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*Searching for My Destiny* is particularly beneficial for readers who wish to gain some momentum, motivation, and inspiration in order to remain on their career paths. For those who are discouraged, this book can be uplifting. For others, it can be a confirmation that such a career as that achieved by Blue Spruce can be within one's reach. Those seeking information and additional insight into the trials of those who came before us will also want this book for their personal library. Facing prejudice and overcoming hardship, Blue Spruce reached the top of his career as the as director of the Phoenix Regional Indian Health Service and then achieved the rank of assistant surgeon general of the United States.

We will probably never see such an awe-inspiring individual in our lifetime. Blue Spruce's life story is one of only a handful that we can consider to be a real success story, based on his intelligence, support from family, and perseverance to succeed. His destiny is truly an accounting that needs to be told and retold. This book is an enjoyable publication and documents a life in a positive and straightforward manner. It can be given to the young and old among us to read and enjoy.

*Felicia Schanche Hodge*

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**Spirits of the Air: Birds and American Indians in the South.** By Shepard Krech III. Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2009. 264 pages. \$44.95 cloth.

Anthropologists are usually reluctant to make "all" statements, but it's fair to say that all Native American peoples, from the Arctic to Tierra del Fuego, had special relationships with birds. Many still do, and the same can be said for peoples throughout the world. The focus of Shepard Krech III's book is the myriad relationships among birds and peoples of the South—the states of the former Confederacy.

Krech notes that "the most persistent visual image of the indigenous peoples of the New World is that they were feathered. From the sixteenth through the twentieth century, a succession of woodcuts, engravings, lithographs, watercolors, drawings, oil paintings, photographs, and other images of American Indians from the South and elsewhere show them in feather capes, crowns, sashes, and headdresses" (63). He then amasses a wealth of historical documents—writings, artwork, photographs, and archaeological and ethnographic objects—in order to show and explain why. One great strength of this volume is the richness of the illustrative materials.

This is not the first such book about birds and American Indians—Hamilton Tyler, for example, published *Pueblo Birds and Myths* (1979)—but Krech's volume is the best and most comprehensive work of which I am aware. Following the opening chapter on birds and American Indians in general, Krech provides an overview of the birds of the South and then continues through ten chapters, "Subsistence," "Material Culture," "Imagery," "Descent

and Power,” “War and Peace,” “Spirituality,” “Bird Spirits and Spirit-Birds,” “Sacred and Secular Narratives,” “Human Impact on Birds,” and “Visible and Invisible Birds” (a particularly interesting discussion), before he concludes with an afterword, notes, bibliography, and index.

Krech discusses the difficulty of recognizing which species of birds are recorded in observers’ inventories due to various factors (26–27). Bird names differ from one source to another because from the sixteenth through the nineteenth century there was little in the way of a common vocabulary, and the meaning of some terms is unclear. William Strachey’s 1612 list included “duck” (mallard?), “another duck,” “goose,” and “another goose.” Thomas Harriot’s 1591 list of eighty-six birds is no longer extant, which is a significant loss (27). Although we know specific birds were present from the archaeological record, local Native peoples did not provide terms for them to such early sixteenth-century recorders as John White. This probably helps to explain why Krech omits scientific names for most birds he discusses, though the more important ones such as the Muscovy duck (*Cairina moschata*) are identified (48).

The wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) is discussed at length (41–44, *passim*), notably in terms of domestication, or lack thereof: “firmer evidence for the domestication of turkeys is sketchy” (42). This is curious given that the domestication of turkeys occurred early in the Southwest and Mexico and was apparently attained quite easily, as the late Jean M. Pinkley demonstrated in her 1965 paper, “The Pueblos and the Turkey: Who Domesticated Whom.” Given the importance of the turkey for food, feathers, and bones for tools in the South, the scarcity of evidence for domestication is problematic. DNA analysis of archaeological turkey remains might provide clarification as to whether domestication took place and, if so, when it occurred.

Krech is masterful in his discussion of the importance of birds in terms of issues such as descent and power, cosmology, and spirituality, and the numerous images he provides make it clear that it is difficult to overstate the importance of these animals. Bird feathers were used to denote rank, social position in terms of moiety membership, and kinship affiliation, and provided visual symbols and keys to other personal and group identities. Even today, as the photographs of Jim Sawgrass and Joshua Squirrel indicate, the status of birds remains high, as birds are central to American Indian being (200, 202).

In “War and Peace,” Krech notes that tobacco (*Nicotiana rustica*) smoked full strength had an “intoxicating and dizzying power” that could produce “levity and even perhaps [was used] to simulate flight.” He states, “In the South, the smoker was literally nose to bill with the bird carved on a stone pipe” (126). This is true for some but not for all of the pipes depicted; for example, using the Copena pipe, the smoker would face the side or back of the bird effigy (125). One striking difference between Hopewell effigy pipes (500 BC–AD 200) and Mississippian effigy pipes (AD 900–1250) is that with the former, the smoker directly faces an effigy bird or mammal, while with the latter the effigy (most often human) faces away from the smoker. During the earlier period, the smoker communes directly with the animal (and presumably its spirit) while later he does not.

Krech states, "Owls were without doubt the most dreaded and dangerous birds in the South," noting that they were not only ill omens but also were perceived "as witches and spirits bent on malevolence" (145). This is true throughout much of North America, especially in the Southwest and on the Northwest Coast. The association of the owl's call with an impending death is the subject of Margaret Craven's 1973 novel about the Kwagiulth, *I Heard the Owl Call My Name*. Fear of owls is almost universal among American Indians and is, perhaps, a consequence of their nocturnal hunting, silent flight, and haunting calls. Yet, as Krech shows, owls are widely depicted on pottery and other objects throughout the South, possibly as a way of recognizing and coping with the fear. Among some Pueblos in the Southwest, possession of owl feathers is an indicator that one is a witch or at least intent on doing evil. Conversely, some Pueblos place owl effigies above their doors, on roofs, or in crooks of trees to ward off witches. Krech not only mentions Creek, Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Cherokee fears regarding owls, but also notes that "the relationship of Creek Indians with owls was not uniformly negative" (146-47).

Occasionally Krech makes statements but then counters them. For example, "There should be little doubt that they consumed most of the birds that turn up in archaeological middens" is closely followed by, "But it is not always possible to conclude that birds were fair game and eaten, and questions might be raised about midden evidence of birds such as turkey and black vultures as well as barred and long-eared owls" (39). Several reasons exist, aside from food use, for birds' skeletal remains to be in middens, not the least of which is that some birds such as crows and vultures may have been killed while scavenging on the middens.

Early on in "The South," Krech states, "As in other parts of North America, the bird-human relationship is largely invisible in the South" (3). This is a curious thing to write given his observation that the most persistent visual image of indigenous peoples is that they are feathered. In Pueblo kiva murals, birds are the most common life form depicted, and any visitor to a Pueblo ceremony cannot fail to observe the importance of bird-human relationships in the feathers displayed on people. The presence of numerous bird-named clans is further evidence of this (for example, Eagle, Turkey, Parrot, Macaw, and Roadrunner). The same is true on the Northwest Coast where bird images such as the eagle, sea eagle, thunderbird, and raven are omnipresent, and Eagle and Raven are among the most prominent clans. To put it simply, birds were and are essential to American Indian life, and Krech has clearly demonstrated this in *Spirits of the Air*. It is a beautiful, scholarly work that belongs in the library of every anthropologist and historian who specializes in the American South or who is interested in birds.

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