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want to compare this autobiography with those of Gwich'in John Fredson (who is referred to above and who was Sapir's Kutchin informant) and of Belle Herbert and Katherine Peter, all published by the Alaska Native Language Center of the University of Alaska in both Gwich'in and English translation. Belle died in Chalkysik in the 1980s when she was over a hundred years old. The life she lived and told Katherine Peter about was very different from the life lived either by Katherine herself or the lives lived by the two mission boys, John Fredson and Moses Cruikshank. And the ways in which each told about or wrote about their lives in the native language differ markedly from the way in which Moses described his life in English to Schneider. Despite this a perceptive reader will discern values and actions in each of these accounts which he can with confidence label as Native Gwich'in or, at least, Athapaskan.

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**Oglala Women: Myth, Ritual, and Reality.** By Marla N. Powers. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986. 241 pp. \$19.95.

Due to its depth, breadth, comprehensiveness, and versatility, *Oglala Women* is a richly fulfilling and challenging work to assess. Its author, an associate member of the graduate faculty in anthropology at Rutgers University, draws on twenty-seven years of experience and friendship with the Lakotas, especially those of the Red Cloud Community. An astute observer, researcher, and highly skilled anthropologist, Powers searches for and finds meaningful cultural patterns with which to interpret the lives and lifestyles of Oglala women, past and present.

The work consists of two parts—"The Past," and "The Present." It includes an historical prelude on the early history of the Lakotas, as well as the significant role the Bureau of Indian Affairs has played in the life of the Sioux. The book has notes, references, and an index. The scholarly material in the second part of this publication comes alive in the words of the Lakota women Powers interviewed.

The author begins with a study of the cosmological matrix of the Lakota, as a means for understanding "the ideological basis for male/female behavior and the way the Oglalas assess the role of women." This people are "born of woman, really and spiritually" in that they are the Buffalo nation who literally and metaphorically equate women with buffalo: *pte*, the generic term for buffalo, is feminine and means "buffalo cow." Powers emphasizes the importance of White Buffalo Calf Woman in the life of the people. This sacred woman is perceived to be a "mystical extension of the daughter of the sun and the moon, herself a prime mover in the cosmological plan." Thus, the writer establishes the primal importance of woman, of buffalo, and of this figure in the life of the Sioux.

Powers goes on to claim that White Buffalo Calf Woman lays down all cultural values which are unequivocally Lakota. Black Elk, Joseph Epes Brown, and others would strongly disagree with this assertion. According to Black Elk, two important rites were known to the Sioux prior to the coming of this sacred woman: the sweat lodge, and the vision quest (*The Sacred Pipe*, p. 7). The scholar cites conflicting evidence suggesting that White Buffalo Calf Woman is a historical personage, asserting that this reduces the "chasm between myth and reality," and thus elevates the sacred figure's status from one of merely mythic importance to one of historic significance. I have reservations concerning this devaluation of the cultural relevance of what is termed myth—it is a significant aspect of reality.

Following her chapter on "The Buffalo Nation," Powers treats the traditional stages of a woman's life in the four following segments: girlhood; adolescence; womanhood; and old age. These chapters are enhanced by the author's understanding of Lakota customs, tribal and kinship systems, and terminology. She maintains throughout that the relationship between the sexes among the Oglala is one of complementarity and cooperation rather than competition.

In the second part of her book, "The Present," Powers describes "Growing Up Oglala" from the Treaty of Fort Laramie to today. The government and the Jesuits of Holy Rosary Mission unwittingly made a significant choice when they decided to emphasize vocational education for men and home economics for women. As a result, women in general have been better trained

for clerical and administrative positions than have men, and many times have been better placed professionally than men.

The author claims that Oglala women bolster their men's generally sad post-treaty employment and existential status by alluding to their role as chiefs: but they are chiefs whose concerns are to set "impossible goals at the national and regional levels," while the women capably take charge at the local level, in the community and in the family." Powers believes that this interpretation of the role of men will have deleterious effects on future generations. She declares that the socialization of Oglala women and men occur along three continua: "traditional versus modern; white versus Indian; and male versus female. The successful female finds herself capable of operating at both ends of each continuum. . . ."

Powers then writes perceptively and discerningly about the problems women face today in sickness and in health, including mental health, teenage pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, alcoholism, drug abuse, and battered women. She speaks of the traditional women who care for the people. In the chapter entitled "All My Relations," the author addresses the complex relationship between Christianity and traditionalism, and the varied roles of women within these two traditions. Powers concludes her study by emphasizing the important roles women play in Lakota culture:

The Oglala female . . . assigns the highest priority to the welfare of the tribe. As such, traditional culture—myth and reality—obliges her to participate fully as leader, worker, and sometimes follower. But she is primarily *Oglala* and secondarily *Indian*. Unlike many of her non-Indian counterparts, who view womanhood exclusively in terms of gender differences, being a wife, sister, and mother only partly defines her role as an Oglala woman.

There have been many good works published recently on Native American women. *Oglala Women* is an important addition to this collection.

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