Russians, although harsh at times early in their encounters with Alaskan Natives, were overall more thoughtful and caring than the Americans who followed

them in Alaska. The commercial rather than settlement or expansionist nature of the Russian presence was documented. The reasons for the withdrawal of Russia from Alaska (weak military presence, desire to retrench to defensible borders, preference to support the Americans rather than the British in North America) are also explained in detail. This is a great book for understanding the history of Alaska and appreciating some aspects of the present, especially if you are visiting Kodiak or Sitka. 11 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Enhanced with fold-out maps and color illustrations
By Midwest Book Review
In *Russians In Alaska 1732-1867*, Russian American scholar, historian, and anthropologist Lydia T. Black (Professor Emerita, University of Alaska, Fairbanks) has drawn upon her extensive archival research (including documents only recently made available to academia) to write a comprehensive historical overview of the Russian presence in Alaska. Professor Black's work is a well-founded challenge to traditional perspectives on the Russian period in Alaska as a time of ruthless exploitation of Native Americans and Alaska natural resources. Including the harsher aspects of the Russian occupation, Professor Black reveals the complexity of relations between Russians and Native peoples as she chronicles the lives of the ordinary men and women who established Russian outposts in Alaska who carried to this northern land their Orthodox faith, Russian language, distinctive architecture, and place names. Also available in a trade paperback format, *Russians In Alaska 1732-1867* is wonderfully enhanced with fold-out maps and color illustrations. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent review of the Russian period in Alaska
By I.L.S.
The book is an excellent up-to-date detailed review of the Russian discovery and occupation of Alaska. Most publications covering this period of Alaskan history do not have the detail and complete citations that are contained in this book. Lydia Black spent much of her life studying the Russian history in Alaska and it shows in this excellent book.

This definitive work, a crown jewel in the distinguished career of Russian America scholar Lydia Black, presents a comprehensive story of the Russian presence in America from the point of view of social anthropology and ethnohistory. Drawing on extensive archival research and especially on documents only recently declassified in Russia, Black shows how the expansion into lands beyond Russia's Pacific shore was the culmination of a centuries-old movement of peoples originally from the Russian north, a movement more mercantile than military. Black counters the stereotypical depiction of the Russian period in Alaska as a time of unbridled exploitation of the Native inhabitants and pillaging of the land's resources. Without glossing over the harsher aspects of the Russian period in Alaska, or the sometimes mutual incomprehension that clouded the interactions of Native Americans and Russians, she presents a far more complicated--and certainly more accurate--portrait of their interrelationship. Going beyond governmental policies, she focuses on the actions of ordinary Russian men and women in Alaska, and neither romanticizes nor chastises their actions. She clearly sets forth who they were, precisely what they did, their aims, the immediate and distant consequences of their actions, and how imperial governmental considerations, dictated by geopolitical struggles of the time, affected their destinies. This deluxe volume features fold-out maps and color illustrations of rare paintings and sketches from Russia and North America, many of them never-before published. A jewel for historians, *Russians in Alaska* will also be the go-to text for all Alaskans, visitors, and readers interested in this important period under the Russian flag. A tribute to Black's life as a public and university educator, it is an essential text that will inspire yet another generation of students both inside the classroom and out.

About the Author
Lydia T. Black (1925–2007) was professor emerita at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She contributed nearly seventy books and articles to the study of Russian America and Native Alaska culture. In 2000, she was awarded The Order of Friendship by the Russian Federation for fostering cooperation between the Russian and American scholarly communities.