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Author

Schaaf, Gregory

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American experience. People the world over have been tribal at some point in their existence, so there is no privilege in primitivism.

Defining American Indian Literature is hopeful that a new American consciousness, a “syncretic vision” will emerge when Indian writers rise above the superficialities of race and history and identify themselves thematically with true Americans (p. 95). When this blending happens, the “old American dream of becoming brothers and sisters at last” will prevail (p. 95).

Defining American Indian Literature is important to students of American Indian literature because it brings several problems to light. It may be fair to say that the field of American Indian literature is in intellectual disarray at this particular time, and Berner has made this confusion quite clear. Relatively speaking, given the brief period of time in which American Indian literature has been studied in the academy, there is an understandable paucity of well-reasoned, insightful criticism written by persons who understand American Indian literary theory; therefore, it is difficult for scholars to find answers to their questions and to contextualize the responses they do find. Berner’s reliance on off-hand remarks by writers giving interviews underlines this point. *Defining American Indian Literature* reminds all those working in the field that questions regarding American Indian thought are legitimate and deserve respectful consideration.

Berner’s book is important to American Indian writers and critics because it is a brutally honest depiction of how some established academicians view American Indians, their histories, and their literary endeavors. Berner has the fortitude to say in print what many American Indian writers and critics have only sensed. There is a resistance to American Indians in today’s academy and in today’s society. This book has done much to articulate the nature and scope of that resistance, since it not only takes on American Indian writers, but also calls into question the works of many recent scholars in other fields who have produced works sympathetic to American Indians. Researchers such as Henry Dobyns, David Stannard, Tzvetlan Todorov, Donald Grinde, Vine Deloria Jr., and Bruce Johansen come under fire in this volume. *Defining American Indian Literature* is a book that must be read and responded to by scholars interested in American Indians and their literature.

Betty Booth Donohue
Bacone College

Indians and Colonists at the Crossroads of Empire: The Albany Congress of 1754. By Timothy J. Shannon. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000. 268 pages. \$39.95 cloth.

This book is the winner of the Dixon Ryan Fox Prize from the New York State Historical Association, and the author, Timothy J. Shannon, is an assistant professor of history at Gettysburg College. His subject is the 1754 Albany Congress, where a plan to unite the American colonies was debated in Albany, New York. The stated purpose of the meeting was to address Mohawk Indian

complaints of land fraud and diplomatic neglect. The gathering's outcome was the Albany Plan of Union, penned largely by Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Hutchinson. This attempt to unify the colonies precedes the Articles of Confederation. The Albany Plan proposed that the British Crown appoint a president general and that a "grand council" be appointed by colonial assemblies. The executive branch was to have exclusive jurisdiction in the negotiation of treaties, the declaration of war, and the administration of Indian affairs. Furthermore, the president was to make peace with the Indians, raise a military force, and govern all western land transactions. Taxes were to be levied to build a national treasury. The plan collapsed when none of the colonial assemblies ratified the plan, largely because the individual colonies refused to give up their exclusive taxing authority.

The unique contribution to history offered by this book is the presentation of archival resources from significant manuscript sources. The volume will be of interest to students of the New York State Archives, especially the "New York Council Minutes," "New York Colonial Manuscripts," and "New York Colonial Documents." Shannon heavily uses one source by a New Hampshire member of the Union Committee, Theodore Atkinson's "Journal" (1754) in the Force Papers, Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress. Beverly McAnear reproduced Atkinson's journal entries, a source cited throughout the book as McAnear, "Personal Accounts." This abbreviated citation is misleading, since the source is Atkinson, who recorded some of the opening conference talks.

Another important primary source used in this book is the "Minutes of the Albany Commissioners of Indian Affairs" (29 June 1753–4 May 1755) in the Native American History Collection, William L. Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan. This source reveals plans of New York colonial officials to force the Mohawk into a single village, part of a land grab in Indian Country. Fortunes were made by those who claimed Indian lands, speculators politically powerful enough to have their shaky titles confirmed and to sell Indian lands for a profit. The issue of land title remains an explosive issue in contemporary New York State.

The question remains, Do the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy still have a rightful claim to lands within New York State that were illegally taken from the Indians centuries ago? During the tenure of the federal Indian Land Claims Commission in the 1950s, attorneys lined up on both sides when New York State and Iroquois Indian nations offered expert testimony from noted historians, anthropologists, and other scholars who supported opposing sides of the issue. Indian land claim cases from the 1960s through the 1990s continued to create a division among Indian studies scholars. One Iroquois nation, the Oneida, was thoroughly dispossessed, reduced to thirty-two acres. A group of Seneca and Cayuga Iroquois was completely dispossessed and forced to Oklahoma Indian Territory in the nineteenth century. The purpose of the Land Claims Commission was to get Indians to relinquish aboriginal Indian land claims in exchange for cash payment. The process heated up politically when some Indian nations began to negotiate for the return of some land, as well as cash settlements. What motivated some states to settle Indian land claims was their desire

to clear cloudy land titles, thus appreciating the resale value of these lands. The debate still rages in New York State. Shannon's book could be cited as a secondary source in these ongoing political and legal battles.

Beginning in the early 1980s, interest in the Albany Congress of 1754 resurfaced in the literature connected with the subject of Indian influences on the US Constitution. Benjamin Franklin, co-author of the Albany Plan, was quoted in his famous statement about how amazing it was that the Iroquois Six Nations had long established and maintained a united democratic form of government, something a "dozen or so English colonies" at this time had been unable to achieve. He challenged fellow colonists to unite and to create a United Colonies, forerunner to the United States of America.

A comparison of the Iroquois Great Law of Peace and the Constitution of the United States of America were presented in testimony on 2 December 1987 at a hearing before the Select Committee on Indian Affairs, United States Senate (Senate Hearing 100-610). Shannon did not testify, but he cited this Senate report. At issue was Senate Concurrent Resolution 76 to "acknowledge the contribution of the Iroquois Confederacy of Nations to the development of the U.S. Constitution." Testimony totaling 391 pages was presented in support of the resolution that the US Senate subsequently passed one hundred to zero in favor, acknowledging that "the confederation of the original Thirteen Colonies into one republic was explicitly modeled upon the Iroquois Confederacy as were many of the democratic principles which were incorporated into the Constitution itself" (p. 2). The House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the concurrent resolution, which finally was signed by the president.

Shannon cited works by scholars who testified in support of the resolution, including Bruce E. Johansen's *Forgotten Founders: How the American Indian Helped Shape Democracy* (1987) and Donald A. Grinde Jr. and Bruce E. Johansen's "Sauce for the Goose: Demand and Definitions for 'Proof' Regarding the Iroquois and Democracy," published in the *William and Mary Quarterly* (1996). Shannon does not profess impartiality. He comes out clearly against Johansen, Grinde, and other proponents of the Indian influence thesis. While Iroquois did meet with colonial commissioners at Albany, the commissioners did not invite the Indians into their private meetings when they debated the Albany Plan of Union. Resting on this fact, Shannon concluded that the "Albany Congress occurred independently of any Indian participation." Shannon adds, "This fact makes it hard to sustain the image of colonial statesman and Iroquois chiefs discussing how the Iroquois Confederacy might serve as a model for American union and democracy" (p. 134 n. 54).

Shannon's position against the Iroquois is further articulated in the dust jacket summary: "Shannon challenges the Iroquois Influence Thesis that has located the origins of American independence in the plan of colonial union the Congress produced. The Six Nations, he writes, had nothing to do with the drafting of the Albany Plan, which borrowed its model of constitutional union not from the Iroquois but from the colonial delegates' British cousins." However, just because Iroquois chiefs did not pen the Albany Plan does not deny the fact that they were the only democratic government at that

time in New York. Shannon's book falls under the "British influence" theory. He describes his writings as part of the "new imperial history" looking at the "political dimensions of Britain's emergence as an imperial power, including its effect on the formation of national and colonial identities and encounters between colonizers and natives" (p. 11). This book follows the old imperial history that looks to Europe, rather than America, to explain American institutions.

During the last ten years, a polarization has occurred between the proponents and opponents of American Indian influences on American history. Strong emotions have surfaced. A backlash has occurred against American Indian participation in New York State educational curricular development. The two groups continue to move farther apart. Perhaps the time has come to call a general "cease fire." Let us consider the fairness of including American Indian viewpoints in our future educational curricula.

Gregory Schaaf

Center for Indigenous Arts and Cultures

Indian Country, God's Country: Native Americans and the National Parks. By Philip Burnham. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2000. 383 pages. \$27.50 cloth.

Philip Burnham's *Indian Country, God's Country: Native Americans and the National Parks* explores the National Park System (NPS) as a major beneficiary of American Indian land loss. Burnham's work continues the recent spate of books chronicling the association between the growth of NPS and the dispossession of Indian people from either their treaty homelands or aboriginal use areas. Until this outpouring during the past decade, an analysis and description of the relations between NPS and Indian tribes was almost nonexistent in academic literature. This oversight is even more impressive since at least eighty-five tribes have direct interests and relationships with neighboring parks, including virtually all the "crown jewels."

Burnham's book differs from the others in that he frames his work within the context of the development of federal Indian policy. In designing this strategy his analysis of park-Indian relations follows a policy-through-time orientation of the park sites he describes, rather than a separate park-specific history through time.

The people and places Burnham chronicles include (1) the Timbisha Shoshone and Death Valley National Park; (2) the Blackfeet and Glacier National Park; (3) the Oglala Sioux and Badlands National Park; (4) the Havasupai in the Grand Canyon; and (5) the Ute Mountain Ute in Mesa Verde National Park. Throughout the text, Burnham describes how these tribes were forced or coerced by NPS to sell or trade treaty land or sign agreements they did not agree to (or perhaps did not understand). Native peoples were threatened with forcible removal from their homes, or saw their traditional use areas removed by executive order. Burnham personalizes these histories with elders'