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be recommended reading for a new student of the Native American experience, but less appropriate for more avid students of Native American culture.

Lanny Real Bird
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Native American Spirituality: A Critical Reader. Edited by Lee Irwin. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000. 334 pages. $24.95 paper.

In passionate and lucid prose, the fourteen essays collected in *American Indian Spirituality* create an engaging dialogue, allowing the reader to listen to Natives and non-Natives reveal, critique, cajole, and persuade in what feels like a large family gathering. These writers take on difficult issues pertaining to Native religions, while practicing a multivocal discussion of complexity, richness, and scope.

Even though editor Lee Irwin clearly intends that the audience for this collection be a knowledgeable member in the field, I suggest that a reader, particularly a more general one, might profit from reading Irwin's essay "Freedom, Law, and Prophecy: A Brief History of Native American Religious Resistance," which succinctly chronicles the dense history of Native resistance to white/Christian domination and documents current pressures placed on Native religious practitioners, such as the present-day obstacles to Native religious practice, the First Amendment right to freedom of religion notwithstanding. This basic human right continues to be denied to Native people, even after its reiteration in the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 that affirmed federal US protection and American Indians' inherent "right of freedom to believe, express, and exercise [their] traditional religions" (p. 295). Irwin also supplies the reader with the "Declarations against the Sale or Appropriation of Native Ceremonies by Non-Natives," part of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Traditional Elder's Circle. Their words clarify how, where, and who may properly speak of "the processes and ceremonies of the most Sacred Nature" (p. 310). They decry the selling of ceremonial items and rituals, and the exposure of sacred traditions.

Ronald L. Grimes discusses this theme in "This May Be a Feud, but It Is Not a War: An Electronic, Interdisciplinary Dialogue on Teaching Native Religions," where he begins with an anecdote: A Native woman remarked after a lecture by a non-Native professor, "Much of what you say is probably true, but suppose you were a Jew and you had just heard your spirituality or your history presented to you by the grandchild of a Nazi. How would you feel?" (p. 78) Contemplation of this question led him to create three websites where he posted questions pertaining to whether Euro-Americans should be teaching courses on the Native religions of North America. Grimes comments on the varied postings, then offers a personal response: Yes, non-Natives should teach Native religions when Natives are not in place to teach them, because it is better than the message inferred by not offering these courses at all (that they are not worthy), but the teaching must be done with "humility, collegiality, and sensitivity" (p. 92).

Others also comment on the cultural imperialism of some literary and academic practitioners. Christopher Ronwanièn:te Jocks, in "Spirituality for Sale: Sacred Knowledge in the Consumer Age," discusses white "shamans" who purport to sell authentic Native spirituality. Despite these folks and their credulous followers, Jocks tries to imagine how Euro-American and Native intellectuals can speak together with mutual respect, opening and sustaining dialogue about pedagogical approaches to Native religions.

Taking up legal and political issues around religion, John A. Grim, in "Cultural Identity, Authenticity, and Community Survival," calls for dialogue with and responsibility to the studied communities. He asserts that only Native peoples can articulate the question of authenticity, which "is connected to the Native American regard for place," and cannot be "collapse[d] into a spiritual environmentalism" (p. 38). The assertion of a sacred relationship with the earth is a significant issue because of how courts have imposed imperialistic and commercialist attitudes onto the human-land relationship, distorting Native spirituality so that it can be exploited, alienating the people from the land and denying them their right and responsibility to live within a spiritual landscape. He talks about the immense complexity of this subject, as Natives continue to respond to postcolonialism.

Robin Redington integrates theory and practice in "Voice, Representation, and Dialogue: The Poetics of Native American Spiritual Traditions." Redington shares Native stories in which animals and tree stumps are sentient and wise beings. A boy learns from the stump to demonstrate proper respect and understand the interconnectedness between humans and nonhumans. These tales undercut Western dichotomization of man and nature by engaging in conversations between humans and all participants of the natural world. This teaching and learning happens within a "respectful circle of dialogue," which includes animals and trees as intelligent beings in their own right (p. 18).

This respectful circle takes on an architectural form in "The Church of the Immaculate Conception: Inculturation and Identity among the Anishinaabeg of Manitoulin Island," by Theresa S. Smith. After a fire destroyed this church, discussions on how to rebuild it brought Roman Catholics and traditional Anishinaabegs to meetings where they designed a church whose "most well-known feature [is] the Stations of the Cross painted by Anishinaabe artist, Leland Bell" (p. 151). A "committed traditionalist and member of the midewewin society," Bell "wanted to try to say something from [her] point of view, but . . . also wanted to respect the other tradition. . . . I found the balance in Love." His work is a generous gesture, allowing Christians a path into the Anishinaabe viewpoint, seeing this "not so much communicating the Stations to Anishinaabe people as handing Anishinaabe teachings to Christians" (p. 151).

The Pope's acknowledgement of its active role in the persecution of Native religious practitioners inaugurated a more humble stance toward Native religion, but Smith is clear in pointing out that the iconography which seems to make analogies between symbols are actually bridges opened by the Anishinaabe. For example, the thunderbird manitou could be seen as standing in for the Holy Spirit, which is usually depicted as a dove. For Natives, how-

ever, this symbol "may gesture upward, outward, and back toward the natural world in which the traditionalists find their own best path" (p. 155). It is no surprise that some sacred symbols are similar, but the fact that the Church of the Immaculate Conception attracts more non-Natives than Natives to its Sunday services suggests that it is the Native people who are giving, and non-Natives receiving.

The difficulties of interpreting Native/Christian symbol systems occasioned my favorite anecdote from the book, found in "Nahuas and National Culture: A Contest of Appropriations." While observing Nahua ritual, Richard Haly disregarded the Christian prayers, such as the "Our Father," when he was recording. But upon coming outside after a ritual, his host, don Pedro, extended his arm toward the sun, saying he would see Haly tomorrow, early, when "Our Father Dios appears" (p. 170). At that moment and gesture, it dawned on Haly that "the 'Our Father' had another interpretation, one as thoroughly Nahua as I had previously imagined it to be thoroughly Christian." He uncloaks "the ethnocentric 'invisibility' of this religious practice" (p. 170). His eyes now more acute, he sees how rituals make the Nahua community, and how, in the rituals of the feeding of the saints, ritual becomes production. The saints are the embodiment and the rituals of the place. People working together to celebrate the saints is the ritual. "Ritual is work" (p. 165). The celebration is synonymous with community membership and tied in a sacred way to a certain place. All community members "feed the saints" by working for and participating in traditional community religious festivals and feasts.

A more painful occurrence of ethnocentrism is mentioned in "Mediations of the Spirits," where Ines Hernandez-Avila chronicles a grievous loss. R. Gordon Wasson's recording of the Mazatec elder Maria Sabina in ritual destroyed the sacred relationship between her and the "little children," the sacred mushrooms she used (p. 21). Wasson's publication brought hippies from the north to ingest the "flesh of the gods" with no regard for correctness or tradition, and Maria Sabina felt their power decline (p. 23). If it had not been for the foreigners, she asserts, "the saint children would have kept their power" (p. 21). Hernandez-Avila asks hard questions: "Does 'extinction' inevitably follow 'discovery'? When is the cost too high?" She quotes Paula Gunn Allen saying, "Preserving tradition with the sacrifice of its living bearers seems at best reasonless, at worst blasphemous" (p. 22).

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Natives and Newcomers: The Cultural Origins of North America. By James Axtell. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. 418 pages. $59.95 cloth; $24.95 paper.

Anyone interested in the history of contact between Native Americans and European explorers, settlers, and missionaries in what is today the eastern United States ought to know James Axtell's work. For nearly thirty years Axtell