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book is ample evidence that we should not venture so far, at least not with Grim as our "Indian guide" (putting aside the fact that Grim's "beyond ethnology" section evidences a misunderstanding of the word "ethnology"). The reader would be much better served by going back to the original sources, especially such as Ruth Landes' *Ojibwa Religion and the Midewiwin* (1968, University of Wisconsin Press), a work that when it first appeared I privately criticized for "reading like fieldnotes," but in light of Grim's book must now add, "Thank God!" (This is not to deny, however, that nowadays anthropology has in its own house its own brand of frustrated, would-be priests and rabbis who have abandoned the "struggle for a science of culture" in favor of hermeneutics, "ethnography as text" and similar sophomoric foolishness.) In fairness, I must direct readers to De Mallie's review of Grim's book (*American Anthropologist*, 1986, Vol. 88, No. 1, p. 196) which finds many of the same faults with the book as I but does concede, "nonspecialists may profitably read the book as an introduction to shamanism as a religious system."

If one must go beyond the bald facts of mere ethnology for some deeper religious interpretation of "Ojibway healing," I prefer the blunt, unadorned commentary of some of my own Ojibwa acquaintances in the 1960s (Paredes, *Anishinabe: Six Studies of Modern Chippewa*, 1980, University Presses of Florida: 382): "Those old Indians probably knew things which we don't understand today."

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Minority Report: What's Happened to Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians and Other Minorities in the Eighties. By Leslie W. Dunbar, editor. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984. 236 pp. \$8.95 Paper.

These essays, Dunbar states in his Foreword, explore "how well or how poorly American society affords realistic opportunities for its racial minorities to participate in—to give their consent to—the decisions that determine their place within it. . . ." By exploring both the consequences of and the factors that contribute to group differentials in structural access and opportunities, the book's authors help identify what Dunbar terms "the nature and

guiding principles of our society." There is near unanimity that these "guiding principles" (as well as the society itself) are undergoing a radical transformation, Reagan Administration policies, supported knowingly or otherwise by a majority of society, restricting if not reversing the capitalist welfare state that has evolved since the New Deal. Under the guise of "getting the government off peoples' backs," the incumbent administration is dismantling programs, policies and structures that were earlier established to provide greater access and opportunity, be it in education, employment or elsewhere, to America's dispossessed groups.

Racial groups (blacks Hispanics and Amerindians) are the major focus of these studies, but the plight of rural poor whites is also considered, lending credence to the book's underlying thesis that structural (primarily economic) factors, not simply racism, are the basic cause of disprivilege in society. This argument is most clearly drawn in the analyses of William J. Wilson (of the black urban underclass) and Vine Deloria Jr. (of the rural poor). As they illustrate, eliminating discrimination will not necessarily lead to equal access and opportunity for dispossessed groups; rather, pervasive structural changes, political as well as economic, must first occur. This means that government must play an active, positive interventionist role, one that leads to further structural changes. Although this has been the thrust of reforms since the New Deal, equal access and opportunity are still not assured for minority groups. Continued government involvement is therefore crucial, but Reagan policies are aimed at the government's withdrawal from such activities except where it enhances the opportunities of society's already privileged groups. What is emerging in American society, as a consequence, are a philosophy and programs reminiscent of late 19th century *laissez faire* policies and social Darwinist beliefs.

Viewed from a broader historical perspective, America has undergone a swinging of the pendulum between what Karl Polanyi, in *The Great Transformation* (1957), discerned in late 19th century capitalist societies as the simultaneous unleashing and expansion of market forces, leading to an unbridled capitalism, and the emergence of countervailing forces, including government intervention in society and economy, to correct the negative consequences of capitalism. Unrestrained 19th century capitalism, with its problems, prompted a countermovement that relied upon government intervention to protect society, including, in

America, the New Deal responses to capitalist practices that caused the Great Depression. Thereafter, society and government, recognizing the necessity for government involvement, sought to curtail capitalism's negative aspects while broadening opportunities for the dispossessed, including racial groups, regardless of whether their exclusion was the result of structural factors or discrimination. But a reaction has recently set in, and the pendulum now swings toward an unbridled capitalist system, one where government restricts its activities except in support of society's privileged and powerful. In the process, policies and programs aimed at removing racial barriers and inequalities are systematically being dismantled or destroyed.

Blacks, as Charles Hamilton indicates, have made political advances since the 1960s, but these came only after protracted struggle, the intensity and character of which no other minority group encountered. Nor were other groups ever enslaved, and few endured the persistent and pervasive discrimination that confronted blacks. Despite successes, attributable in part to their politicization and mobilization efforts, black Americans (and other minorities) now encounter new barriers, the most fundamental being that of society's increasingly negative attitude toward government intervention for helping minorities overcome barriers (racial, economic and otherwise) that impede their progress. Earlier, government had society's support for these activities, but now society has reverted to a principle "in favor of minimal government." This attitude, besides precluding new government efforts, threatens existing minority programs and policies.

Government intervention on behalf of minorities, William L. Taylor suggests, has been evident particularly in three areas:

Court decisions aimed at eliminating discrimination, be it in education, employment or elsewhere, commencing with *Brown v. Bd. of Education* (1954);

Government programs and policies, including affirmative action, aimed at eliminating discrimination and/or increasing minority opportunities; and

Great Society programs of the Johnson era that sought to eliminate barriers and obstacles to minority advancement and opportunity.

Most of these changes occurred between the Brown decision (1954) and Richard Nixon's 1968 presidential election. Since then, the country has witnessed a pervasive countermovement directed toward the restriction or termination of these programs and policies, be it under Republican or Democratic administrations. It has reached its apex with Reagan Administration policies and its emphasis on minimal government, an emphasis that calls for termination of the government's interventionist role. Initially there was the emasculation or termination of Great Society programs, and that was followed by curtailment of affirmative action programs and measures. More recently, through selection of conservative-oriented individuals, the present administration has sought to use the judicial system to redefine and restrict if not reverse earlier civil rights decisions of the courts. There is little likelihood that civil rights will revert to their pre-1960s status, but the combination of recent court decisions and administrative as well as legislative actions clearly indicate that minorities can no longer turn to the federal government for support in their struggle for equal rights and opportunities.

As Dunbar claims in his concluding essay, only government intervention, including new programs and policies, will create the conditions that assure minorities equity and justice. Minorities can mobilize their members, as Wilson suggests, but that mobilization, without support from government and society, will not bring the needed changes. The most basic needed reforms are changes within economic structures, for structural unemployment is a major source of existing inequalities. Minorities, Dunbar notes, have historically been "typically poor and universally discriminated against." Through government intervention blatantly discriminatory practices have been eliminated, but minorities "remain typically poor" for lack of education, training and employment. Only major structural reforms can correct these problems, for the root cause of poverty derives from "the inadequacy of the American system." That factor, along with prevailing political attitudes which rationalize poverty as inevitable and normal (a contemporary version of social Darwinism), indicate that needed reforms are highly unlikely in the near future. Critics of the system, given present conditions, are again voices in the wilderness, as were late 19th century critics of unbridled capitalism. Given the increasing pauperization of American society and the worsening economic conditions for greater numbers of people, there

are grounds for the belief that, as in the late 19th century, the pendulum will swing once again toward a society supportive of programs that assure equity, opportunity and justice for its citizens, including minority groups. Such a swing is not inevitable, and what it will necessitate is the emergence of the dispossessed, be they racial or other groups, as a politicized, mobilized political force, for only such a force has the power to counteract the near-stranglehold that the more privileged groups of society exert over the government.

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Diné Bahane': The Navajo Creation Story. By Paul G. Zolbrod. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984. xi + 431 pp. \$29.95 Cloth.

Diné Bahane' is the fruit of twelve years of labor. In this work, Paul G. Zolbrod compiles the various early translations of the Navajo emergence myth, the unpublished fragments of the creation story recorded by Father Berard Haile and Gladys Reichard early in the century, and the knowledge of native informants into a delightfully readable, yet comprehensive version of the Navajo creation story (or more accurately, cycle of stories).

Relying primarily on Washington Matthews's 1897 translation of "The Navajo Origin Legend" along with his unpublished notes on fragments of the Navajo creation story stored in the Wheelwright Museum, Zolbrod adds to, embellishes, and shapes the narrative, supplementing his account with the early ethnographic works of Berard Haile, Gladys A. Reichard, and Pliny Earle Goddard as well as the contemporary critical insights of Dennis Tedlock and Dell Hymes. While using Matthews' translation extensively, Zolbrod criticizes him for his failure to translate "the poetic devices employed by storytellers" and his Victorian sensibility that led him to delete "passages dealing overtly with sex." Zolbrod restores both poetry and ribaldry to the creation story, destroying the stereotype of "the granite-faced grunting redskin" by revealing the good humor and humanity of the Navajo people.

Although he builds upon Matthews' translation, Zolbrod compensates for Matthews' literal prose by highlighting the poetry