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Wâskahikaniwiyiniw-âcimowina/Stories of the House People. Edited by Freda Ahenakew.

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### Author

Hoy, James

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and Western medicine in Maxine Hong Kingston and Lu Hsun presents a study of differing responses to contrasting (clashing) medical/social theories; likewise, Marian Gray Secundy's article on the New Orleans jazz funeral contributes to our understanding of the possibilities of ritual in general. Taken as a whole, the *Literature and Medicine* series is a laudable effort to counteract increasingly narrow disciplinary specializations and return us to fundamental questions of how the verbal artifact does, can, and should function in people's real lives.

*Helen Jaskoski*

California State University, Fullerton

**Wâskahikaniwiwiniw-âcimowina/Stories of the House People.** Edited by Freda Ahenakew. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1988. 240 pages. \$24.95 Cloth.

The ten stories in this collection, related in one brief sitting in Saskatoon, were recorded at the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College in 1982. The two storytellers, Peter Vandall and Joe Douquette, members of the House People band of the Plains Cree, have since died, but this book serves them well as a legacy. It is not so much the content of the stories that is noteworthy, however, as it is the manner in which they have been preserved in print.

A reader looking for legendary material, for trickster or creation myths, will be disappointed, for these stories are primarily hortatory and anecdotal, based on personal experiences (although not always those of the tellers) from historical times. The editor, in fact, has categorized them as follows: The first four stories are "counseling texts," decrying and lamenting the decline of the old ways; the next three are humorous anecdotes, at least one of which is a joke widespread in the white culture (of a fisherman pouring whiskey down a snake's throat to get a frog out of its mouth, then having the snake return with another frog); the next two are autobiographical stories of amusing incidents; and the last is a straightforward account of how, in his younger days, a 118-year-old man lost an eye. A recurrent theme (implied if not overt) in all the stories is the superiority of the old ways, the det-

rimental effect on tribal society and morality wrought by contact with the whites.

Rather than merely collecting the tales and publishing them in English, however, the editor has used them as a vehicle for making the Cree language accessible to any who might wish to study it. The first recounting of the stories is in ideogrammatic Cree; then follows a section that prints the stories in Cree transcribed into English alphabet on the verso, with a facing English translation. The appendices, which take up more pages than the combined three versions of the stories themselves, contain a thorough set of notes on the orthography and the glossary; a bibliography of references; a Cree-English glossary; an inverse stem index; and an English index to the glossary.

The apparatus of this volume lends itself well to pedagogy, which, whether used for classroom instruction or as a point of reference by which to study additional Cree texts, is one of the book's primary functions. Language, after all, is essential to the maintenance of a culture. It is quite possible that as an oral culture declines, the meticulous publication of native texts might play a key role in the survival of that particular culture. I applaud the publishers for making this cultural investment in the Cree, even though the financial return will likely be small, and I would urge other presses to follow their example.

*James Hoy*  
Emporia (Kansas) State University

**Kiskinahamawâkan-âcimowinisa/Student Stories: Written by Cree-Speaking Students** (second edition). Edited, translated, and with a glossary by Freda Ahenakew. Saskatchewan Indian Languages Programme, Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre, 1989. 91 pages.

The second edition, revised and enlarged, of this collection of eight stories is the product of an intermediate course in Cree given at Saskatoon in the summer of 1982. Written by native speakers, the stories are an important contribution to the growing body of accessible literature in a major dialect of Cree. In their original version, the editor tells us, these stories represent several