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To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1983-1920. By Clyde Ellis

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As might be expected because of the nature of the book, many artists are missing. In particular, the Sioux, including the Lakota, are underrepresented with only five works. And four of these, listed under Lakota, are of beadwork or beaded clothing. The one work listed under Sioux is a painting by Jim Yellowhawk, dated 1991, which is the property of the College of Wooster Art Museum in Wooster, Ohio. This work might be called traditional, depicting an Indian on horseback pulling a travois painted on a parfleche. No works by internationally known Sioux artists Art Amiotte, JoAnne Bird, Oscar Howe, or Paul WarCloud are included.

The artworks are beautifully reproduced on the same heavy paper on which the stories are printed. The reproductions have been flawlessly done by Tappan Printing Company of Singapore. This is a large book and is probably designed to be a coffee-table book, where it can attract those interested in either story or art. It is the kind of beautiful book that should lie where it can be seen, but out of the reach of children.

Jack W. Marken
South Dakota State University

To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1983-1920. By Clyde Ellis. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996. 250 pages. \$28.95 cloth.

Within the last decade or two, a concerted effort has been made by historians and educators alike to debate and deconstruct the most controversial enterprise of the American Indian educational past—the boarding school. The boarding school concept never fostered ideological neutrality. Viewed as a moral necessity by some and the tangible purveyor of hegemony by others, the boarding school carried with it the dichotomous ideal as a place to be redeemed and a place to be reduced.

It is this notion of opposing ideals that lies at the heart of Clyde Ellis' *To Change Them Forever*. Just as the boarding school construct was never neutral, neither is the author's chronicle of the Rainy Mountain Boarding School on the Kiowa-Comanche-Apache Reservation. Conflict, tension, and fundamental difference are common threads that run throughout this work. It is this underlying theme of contrasting values and expectations that separates this work from other chronicles of boarding

school life. Though K. Tsianina Lomawaima's *They Called It Prairie Light* and David Adams' *Education for Extinction* certainly address the disparate ideologies inherent in the boarding school ideal, it is not the centerpiece of their argument. Ellis' book reads with tension at the forefront. The reader is constantly reminded that the existence of the Rainy Mountain Boarding School was an endless dance of sacrifice and struggle, of compromise and complaint.

In 1893, Rainy Mountain opened to a total enrollment of five students. The initial reluctance of Kiowa parents to send their children to Rainy Mountain was tempered, for in the following year school enrollment had jumped to more than fifty. Though enrollment figures were at times quite robust, the Kiowa community never entirely embraced Rainy Mountain. Some parents refused to send their children, citing economic or moral objections. As time went on, the Kiowa began to take a more concerted and aggressive interest, voicing their dissatisfaction concerning the school's learning and living conditions. Kiowa students also displayed their displeasure with the school's environs. Student resistance to the smothering rules of Rainy Mountain came in various forms: conversing in the Kiowa language, defying curfew and access restrictions, and, in the ultimate act of resistance, running away. Though some students and parents alike did come to welcome Rainy Mountain and the hope it was said to hold, many continued to view the school with both caution and contempt.

Just as students and parents came to feel the frustration that was Rainy Mountain, so did its administrators who were charged with the daily operations of the school. Poor construction of campus buildings caused an endless requisition of much-needed repairs. The school's plumbing system was eternally inadequate. Heating and sanitation were spotty at best, milk and eggs unheard of. This continual struggle for adequate facilities prompted the indefatigable school administrator Cora Dunn to lament that "there are so many things needed for the school" that she was running out of both ideas and solutions (p. 78).

The root of Cora Dunn's consternation lay in the recalcitrance of federal agencies to appropriate the funds needed to run the school. In its benevolent zeal, the federal government had conceptualized the boarding school ideal, yet never became vested partners in its implementation and facilitation. This benevolence rang true in spirit but in reality it was a hollow promise manifest through neglect. Rainy Mountain was not spared the government's disregard. Located in an isolated area of an isolated reservation, the school was "out of sight, and just

as often out of mind" (p. 71). The most tangible manifestations of this financial and philosophical neglect came in the form of barefooted, hungry, and diseased Kiowa children, the government's "forgotten" charges.

When viewed as a whole, *To Change Them Forever* is a crisply written documentation of the endless setbacks and the little victories that encapsulated life at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School. The work moves in a chronological order, tracing the early visions of American Indian education, through the inception and facilitation of the school itself, ending with the causes and the consequences of its inevitable demise. The research is meticulous and refined as the author draws on numerous primary and secondary sources to bolster his argument. Most welcomed and most powerful are the primary sources. As with Lomawaima's work, Ellis includes the voices of those who attended Rainy Mountain. In doing so, the reader is moved from the abstract and impersonal recitation of documentation into the richness and immediacy of biography. We hear the voices, sense the joys and sorrows, and somehow, just for a brief moment, we too are students at Rainy Mountain.

The most disjointed section of the book is chapter 5. Here, the author presents a thorough exploration of the fluid educational ideologies encompassed in the progressive era and their subsequent impact upon American Indian education. An important contribution in its own right, this exposition appears out of place and isolated from the remainder of the work. This chapter reads as having a peripheral relationship to the day-to-day chronicles of Rainy Mountain, the backbone of the author's work. At times both marginally captivating and minimally relevant, a condensed version of this treatise would have preserved its integrity while serving the reader well.

The power and promise of Ellis' work is found in this spirit of encompassing contradiction, this eternal conflict between vision and action. The author likens Rainy Mountain to a laboratory. The proposed experiment was simply to provide the Kiowa with a formal education. If the method itself appeared harmless, the expected results were not so benign. Rainy Mountain was charged with the complete transformation of a people, a whitewashing of cultural and spiritual mores deemed inappropriate and irrelevant. Through its twenty-seven-year tenure, Rainy Mountain was caught between the desire for change and the will to resist, an ideological tension that both enhanced the school and crippled it. It is the elucidation of this

encompassing incongruity, this eternal conflict between vision and action, that is most compelling. Ellis tells us that all was not right at Rainy Mountain. And we believe him.

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Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays: A Tribal Voice. By Elizabeth Cook-Lynn. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996. 158 pages. \$45.00 cloth.

The irony of reviewing a book that begins with a discussion of the art of reviewing a book is clear, and when the book on review is by one of the most eloquent, crisp, contemporary American Indian reviewers, the promise of complications looms large. In *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays*, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn surveys the contemporary scene with clear, undiluted vision. This collection of thirteen previously published and new essays range across the divides: missiles aimed at racist, genocidal policies and platitudes in literature, politics, and culture in late twentieth-century United States of America. It is a collection that will stand for many years as a standard by which the works and days of writers (Indian and non-Indian) and politics (public and private) will be measured. With this publication, Cook-Lynn once again makes clear the fictional dimensions of the assumption that there are no public intellectuals of the stature of Henry Louis Gates, Jr., bell hooks, or Cornel West, among others, in the Native American intellectual community. Cook-Lynn, Deloria, Forbes, Jaimes, Churchill, and many others make clear that there *is* a community of public intellectuals of great brilliance, and at the same time, redefines what the term *public intellectual* might mean from the perspective of indigenous thinking.

This assumed absence of indigenous public intellectuals is only one of the many fables and lies of colonization that Cook-Lynn undoes in this collection. Each essay takes on a particular moment, exposing the bare bones of the incident, book, or assumption, then carefully exploring not an alternative reading, but a more honest, historically contextualized understanding of the moment. This is not a view from the margins, but a recentering of the view from the heart of the North American continent.

One of the most poignant essays focuses on Michael Dorris' "polemic" against prenatal drinking by women, "The Broken