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Dreaming History: A Collection of Wisconsin Native-American Writing.  
Edited by Mary Anne Doan and Jim Stevens.

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result of cultural estrangement. Rather, she honestly and boldly claims her heritage as an Abenaki and integrates this rich past into her present circumstances. Savageau's "chronicle of returning" is a refreshingly positive journey.

Louise C. Maynor

North Carolina Central University

**Dreaming History: A Collection of Wisconsin Native-American Writing.** Edited by Mary Anne Doan and Jim Stevens. Madison, Wisconsin: Prairie Oak Press, 1995. 120 pages. \$10.95 paper.

A wonderfully executed collection of writing styles, *Dreaming History: A Collection of Wisconsin Native-American Writing* flows with the cadences of fine storytelling. True to indigenous sacred formulae, it is constructed in four parts, each setting groundwork for the next.

The introduction sets the tone for this ritual form, telling the story of the recent birth of a white buffalo calf on a farm in Wisconsin. The farmer, although not a Native American, understands the importance of the event to indigenous people because of his early interaction with native religious figures. This tale is offered as an analogy to the wider phenomenon of Native American values and beliefs being disseminated to the rest of the world in hopes of achieving a sane balance between humans and nature. It is an exemplary premise for the body of this work, writing that seeks to reach a diverse audience with the message of enduring cultures and people, often struggling to preserve the "old ways" in an uncaring, sometimes hostile society.

The ritual now moves from its "call to the circle" into the four individual parts, "Listening to the Voices," "Living the World," "Teaching and Prayers," and "Talking Indian." Each is prefaced with a section explaining the content and intent of the separate pieces, weaving them together into a cohesive pattern addressing the section title and a theme. "Listening to the Voices" tells of the messages those who went before us continue to send, if only we will listen and heed their wisdom. "Living the World" recounts the sometimes jarring experience of trying to stay firmly rooted in an ancient worldview while surviving in a contemporary, rootless society. While "Teaching and Prayers" obviously addresses those things identifiably sacred to indigenous life, it also points

out that the intrinsic nature of native faith, which runs throughout all other facets of life, can still be expressed in today's world. Finally, "Talking Indian" both celebrates the ability of tradition to endure and reminds us that native history is never far away, no matter how removed we feel ourselves to be from the old ways. Each segment presents a variety of short stories and poems telling tales of pride, confusion, vision and hope among Wisconsin's indigenous people and those natives who came to this land by choice or force.

*Dreaming History* includes the work of eleven Native American authors, ranging from relatively well-known writers such as Charlene Blue Horse (Oglala Lakota), Jim Stevens (Seneca), and Ellen Kort (Ojibwa Anishinabe) to as-yet less widely read authors such as Pamela Green LaBarge (Oneida), Michael Roberts (Oneida), and Mary Anne Doan (Cree). In addition to a mix of writing styles, tribal backgrounds, and themes, the writers also bring their personal experiences of affinity with, or alienation from, their ancestral cultures to the content of their efforts.

Even though the authors reflect a variety of tribal backgrounds (Oneida, Cree, Oglala, Seneca, and Anishinabe), a central element prevails: contemporary topics that speak to the ongoing dialogue with the ancestors and their continuing presence and importance in the lives of modern Native Americans. Although the anthology is highly readable, it carries a bittersweet undercurrent that provokes strong thought. It tells of the loss of cultures, religions, languages, sacred ground, and beloved relatives. It does so with little of the dark humor so well presented in Rayna Green's *That's What She Said* (Indiana University Press, 1984) or Hunter, Sweet, Northrup, and Louis's *Days of Obsidian, Days of Grace* (Poetry Harbor, 1994). That is not to say that this is a shortcoming; quite the contrary. *Dreaming History's* purpose seems to be to focus on the strength of indigenous people who survive in a world unfriendly to the old ways. It does so with unswerving commitment. While some readers may find this intensity disturbing, others will feel a catharsis, a ritual cleansing.

Throughout *Dreaming History*, we are introduced to characters, some fictional, some real, some pure spirit more real than the rest. These characters carry on, dreaming their own history at powwows, ceremonials, and PTA meetings. They ride buses and whirlwinds, hitchhike across snowy prairies, and stand on the shore, watching the coming of a human storm whose destructive power they cannot yet know. Tribute is paid to mythic spirits,

famous leaders, honored kin, and those who publicly carry the indigenous cultures of centuries' duration outside Indian Country. This last group includes activist/singer/actress Buffy Ste. Marie, religious figure Oren Lyons, and elder powwow dancer Ken Powless.

Another element to which the writers refer again and again is the sometimes tenuous self-identity of those of mixed ancestry. Even those whom we as readers assume to be "full-blood" and "traditionalist" are tested for their fluency in their tribal language, their knowledge of and belief in the ancient faiths. Traditionalist, full-blood grandmothers raise their grandchildren in Bureau of Indian Affairs housing while daydreaming of custom-built homes with lofts and jacuzzis. Young women drive to powwows, wearing turquoise and silver, diamonds and Elgin watches. A mixed-blood man who evidently can "pass for white" careens through tai chi classes, Little League games, and Vietnamese restaurants, enduring the overheard comments about the inappropriateness of natives being admitted to Marquette University. We are left with the clear impression that, even for those whose biological identity is secure, the crazy quilt of modern native culture creates a somewhat schizoid worldview.

The reality of bicultural life is sometimes seen through different lenses by Native American women and men, and that dichotomy is clear in *Dreaming History*. Although writers of both genders in this anthology address the larger sense of family inherent in seeing indigenous people as a single clan, longhouse, or powwow drum, it is quite evident that immediate family is a topic used much more frequently by the women authors here than by the men. In fact, with the exception of Andrew Connors's "Like the Snowflake" (pp. 60–63), none of the men in this volume speaks directly to the subject of relations with close kin. Likewise, although Charlene Blue Horse's "Poem for Our Ancestors Dedicated to the Kiwanis Club" (pp. 104–105) relates native genocide to the Jewish Holocaust, and Kimberly Blaeser's "Where I Was that Day" (pp. 8–10) searches for and finds the spirit of Geronimo, most of the works of the women writers couch relationships to the larger world in terms of personal relationships. Often these personal vignettes serve as metaphors for connection to the Ancient Ones, other native nations, and nonnatives in general, yet they emphasize the importance of the primary relationships in any native's life as the framework for their place in the bigger web of creation.

Finally, *Dreaming History* gives the reader an almost visceral sense of the spirit-of-place of Wisconsin and the Upper Great Lakes. Through allusions to the internal landscape of this holy ground, we are introduced to the Creator's power to endure in an aboriginal guise, no matter how the physical world is molded to humans' whims. Gitchie Manito, Tunkashila, Moon Bear, Earth Mother, and others people Green Bay, Lake Superior, Red Earth, and Turtle Island, existing simultaneously in the timeless past and the present day too focused on the lack of time. Beneath the veneer of modern-day Chicago, Milwaukee, Marquette, and Vermillion, we are able to glimpse these lands as they were and as they continue to be in the native heart. Readers will grasp the authors' insistence that a spirit survives that animates these lands, even in the face of antitreaty fishing protestors, civic organizations ignorant of American history, and stereotype-spewing yuppies. In this context, it is easy to see why this book often portrays "the reservation" as a place of asylum, despite poverty, despair, and lost traditions.

*Dreaming History: A Collection of Wisconsin Native-American Writing* is well-written, the editing is balanced, and the overall coherence is intact, despite an eclectic mix of topic and style. As a vehicle for the introduction of "new" writers to the native literature audience, it is sure to alert us to watch for the future work of these authors. The relevance of themes is particularly poignant for Native American readers, but the presentation is easily understandable for a more general readership.

I highly recommend this anthology. The spirit-of-place of the Great Lakes region is intrinsic throughout, as is the strength and courage of native peoples and native cultures that continue to revere this land as sacred ground.

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**First Nations in Canada: The Circle Unfolds.** Edited by Marie Battiste and Jean Barman. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1995, 355 pages. \$24.95 paper.

This book essentially comprises a worthy "progress report" on native education in Canada. Its contents pretty well cover developments across the nation, albeit from a distinctly western Cana-