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The Critical Collaboration: Introductions As A Gateway To The Study Of Native American Bi-Autobiography

R. D. THEISZ

In our exploration of the nature of Native American literature, we have customarily drawn the distinction between the major oral forms such as oral narratives, song-poetry, and oratory, and the written forms of the novel, the short story, and poetry. In doing so, we have not meant to imply that the oral forms are examples of tribal heritages that have vanished, and that the written forms have supplanted them in the same soil, only quite assimilated, only 20th Century. On the contrary, the oral tradition continues with considerable vigor, albeit less central to the fabric of Native American life, and with some shifting from the oral to the written.

One specific written form of Native American literary expression, which will be termed "bi-autobiography," blends both the features of the oral and written modes. To be sure, other written works by 20th Century Native American authors in some way reflect oral tribal traditions, sometimes confirming them, sometimes fleeing to them, sometimes transcending them. Yet, Native American bi-autobiography stands apart from these other Native

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American written forms in its greater adherence to the stance and the flavor of oral narrative while, at the same time, permitting necessary adjustments to the literary market and our literary conventions.

The understanding and appreciation of bi-autobiography, I contend, hinges upon an awareness of the collaborative venture which has brought it forth. Moreover, even the familiarity with only a limited number of bi-autobiographies should impress us with the significant and unique role the introductions play in elucidating the nature of the specific collaboration involved in the life stories which follow them.

PART ONE

I am suggesting the designation of "bi-autobiography" as a neologism for the more cumbersome tandem "autobiography/biography" or the term "as-told-to" autobiography which would also express the special type of life story in question. Most typically the bi-autobiography presents segments or all of the life of a Native American man or woman, narrated orally or in writing, which is then recorded by a non-Indian editor, generally from among social scientists or literati. The recorder/editor usually acts as catalyst or stimulus in the inception of the work. The native narrator, in a number of possible variations, then supplies the basic content, which the recorder finally more or less freely shapes into the resultant work including an introduction and notes. I will, henceforth, refer to the two participants as narrator and editor.

The hybrid bi-autobiography is distinct from its two bordering relatives. Biography, in which the author deals with the central figure in the third person, may, at times, be based on this figure's own story. The reader, however, expects that the role of the subject in the creation of the resultant work has been considered by the biographer but that ultimately, in assuming the third person point of view, the biographer has refracted the subject's experience significantly in recording and presenting a human life story. Autobiography, on the other hand, purports to represent the efforts of a single individual who is telling his own story, any editorial activity by another person being negligible. When compared to autobiography, bi-autobiography permits and even requires the intrinsic participation of the editor which we do not grant the typical autobiography. On the other hand, we see in bi-autobiography a first person point of view and a direct expression of self which has not

been expropriated by the editor/biographer as it is in the related form of the biography. Some works of marginal nature cannot, of course, be placed clearly only under one designation or another. Furthermore, all three related forms—biography, bi-autobiography, and autobiography—presume, by necessity, that the various roles of narrators, authors, and editors involved have been properly credited and explained. It is difficult to say, for example, how many autobiographies would be included among the bi-autobiographies if a *de facto* editor were acknowledged.¹

Finally, in defining the mode, we must make mention of the occasional presence of successive editors, that is, an initial transcriber or amanuensis who did not publish the account and a final editor. Even though the editorial role is split, shared, or even magnified, the quintessence of the mode is retained. Some examples of this kind are *Two Leggings*, *Karnee*, and *Geronimo*.

In my attempts to deal with bi-autobiographies in the college classroom, I found myself leaning more and more to an inquiry into the manner of the collaboration involved. Whether analyzing style, examining the structural patterns, raising questions of representative cultural reliability, or asking a number of other literary, cultural or even "human condition" questions of the texts involved, I repeatedly returned to this common denominator: What is the specific manifestation of the cooperative effort which leads to the designation bi-autobiography? How does it affect our reactions to and expectations of the form? What does it reveal of the native narrator's adherence to traditional oral narration? What of the editor's attitude toward the native narrator and the material before them?

These and similar concerns must ultimately be set against the text under consideration. Yet, as we examine a representative number of works we would include under our category, we perceive that editors inevitably feel themselves bound in the introduction to clarify the collaborative process which produced the pages to follow. As we compare more and more introductions²—occasionally the same points will be presented in an epilogue or appendix³—six subjects emerge. Merely understanding the handling of these six issues as they appear in the introductions can generate a set of conclusions about the nature of Native American bi-autobiography, and especially the functioning of the collaborative act.

As my aim is to present a method of analysis applicable to virtually all examples of the mode, I will cite exemplary introductions

only sparingly with no attempt at supplying all works known to me which would serve to illustrate my points.

I

The first of the six topics dealt with in almost all introductions explicitly or implicitly is the manner of collaboration. Whatever the subsequent editing process, the central narration emerges either as an independent, though often prodded, relation of experiences and remembrances by the native narrator which is recorded by the editor for further treatment at another time; or, more seldom, as an organic growth produced by the dual ego of narrator and editor. In the first instance, the editor often attempts to remain outside the narration. His role is one of condensing, of rearranging in a limited way the original account which may have been rendered in English or in the narrator's native language and then translated by a trusted interpreter, often a relative (*Jim Whitewolf*, p. viii; *Son of Old Man Hat*, p. xii). A more intrusive treatment may select, condense, abbreviate and reorganize, yet stress that the narrator's own words were retained, or words "which he readily recognized in checking the manuscript" (*Sun Chief*, p. 7). Still another approach concentrates on the authenticity of the source, but is apparently less concerned or even cavalier about the recording and shaping of the narration (*Black Elk Speaks*, p. xi; *Wooden Leg*, p. ix; and *Karnee*, pp. 15-16). Not surprisingly, the editor's attitudes toward the narrator and his account range from the commitment to leave the original material as untouched as possible to the free molding of the original, according to the intentions and attitude of the editor. Obviously, these terms are relative.

The other type of collaboration brings the editor into the initial recording of the account. One of the clearest instances of this type is portrayed by Pelletier and Poole:

This book is what is known as a collaboration. But the usual terms "as told to" and "edited by" do not describe how it came into being. The book was grown rather than produced. It proceeded from the ground of a shared humanity, neither by arrangement nor agreement, but through an organic relationship" (*Foreign Land*, p. ix).

Perhaps not really involving dual narrators of equal import, the material nevertheless shows the stamp of the editor in a more integral role and at an earlier stage of the overall process than in the

instances cited earlier.⁴ More than just the genesis of a narrative may be under discussion, however, for the "oneness" may serve as a statement of a *Weltanschauung* which transcends individuality, polarities, and differences.

II

The second area commonly addressed in introductions also deals with the collaboration, but rather than concerning the manner of the collaboration, now the meeting of the collaborators and the decision to undertake their joint venture is portrayed.

The original meeting of narrator and editor can take two forms. In the first, it either occurs by pure chance or upon solicitation for the sake of some project. In time, the editor is accepted on a close personal basis and his worth recognized by the narrator who, originally a paid informant or consultant, now supplies his account more for personal reasons than for pay or praise (*Karnee*, p. 16; and *Son of Old Man Hat*, pp. xi, xiv).

The other type of meeting may be based on similar circumstances at first, but the validation of the editor's role results not from the developing friendship, but from the expressed conviction, expressed by the narrator and quoted by the editor, that the encounter was predestined. Thus, in *Mountain Wolf Woman* the narrator's brother in time ". . . came to believe that our association had been pre-ordained" (p. xii). Black Elk, somewhat differently, knows of Neihardt's purpose for being at his side before Neihardt has the opportunity to refer to it: "As I sit here, I can feel in this man beside me a strong desire to know the things of the Other World. He has been sent to learn what I know, and I will teach him" (*Black Elk*, p. ix). Similarly, John (Fire) Lane Deer tells Erdoes: "I always wanted somebody to help write a book about Indian religion and medicine, and when I first met you I knew that you were the man I had been waiting for. Your coming was no accident" (*Seeker of Visions*, p. 275).

What we find in introductions then is a depiction of relationships whose beginnings are sometimes cool and casual, at times slow in growing, at times with immediacy from the outset, especially when the meetings are seen as fated encounters. The cooperation is occasionally initiated by the narrator, but most often sought by the editor.

Since the introductions present the direct comments of the editor, it would seem that stressing the uniqueness of the first meeting or

of the subsequent personal relationship indicates the editor's desire to validate his contribution to the partnership. Could not his role otherwise be seen as unoriginal, pedestrian, vicarious or even parasitically exploitive? On the other hand, the narrator in his turn, may wish to share some of the responsibility of deciding to make public his personal narrative. He therefore welcomes an impersonal sign of the fated collaboration, or appreciates that the warm insistence of friendship helps to overcome his reluctance.

III

The third of the areas usually dealt with in introductions expresses the compelling reason for the existence of the book, its purpose, its value. Given an Indian narrator, we will naturally be shown the Indian world and the Indian experience of the non-Indian world.

Seeking to satisfy the reader's expectations about the value of involving oneself with the text, the editor presents his *raison d'être*. The most common rationale revolves around "The Vanishing Red Man" theme. On the premise that the curtain has closed on a "formerly great culture," we will be provided one last look at the disappearing actors. Thus *Cheyenne Memories*, we are told, makes possible an "inside view" of a native historian which "will never be achieved again" (*Cheyenne Memories*, p. 3). Radin wants to "throw more light on the workings of the mind and emotions of primitive man" (*The Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian*, p. 2). In *Karnee*, we are offered a record of "local Indian history and lore" (*Karnee*, p. 15), and *Plenty Coups* provides "a genuine record" of a past culture (*Plenty Coups*, p. x).

Although we can cite examples such as Pretty Shield's refusal to talk of the days of traumatic adjustment of the reservation, so that she chooses to cover only the pre-reservation years (*Pretty Shield*, p. 10), the selection of the "before it's too late" approach usually reflects the interests and bias of the editor.

A number of bi-autobiographies stress the dimension of cultural change. These texts tend to pursue a diachronic approach of: 1) conveying "some feeling for the reality of a man's experiences under conditions of stressful culture contact and social disorganization" (*Jim Whitewolf*, p. vii); 2) drawing a bridge "between old American Indian cultures and the life-ways of the non-Indian with whom they come in contact" (*Dance Around the Sun*, p. xi); and 3) showing the "molding impact of culture upon personality" meaning both

of the two cultures in question and their effect on personality development (*Sun Chief*, p. 1).

A closely related set of bi-autobiographies makes the world and person of the narrator serve as a foil for ours. It seems that modern industrial/computer/space-age man enjoys or urgently needs moments of respite, of insight, of escape into other worlds which provide options for life. Often labelled examples of primitivism,⁵ these accounts serve as overt or indirect indictments of Western thought and social structure, and offer alternative worlds. Many of the works cited in this study would satisfy this description, but none expressly portray Indian life as an equal or more valid reality.

The final discernable trait of some introductions, at least initially, is the investigation of a popular or notorious occurrence or person. Neihardt sets out to gather the "deeper spiritual significance" of the Messianic dream that ends in the massacre at Wounded Knee (*Black Elk Speaks*, p. vii); and "the fact that Geronimo has told the story in his own way" attests to the appeal of the "patriot chief" or "renegade" reputation (*Geronimo. His Own Story*, p. 56).

IV

The choice of cultural phase and the cultural/geographic region, covered in the narrator's account, is of sufficient importance to be discussed as our fourth area. Virtually every introduction deals with the time between the former tribal existence and the dominance of the non-Indian world. An initial distinction can be drawn between the backward-looking, nostalgic remembrances of things past and gone, and those accounts which begin with descriptions of the tribal traditions, but then proceed also to reveal a viable though changing Indian experience in our day.

The first of these groups is much more numerous. The attitude which prevails in these texts sees the end of the integral, whole tribal world. Some narrators like Pretty Shield, as seen above, will not even talk of the days of adjustment to the reservation existence: "There is nothing to tell, because we did nothing," she insisted when pressed for stories of her middle life. "There were no buffalo. We stayed in one place, and grew lazy" (*Pretty Shield*, p. 10).

The narratives in this vein are not overly interested in recording the period of traumatic adjustment. Instead, they are chiefly preoccupied with the "uncorrupted" aboriginal societies which often maintained themselves until the end of the Indian wars of the 1860s through the 1880s.

The "before it's too late" conviction of the editor is frequently in evidence; witness the Marriott-Rachlin introduction: "Unfortunately, an anthropologist works one jump ahead of the undertaker. This time the undertaker caught up with us. There are many questions that will never be answered" (*Dance Around the Sun*, p. xii).

Margot Liberty's introduction provides a further example:

He was one of the last Cheyennes to hear the tribal story from those who lived it. He was the only one to seek out their accounts in steadfast determination that they should some day be published. His kind of inside view will never be achieved again (*Cheyenne Memories*, p. 3).

This mood of cultural fatigue and despair shades the majority of bi-autobiographies. Yet, as indicated above, some representatives of the mode are interested in the cultural change of the periods of transition: "Our interest is in what manner of man the two cultures made of him and what we can learn from his experiences" (*Sun Chief*, p. 1).

Less explicitly, Richard Erdoes, in his epilogue, draws the strings from New York to the Rosebud Reservation, from skyscrapers to sweat lodges (*Seeker of Visions*, pp. 267-83). We thus find not merely a link from one period to another, but also the oscillating of the collaborators between the reservation community and the outside urban world.

Of some significance in relation to the cultural phase is the range of tribal groups. The Plains tribes show the strongest representation, with surrounding areas such as the Prairie, the Southwest, and the Plateau, also supplying some representatives. It appears that those areas whose tribes were the last to yield to American manifest destiny evoke a flamboyant image, militarily and spiritually, in American thought. Moreover, they are at the end of the tribes to be overcome, and can supply the last actual witnesses of "the old days" as well as of the following early years of transition.

V

In his introduction, Peter Nabokov draws a contrast between "the famous man" narrators and "the ordinary man" narrators of autobiographies. The former customarily clarifies his participation in important historical events, whereas the latter is only rarely asked (most often by anthropologists) to relate his, to him, "less

significant" life story (*Two Leggings*, p. xi). This question of the type of narrator, as it is mentioned in the introductions, becomes our fifth area.

Nabokov's observation above remains valid for our purposes with one change. His first category of narrator, that of the "famous man," encompasses two distinct groups. The first and larger group includes the spiritual leader or medicine man such as Black Elk and John Fire (Lame Deer) and the civil leader or opinion-moulder, Plenty Coups as "chief," and John Stands in Timber in *Cheyenne Memories* as tribal historian. The second, smaller group includes the representatives of the warrior tradition such as Two Leggings and Geronimo.

Nabokov's "ordinary man" category and his comment on its anthropological motives hold true as well. Introductions with these examples present a "representative, middle-aged individual of moderate ability" (*Autobiography of a Winnebao Indian*, p. 2) or someone who is "an ordinary member of his tribe" (*Jim Whitewolf*, p. vii). In *Two Leggings* we find the documentation of a "hybrid" personality's story which originally was of the more traditional "famous man" type—although Two Leggings is described as only a "minor leader"—but which is ultimately thought to be of value for its picture of everyday Crow life (*Two Leggings*, p. xi).

One dimension of the type of narrators involved with bi-autobiography is not referred to by Nabokov and has been generally rather neglected and begs to be included here. Most of the early non-Indian observers of Indian life were male. This fact, augmented by Euro-American bias in seeing the Indian fabric of life, was further reinforced by the apparent public dominance of males in most tribal ceremonies.⁶ Yet, as my selection of texts demonstrates, female narrators and editors have been in evidence, though their apparent increase in our own time may reflect the current interest in and emphasis on women more than an actual increase in the number of life stories produced. Women's functions in tribal and contemporary Indian life such as in the creation of life and art, to name just two, certainly deserve further inquiry,⁷ but this undertaking falls outside our examination of introductions as a method of analysis.

VI

The sixth area commonly addressed in introductions is the treatment of the original account (i.e., The translations and the manner

of transcriptions form the first focal point). Not surprisingly, many of the narrators either speak little English or feel more comfortable expressing themselves in their native language. The necessary translating into English is not performed by the editor, who rarely speaks enough of the language, but by a native translator. The editor generally expresses no dissatisfaction with the translator's performance (*Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian*, p. 2; or *Jim Whitewolf*, p. viii), or simply does not give any indication that the translation is of concern to him (*Black Elk*, p. xi; and *Son of Old Man Hat*, p. xii).

The transcription process, on the other hand, stretches in its approach from the freely interpretive treatment to the laboriously faithful written reproduction of the original. The introduction to *Wooden Leg* illustrates the former strain. "The principal storyteller's statements of essential facts have been amalgamated with those of his fellow tribesmen who fought as companions with him" (*Wooden Leg*, p. ix). Although Marquis, the editor in question, stresses that "all points have been checked and collaborated or corrected," his efforts exemplify the freer method of transcription.

By contrast, the most consciously deliberate methods, careful to leave as little imprint on the original as possible, are accompanied by explicit explanations and justifications of the manner of selection, condensation, and reorganization by the editor. Condensation, for instance, is often mentioned, with the editor insisting that the account is still "almost always in Don's own words, or words he readily recognized in checking the manuscript" (*Sun Chief*, p. 7), or that he has "tried to add nothing" and has left out "only some few minor experiences and repetitious episodes" (*Son of Old Man Hat*, p. xii). In general, it seems that even those editors who might be regarded as diligent in their adherence to the original, feel justified in making "necessary" adjustments, and say so in their introductions.

The editor's hand is most obtrusive in the related area of organization. He usually finds it necessary to shape the material in some way, and, with some exceptions, reveals the forming principles in his introduction. Several editors make mention of an "aboriginal order" of narrative and take it to mean a "characteristic Indian manner" which "consists of telling only that which seems to the teller important and telling it in the fashion and the order which seems to him appropriate" (*Geronimo*, p. 45). Some introductions subscribe to not influencing this Indian process of narration in any way (*Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian*, p. 2). Others, how-

ever, speak of exerting a deciding influence on the selection of content either intentionally (*Sun Chief*, pp. 6-7), or by the mere presence of the editor (*Cheyenne Memories*, pp. 4-5; and *Mountain Wolf Woman*, pp. xiv f).

The next phase of the growth of the final work covers a corresponding range, so that those accounts which were generated with little editorial input, tend to remain relatively untouched by subsequent editorial activity. Others, directed by the editor from the outset, are now "selected, condensed, greatly abbreviated and often reorganized" (*Sun Chief*, p. 7), or selected with "sequences arranged, and stories invented" (*No Foreign Land*, p. x).

Judging from the introductions in our representative sample, most editors felt themselves bound to present what Simmons calls the "natural order" (*Sun Chief*, p. 1), but by which he means the order of experience. Accordingly, a good number of introductions indicate that the life history involved had to be chronologically rearranged (*Jim Whitewolf*, p. viii; and *Son of Old Man Hat*, p. xii), even though the narrator may have rendered his version in a memory-and-association sequence centered around personally and culturally pivotal episodes.

That some narrators were given the opportunity to proof-hear the final works and that they recognized (*Sun Chief*, p. 1) or consented (*Wooden Legs*, p. ix) to the final text, suggests only that the most flagrant errors were corrected. Whether the final product was truly representative of the life story envisioned by the narrator is questionable. We are reminded of the ethnomusicologist who, having learned an Indian melody and humming it to a tribal singer, is told, "You've got the tune, but you don't have the Indian throat."

Only a handful of introductions offers alternatives to the chronological manner of arrangement. The place of myth and dream is acknowledged grudgingly in two cases (*Nino Cochise*, p. ix; and *Pretty Shield*, p. 11), and cultural turning points become narrative markers in three (*Two Leggings*, p. ix; *Geronimo*, p. 52; and *Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian*, p. 2).

After this overview of the six areas of topics, it now remains to consider the interrelationship between them. Does the extreme of one topic range always indicate a pattern of related other topics? Does the "average narrator" entail the hands-off editorial policy and the cross-cultural stance? Does the spiritual sage or war leader narrator imply a pre-reservation fixation and considerable molding

of the narrative by an editor with the preserve-it-for-posterity-before-it's-too-late attitude?

Perhaps the gauge to be applied is the apparent willingness of the editor to accept the intrinsic validity and reasonableness of the other tribal culture. If, instead, he perceives a less worthy culture, whose virtues and vices are inappropriate for our day, his treatment of one of its documents may well spring from a certain combination of patronizing, eulogizing, backward-looking, quaintness-seeking, theses-proving motives.

PART II

In using introductions as a gateway to Indian bi-autobiography, we cannot ignore the reader's somewhat disquieting reservations concerning the authenticity of the final text. We have traditionally been led by literary convention to expect unimpeachable authenticity from anything presented as an autobiography. The kind of authenticity in question is not the totally objective, verifiable recall of historical events and the narrator's role in them. Rather we expect the single voice of the narrator, his personal integrity, to give meaning to the course of history. If this meaning departs, at times, from the accepted track, we honor its deviation as personal insight, charming idiosyncrasy, or bold hypothesis.

Given the possible or even probable contamination of the Indian narrator's personally authentic voice by the influence of the editor, as we concluded from statements in introductions, we are now wont to regard the authenticity of the text with suspicion. Didn't the introduction promise the "Indian perspective," the "inside view," the "rare insight," the "genuine record" by an insider? We seem less inclined to grant the native narrator's account even the customary kind of malleability which would permit some shaping by the editor. The latter remains for us an outsider no matter how sympathetic or knowledgeable, and his contribution smacks of alteration or interference.

How, then, to defend the collaborative act? The creative/editorial activity of narrator and editor, it can be shown, overcomes several obstacles which might otherwise smother the growth of the work, or at least emasculate it.

Only rarely does the narrator initiate the project. Most often, the editor seeks out the narrator with the work already in mind, or else the idea crystallizes after their first encounter. Therefore, the very existence of a bi-autobiography depends upon the forma-

tion of the team. The editor could not proceed on his own since he is not a member of the other culture and lacks the life story which serves as the basis of our category. The narrator, in turn, possesses the proper membership as well as either a latent life story or one already formed in his mind.

Some hindrances on the narrator's part to the advancement of the project are his inadequacies in written English, his despair at expressing the ineffable mysteries, and his feelings that in his own tribal community his story is already known or deemed insignificant. These considerations, however, are rarely alluded to in introductions. Instead, we find references to three others which vex the native narrator.

All three arise from the cultural matrix of the tribe in question, and may be summed up as cultural reluctance: first to talk about oneself; second to claim undue authority; and third to disclose sacred things. It has become commonplace to regard Native American cultures, at least the tribes in question here, as tribal societies which prize egalitarianism, stress restraint, and respect privacy. On the other hand, formalized situations exist during which an individual can publicly recount an experience, an exploit, or an explanation of his past or present behavior. Still, any exaggerated focus on the self in such situations or at other times is sure to draw public ridicule or censure. Only the most insensitive or self-sure individuals would tell their life story in book form, for it would be deemed improper to think oneself so interesting or important (*Mountain Wolf Woman*, p. 94 and 98).

This respect for personal restraint extends to others as well, occasionally in the manner of fictionalizing names (*Jim Whitewolf*, p. viii). Since the individual does not impose himself on others, the narrator is also leery of having his remarks taken as representative.⁸

The narrator's desire not to speak for others also manifests itself in his reluctance to claim undue authority or to be taken for a braggart. To safeguard against such accusations, several introductions refer to other individuals of some age and knowledge who are present during the narration process either by way of condoning the project or actually complementing the narrator's account (*Seeker of Visions*, pp. 280-83; *Black Elk Speaks*, p. xi). Nancy Oestreich Lurie, on the other hand, describes the attitude of a narrator who remains modestly silent on certain matters:

In two instances she told of occurrences which she did not want incorporated in the narrative and I must respect her confidence in this

regard. She feared they would sound boastful and cause her to be ridiculed (*Mountain Wolf Woman*, p. 94).

The final examples of the narrator's reluctances regards the discussion of sacred matters. Here as so often, tribal diversity creates different viewpoints. Northern Plains people, when having the personal right, are relatively willing to portray "the things of the Other World" (*Black Elk Speaks*, p. x; *Seeker of Visions*, p. 280). The peoples of the Southwest, by contrast, often equate disclosure of a ceremony with contamination and weakening its efficacy. *Sun Chief* stands as a clear example of the insensitive, possibly greedy editor who urges his narrator to violate his religious beliefs by sharing ceremonial knowledge. The narrator responds when pressed for details of a ceremony: "What I do in the Soyal is secret. When you ask me about that it sets the people against me" (*Sun Chief*, p. 6). When shown the published pictures and drawings of the altars involved in the ceremony, the narrator responds: "This is awful. It makes me unhappy. That man Voth was a thief. The secrets are all exposed" (*Sun Chief*, p. 6). Yet the editor expresses no qualms about delving further into such areas. In spite of extreme examples such as this, most editors are acceptably aware and considerate of tribal and individual sensibilities.

In summary, it can be said that were it not for the collaborative situation, even the relatively minor inhibitions on the narrator's part might prove insurmountable and deprive us of sharing his story.

I would like to stress, in closing, that my recommendation of the study of introductions as a fruitful approach to bi-autobiography must not be taken for advice to replace the analysis of the total work. Although, to my mind, the significance of introductions for appreciating the collaboration of narrator and editor is unquestionable and has not been properly assessed, we are bound to compare these introductions to the life stories they precede. We will need to confirm claims and protestations expressed in the introductions by noting their reflections in the texts. Most texts will certainly bear out the introductory statements; yet, at the same time, some texts may lead us to repudiate claims made in introductions, or provide us with new information. Finally, further research into original transcripts and related archival sources must be undertaken to determine how the texts have evolved from conception, through preliminary and successive versions and stages, to the final, published bi-autobiography.

NOTES

1. Stensland cites the example of Charles Alexander Eastman, whose wife Elaine served as his uncredited ghost writer (Stensland; p. 207), yet whose works are considered to be pure autobiography (See Smith, p. 242).

2. Somewhat arbitrarily I have limited my study to those bi-autobiographies in my personal library and in the Black Hills State College E. Y. Berry Library. They are listed in my bibliography. The selection of works available to the college instructor is likely of similar breadth.

3. Richard Erdoes traces his role in an epilogue [John (Lame Deer) Fire and Richard Erdoes, *Seeker of Visions*, pp. 267-83], and Nancy Oestreich Lurie resorts to both preface as well as three appendices and extensive notes in *Mountain Wolf Woman*.

4. Richard Erdoes in a personal meeting reiterated the "organic growth" of the final text during two months of close association which he vaguely refers to in his epilogue (*Seeker of Visions*, p. 279).

5. See Roy Harvey Pearce for a summary of primitivism in the 18th and 19th Centuries (Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization*, pp. 136f).

6. The question of sexual roles is discussed in Turner, p. 375; Niethammer, p. xiii; Terrell, p. 42, 117; and Katz, p. 4.

7. Gridley, p. 10, offers some insights into the emphasis on the creative side of woman.

8. Stands in Timber is an example of the few representative speakers, being "the acknowledged" Northern Cheyenne historian, although he too had his detractors (*Cheyenne Memories*, p. 5).

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