

# UCLA

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"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West. By Richard White.

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knowledges that some traditional ways would not work in today's society, but she is adamant that the distinct cultural identity of the Sechelt should be maintained. Women are responsible for passing on that culture, and this must be recognized for its importance. In later essays, Patrick Kelly reinforces Jeffries's views on the value of first nation languages, and Leonard George picks up the theme of the importance of native spirituality to culture.

Interspersed among the essays in *In Celebration of Our Survival* are poems by Ron Hamilton, and they are a wonderful addition to the book. There can be no doubt that the essays, although written from the heart, are designed to educate the reader. Hamilton's poems tell the personal side. What is it like to be an Indian in British Columbia? Hamilton writes (p. 80),

I grew up in Canada  
Close to Port Alberni  
On Vancouver Island  
Close to British Columbia

We saw a lot of Canadians  
Over time. Nearly every day  
A Canadian interrupted our lives  
Walking by but looking in

*In Celebration of Our Survival* examines the place of Indians in an imposed British Columbian and Canadian society. It presents an eloquent, fact-filled story of aboriginal life in Canada. Although the details are taken from British Columbia, the history and treatment are, unfortunately, universally Canadian. The book is a useful addition to any collection of materials by and about Canadian Indians.

Linda Fritz  
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**"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West.** By Richard White. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991. 644 pages. \$34.95 cloth.

From Cabaza de Vaca to Ronald Reagan might be an alternate subtitle for this book. Covering over 450 years of history, this work

is a monumental collection of historical sketches that piece together the history of the American West by focusing on the search for land and resources and the economic expansionism that has characterized the American West since the beginning of European settlement. As the title suggests, this expansion was often at the expense of others. The first victims were the native Indians, then the Spanish Americans—both of whom lost the land—and later still the exploited labor of various ethnicities—Chinese, Japanese, Blacks, Euro-Americans—who were never fully incorporated into the growing economy they helped create.

White's book takes us through the history of the American West in broad strokes, covering immense periods and complex subjects in a matter of a few pages each. There are six parts: "The Origins of the West," "The Federal Government and the Nineteenth-Century West," "Transformation and Development," "The Bureaucratic Revolution in the West," "Transforming the West," and "The Modern West." Within each part are from two to seven chapters that focus on specific issues. The book is amply supplied with charts, maps, and photographs illustrating the points the author wants to make.

This work clearly is an expression of dependency theory, although it is not explicitly stated. The following statement outlines the author's approach: "By the beginning of the twentieth century the linkages between the western economy and the larger world and national economies were firmly in place. The West possessed an extractive economy that depended on outside markets, outside capital, and, most often, skills and technologies imported from the outside" (p. 267). This relationship came to characterize the American West. While the increasing role of the federal government and the rise of urbanization in the twentieth century may have reshaped the West in a practical sense, the author points out that the mythology of the West as imagined in fiction and the self-ascribed behavior of westerners continued to emphasize the rugged individual struggling against all odds to carve a living out of the wilderness. Of course, the "wilderness" often was someone else's home, and the westerners usually were more concerned with their own advancement than the rights or concerns of others.

White's book is promoted as "a centerpiece of the New History of the American West." I suspect that means that the role of groups traditionally overlooked by historians is an integral part of the analysis. With the recent surge of interest in social history, especially of women and minorities, White creates a fabric of history

woven from seemingly disparate threads. Nonetheless, there is a common theme running throughout, which is that the West is an "image"—a seemingly endless supply of resources, there for the taking. From cattle roundups and gold mines, Indian wars and water wars, defense contracts and labor unions, the West was created not only in fact but in fiction as well. These are historical realities, but the way in which these social facts are interpreted is as much a perspective of westerners and nonwesterners as it is the raw "stuff" of history.

If I have one complaint about this work, it is that there are no citations or footnotes. This is frustrating to the reader who would like to know from which sources the author is drawing his information. Why the book was presented in this manner is not clear. Although there is a list of readings at the end of each chapter, most professionals reading the book would probably prefer a clearer method of referencing.

Since this review is for the *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, I would like to discuss the role of Native Americans in the context of the overall historical relationships outlined in this book. The federal government has been an important factor in the creation of the American West. Nowhere is this more clear than in the relationship between the federal government and the Indian tribes. White points out that Indians were important in helping develop the economies in local areas of the West. Nevertheless, with the growth of the non-Indian population, new methods had to be developed to deal with the tribes. The old policy of removal, practiced in the East, was not feasible, so in the mid-1800s the reservation system, so characteristic of white and Indian relations in the West, emerged. In order to facilitate continued economic growth, Indian lands were acquired, and the federal government implemented programs to assimilate Indians into the dominant society. The result was increasing dependence. When Indian needs stood in the way of development, the Indians were shunted aside. As evidence that this process continues into the present day, White cites the case of the five Missouri River dams that flooded 550 square miles of Indian lands in the 1960s.

With the strengthening of tribal sovereignty, aided by recent court cases and the civil rights movement, White sees a division developing between Indian communities on the reservations and those in urban areas. The result is tension between the struggles for separate rights for tribes and for equal rights for individuals. This schism, White believes, clearly sets the Indian civil rights movement

apart from that of other minorities and will likely shape the nature of Indian-white relations in the West into the foreseeable future.

In conclusion, this book is a significant contribution to the history of the American West. It will prove of interest to historians, anthropologists, policymakers, and others with an interest in the social history of the West. An added benefit is that it is relatively inexpensive, given its thickness.

*Daniel L. Boxberger*

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**Kachina Dolls: The Art of Hopi Carvers.** By Helga Teiwes. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1991. 160 pages. \$29.95 cloth.

Helga Teiwes's text and photography celebrate the work of twenty-seven modern Hopi carvers, artists whose work reflects the most recent developments in Hopi kachina dolls. Given the popular interest in kachina dolls, it is not surprising that a second book on the subject would appear almost simultaneously: *Hopi Kachina Dolls and Their Carvers* by Theda Bassman and photographer Gene Balzer (West Chester, Pennsylvania: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 1991). Both books document this new art form, Hopi kachina wood sculpture. Bassman interviews twenty-five artists, several in common with Teiwes. Both writers provide basic biographical information, with Bassman furnishing lengthy quotes from the carvers as they discuss their art and its place in Hopi religion. The Bassman book includes extensive color photography, including a photograph of each artist and the artist's signature or hallmark as it appears on the base of the dolls. However, it lacks any sort of historical or cultural introduction, any overall context for understanding or appreciating this art form.

Bassman's book is for the collector; Teiwes's book is as much for the artists as it is for students of Hopi art. Teiwes's volume had its origin in an Arizona State Museum project to document "the lifestyles of various southwestern Indian tribes through photography." To that end, between 1985 and 1989 she made repeated trips to the Hopi villages, where she interviewed and photographed twenty-seven "representative" carvers at work. The first product of this effort was a public exhibit at the Arizona State Museum in Tucson, which was attended by sixteen of the carvers and their families. Teiwes is foremost a photographer, and her images of the