its website, is to "actively engage . . . with what it means to inhabit" the Great Plains, perhaps this approach is most appropriate. After all, if Washburn's goal is to engage readers in what it means to live on a Lakota reservation in a part of the country that is most often "flown over" rather than experienced firsthand, this novel could go a long way toward dispelling stereotypes. Overall, *The Sacred White Turkey* tells an enjoyable story through sympathetic narrators, and it offers a respectful and informative representation of Lakota culture while doing so.

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Spirits of Our Whaling Ancestors: Revitalizing Makah & Nuu-chah-nulth Traditions. By Charlotte Coté. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010. 288 pages. $25.95 paper.

This well-written book successfully integrates two related whaling histories. The author first summarizes Makah and Nuu-chah-nulth aboriginal whaling practices, associated belief systems, and whaling's cultural importance, and then documents the 1999 revitalization of whaling in the Washington State community of Neah Bay. Charlotte Coté, a member of the Tseshaht community of Vancouver Island's West Coast (Nuu-chah-Nulth) nation, has done a superb job in summarizing and contextualizing the extensive body of knowledge surrounding the social, subsistence, and religious aspects of aboriginal (and contemporary) whaling practices, and in particular the Makah's contemporary struggle to reestablish the practice.

The first half of the book includes an introduction and three chapters summarizing Nuu-chah-nulth and Makah whaling through the ages. Major topics include how whaling permeated the culture prior to European contact; how local societies adjusted and somehow adapted to colonial policies and commercial overharvesting of whales during the post-contact era; and how a "whaling identity" evolved through time and persisted into the twentieth century despite the fact that the whales had been nearly wiped out and subsistence hunting had to cease temporarily.

The second half of the book is Coté's personal account of how local cultural revitalization in the 1960s and 1970s, combined with the resurgent gray whale population, resulted in the decision of the Makah people to re-implement a subsistence hunt in the 1990s. The serious implications of that decision included opposition from animal rights groups and other organizations that, at times, took on a nasty, sometimes racist tone. Coté reviews the process

whereby anti-whaling and anti-Native groups have used environmental laws to thwart the Makah's attempts to reincorporate whaling into their contemporary lives. She also looks at the political history, particularly Washington State Senator Slade Gorton's legal crusade against Washington State tribes' treaty rights to fish, and Congressman Jake Metcalf's condemnation of the Makah whale hunt. She concludes with a review of the cultural, spiritual, and nutritional benefits that whaling provides Native Alaskan and Canadian Inuit communities, and how those benefits could also extend to the Makah should harvesting and sharing whale meat and blubber again become a central focus of life in Neah Bay and surrounding communities.

The author focuses much attention on how the social, subsistence, and spiritual aspects of whaling were all intertwined within Nuu-chah-nulth life, and how this central fact permeated aboriginal life and formed the basis for her older relatives' post-contact identity. In doing so, she integrates data from a variety of disparate sources, including stories about the great whaler Sayach'apis (her great-great-grandfather), which were recorded by the linguist/anthropologist Edward Sapir and linguist Morris Swadesh in the early 1900s; political statements by the late aboriginal leader George Watts; and uniquely artistic perspectives on whaling by her late brother-in-law and artist Art Thomson, whose insightful and stunning art graces the cover as well as a few wonderful figures in chapter 3.

The first half seems to have only one significant fault: the author does not sufficiently bring out the major, rapid changes that occurred in the 1770s and 1780s to the political, social, and subsistence (economic) structure of the Nuu-chah-nulth local groups (*ushtakimilth*), changes that previous work has established. For example, Richard L. Inglis and James C. Haggarty note that in the initial recorded contact Cook described small groups operating relatively independently, and that only twenty-five years later, Jewitt described a post-contact phenomenon of amalgamated villages practicing a common seasonal cycle. The backdrop against which whaling took place changed rapidly because of the intergroup conflicts, subsistence scheduling changes, and population amalgamations that the initial sea otter trade period engendered, which caused whaling to cease temporarily. Hence there were really two episodes during which whaling had ceased among the Nuu-chah-nulth, since in addition to the Makah reviving their tradition in 1999, essentially whaling traditions had already been revived in the early 1800s.

The author also does not address how whaling originated among the Nuu-chah-nulth. Because other whaling cultures in Alaska and around the Pacific Rim share similar linguistic, technological, and symbolic elements, the question arises about the emergence and practice of whaling and how it became such an important cultural tradition. Philip Drucker has clearly documented

the mythological origins, which are fascinating, if vague. Archaeological and ethnographic evidence shows that Nuu-chah-nulth people were adept at hunting not just large whales, but also dolphins and tuna. Their amazing ability to integrate technology, mythological beliefs, and traditional environmental knowledge into a cultural practice that nourished so many is truly an achievement to celebrate and honor.

Coté beautifully describes the joy of Nuu-chah-nulth whaling, which she contrasts with the sadness brought on by contemporary opposition from individuals and groups who could not (or would not) "pass over" to see the whale through the eyes of the Makah. Perhaps the author might have included more information on the political processes of contemporary Makah decision-making, but all in all, this is a fine read and a welcome addition to the literature describing tradition and cultural identity on the Northwest Coast.

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Theoretical Perspectives on American Indian Education: Taking a New Look at Academic Success and the Achievement Gap. By Terry Huffman. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2010. 278 pages. $65.00 cloth.

The achievement gap among American Indian students can be seen in higher dropout rates, lower performance on state assessments, lower SAT scores, decreased college readiness, and dismal college attendance and completion rates. This achievement gap is not new: low achievement of K-12 and post-secondary American Indian students has been well documented by the US Department of Education, nonprofit organizations, research centers, school districts, and Native nations. Decades of careful research inquiries have produced vast numbers of ethnographies, statistics, organizational studies, and other mixed-method and qualitative work speaking to the poor educational outcomes prevalent among Native students. In the last few years, the achievement gap has come back to the forefront of public discourse, with increased visibility of national educational reform organizations as well as increased media attention to issues of educational equity and the opportunities provided to low-income and minority students, with the result that academic work on these issues is highly sought after. Terry Huffman's book *Theoretical Perspectives on American Indian Education: Taking a New Look at Academic Success and the Achievement Gap*, then, is both timely and relevant.

A professor in the School of Education at George Fox University, the author has maintained a prominent voice in the area of American Indian education