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The Militarization of Indian Country. By Winona LaDuke. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2012. 110 pages. \$16.95 paper.

Winona LaDuke's *The Militarization of Indian Country* examines the US military's negative influence on the mental, physical, and spiritual health of Native Americans and the devastating impact that military experimentation, testing, and waste disposal have had on the environment. Published by Honor the Earth, a Minneapolis-based Native environmental group headed by the author, the book is advocacy literature rather than narrative history. According to the organization's website, Honor the Earth believes a "sustainable world is predicated on transforming economic, social, and political relationships that have been based on systems of conquest toward systems based on just relationships with each other and with the natural world." Readers should understand that the work seeks to persuade people as much as to enlighten them about alternative ways to envision the future and the way that we treat and/or mistreat the environment.

LaDuke divides the book into four sections. The first, "The Military and the People," examines the historic and enduring importance of warrior societies in Native America. She also examines the paradox of American Indian participation in the US military. "How," she asks, "did we move from being the target of the US military to being the US military itself?" (9–10). This is an excellent question that has much to say about the complexity of Indian responses to military service and their uneasy relationship with it. LaDuke concludes that economic deprivation, domination, and racism explain the high levels of Native induction into the military. There are undoubtedly other reasons that also merit attention: patriotism, the desire to defend their homes and their families, the hope of emulating the proud traditions of their fathers and grandfathers, the desire for a new challenge or adventure in life, peer pressure from family and friends—the list is expansive. LaDuke's assessment is that "the impact of military service on individual Native people is dramatic—and all too often traumatic" (20), particularly for inductees from remote areas or with limited experience spending extended periods of time away from family and their community. The shock of military training, overseas deployments, and combat is hardly unique to Indians.

The book's second section, "The Military and the Economy," seeks to demonstrate the pernicious effects of the US military on Native Americans and on reservations. As in the previous section, LaDuke makes several bold claims. "Increasing worldwide poverty appears to correspond to an upsurge in the purchase of weapons," she argues, "and therefore, increased killing and death, all of which benefits the US military economy" (23). Such claims set aside multiple causes of poverty and war, and that these are not always

beneficial to the “US military economy.” The Iraq War and the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, for instance, have hardly brought sustained economic prosperity to the United States. LaDuke does show the importance of military pay, retirement, and other veterans’ benefits to struggling reservation economies. Without the injection of military dollars, the living standards in some Indian communities would erode further.

Given LaDuke’s environmental views, the book’s third section, titled “The Military and the Land,” is significant. Citing the use of Agent Orange in Vietnam and the military’s use of depleted uranium and chemical weaponry, the author claims “the US military is the largest polluter in the world,” its impact on the planet is “damning,” both historically and in the present, and “the role of the US military in contaminating the planet cannot be overstated” (31). Several interesting and important sections in this chapter could have been expanded. Issues such as depleted uranium storage and usage, chemical weapons in the Southwest, and the proposed Project Chariot in Alaska certainly merit careful and expansive investigation, and it is likely they are not well known to readers. LaDuke also asks a question that should have merited a separate chapter to examine the phenomenon more fully: why the military locates potentially dangerous military test facilities in or close to Indian country. According to LaDuke, it is “a result of our nation’s history of colonialism, its Doctrine of Manifest Destiny, and the subsequent expansion of military interests to support American imperialism” (47). One wishes that the author had interviewed Department of Defense or Department of Energy officials to seek additional explanation. To bolster her case that American imperialism is to blame for many of the ills in Indian country, she poses the question “Why are all those Reservations called Fort?” (59). Native Americans were not consulted when the great majority of reservations were named, particularly those named after renowned “Indian fighters” such as Kit Carson. In another example of a provocative point made in the book that would benefit from expanded treatment, LaDuke concludes this section of the book with another interesting but unsubstantiated claim. Discussing Kit Carson’s 1866 infamous forced removal of Navajos to Bosque Redondo, she claims that Adolf Hitler used the Navajo experience at Bosque Redondo “as a model for his own extermination camps” (64), but leaves untouched the possibilities that he might also have based them on the Spaniards’ concentration camps in Cuba or English concentration camps during the Boer War.

In the final section, “The Military and the Future,” LaDuke calls for a reallocation of world military budgets to stave off global social and environmental destruction. In contrast to her earlier condemnation, here she praises the military for its use of renewable energy, its increasingly energy-efficient buildings, and its “strategic position in the development of markets for renewable

energy and locally produced foods” (66). The military provides some of the best training grounds for the green economy, and its access to resources and advanced technologies make it a potential strong ally in LaDuke’s quest for a peaceful future predicated on “justice and access to adequate ecological and cultural resources” (69).

LaDuke provides a pointed and highly critical examination of the US military’s impact on Native peoples, cultures, and lands. On a number of occasions, she could strengthen her arguments by placing events within their historical context, providing more extensive analysis, and citing references so readers can find out more about a given topic or find out where LaDuke found the material under investigation. In many instances, there are no references cited at all—a problem for researchers who may desire to explore a topic a bit further. For example, in the “Author’s Preface” the author argues that the United States is “the largest purveyor of weapons in the world, and that billions of people have no land, food, and often, limbs, because of the military,” and that since WWII “more than four-fifths of the people killed in war have been civilians” (xv). This kind of strong assertion indeed may be accurate, but require references for additional information.

The Militarization of Indian Country certainly contains an abundance of provocative ideas, and it challenges the adverse effects of military weapons testing and development that take place on Indian reservations across the American West. As a manifesto for environmental protection and change, the book will be welcomed by individuals sharing LaDuke’s green outlook and sympathies, and it also offers a window into how some Native peoples view the US military and its effects on the environment.

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The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism. By Jodi A. Byrd. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011. 320 pages. \$75.00 cloth; \$25.00 paper.

Chickasaw scholar Jodi Byrd addresses the “post” in postcolonial studies with her new book *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism*. Byrd employs indigenous critical theory coupled with Chickasaw cosmologies to discuss the colonial discourses that continue to affect indigenous people and their lands. There is a sense of recognition and familiarity to her work, yet her book is exceptional because she is able to convey the intricacies of what she describes as the “transit of empire.” While referenced throughout, the author