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Reviews

The View from Officers' Row: Army Perceptions of Western Indians. By Sherry L. Smith. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1990. 263 pages. \$24.95 Cloth.

Just as the nonmilitary white society expressed varied opinions and attitudes concerning Indians and Indian wars during the nineteenth century, so too did American army officers and their wives. Indeed, Sherry Smith, assistant professor of history at the University of Texas at El Paso, shatters the myth of the Indian-hating officers and proves that they should not be categorized as a monolith of hatred towards their Indian opponents.

Limiting her study to the period 1848-1890, from the end of the Mexican War to the tragedy at Wounded Knee, Smith relies primarily on numerous letters, diaries, memoirs, and other personal writings of officers and their wives. Included are the views of well-known officers, such as General Phil Sheridan, General William Sherman, General Nelson Miles, General Oliver Howard, General George Crook, and Lieutenant Colonel George Custer. In addition, Smith presents commentary by less well-known officers, such as Captain E. O. C. Ord, Captain Randolph Marcy, Lieutenant Frank Baldwin, Lieutenant William Averell, and Lieutenant Edward Steptoe. Conspicuously missing from her numerous examples is Colonel John Chivington, who led the Sand Creek massacre.

A great deal of significant information can be gleaned from reading this book. Smith presents excellent definitions of savagery and civilization. She points out that officers usually had a better opinion of Indian women than did their wives; white women viewed themselves as superior, as models for Indian women to emulate. On the subjects of Indian wars and federal Indian policy, a good number of officers sympathized with Indians who

fought to protect their homelands from the actions of unscrupulous whites. Many officers supported the goals of assimilation but disagreed with the methods and management of the policy. They strongly criticized civilian control of Indian affairs and believed that the military should be in charge. Ironically, as Smith skillfully demonstrates, officers and the "friends of the Indians" in the East shared remarkably similar views about the goals of federal Indian policy. Again, their major disagreement was over who should administer the policy.

Smith explains that sometimes officers wrote about Indians in order to enhance their military careers. Unfortunately, many officers failed to recognize Indian cultural differences and wrote in sweeping generalizations. Nevertheless, because officers were "on-the-spot" observers, their views are significant and essential to understanding Indian and white relations.

The View from Officers' Row is well-written and contains a very good map of western forts and the territories of major tribes. Because of the availability of sources, much more is presented about the officers' views than about the views of their wives. The book should become a standard work to consult. Smith has succeeded in dispelling the myth of a monolithic military hatred toward American Indians.

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Indians of the Northwest Coast. By Maximilien Bruggmann and Peter R. Gerber. Trans. by Barbara Fritze-meier. New York and Oxford: Facts on File, 1989. 240 pages. \$45.00 Cloth.

Originally published for a German-speaking audience, this handsome, large-format book, with photographs by Maximilien Bruggmann and text by Peter Gerber, has been designed as an introduction to the past and present cultures of the Indians of the Northwest. As such it takes its place alongside books like *People of the Totem* (N. Bancroft-Hunt and W. Foreman, 1979), which is also heavily illustrated, or the more sober *Indians of the Pacific Northwest: A History* (R. H. Ruby and J. A. Brown, 1981), or Vinson Brown's *People of the Sea Wind*, which draws heavily on mythology and ritual. As the order of authors on the title page