# **UCLA**

# **American Indian Culture and Research Journal**

#### **Title**

Native American Resurgence and Renewal: A Reader and Bibliography. Edited by Robert N. Wells, Jr.

### **Permalink**

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9i81w902

## **Journal**

American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 19(3)

### ISSN

0161-6463

#### **Author**

Green, Donald E.

#### **Publication Date**

1995-06-01

#### DOI

10.17953

# **Copyright Information**

This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License, available at <a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/</a>

Native American Resurgence and Renewal: A Reader and Bibliography. Edited by Robert N. Wells, Jr. Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1993. 673 pages. \$65.00 cloth.

This is the third book in a series on American Indians published by Scarecrow Press. The anthology contains sixteen previously published essays (and two original essays by the book editor) that cover a wide range of issues confronting American Indian people as we enter the twenty-first century, including federal Indian policy, sovereignty, education, health care, resource rights, economic development, urban Indian institutions, and the role of women in native culture. The authors of these essays are a distinguished group of writers who are experts in their respective fields, a factor that further enhances the value of this volume. Since virtually all of the essays have appeared in print previously and therefore already have been subjected to critical review and evaluation, I will refrain from the temptation to expose them separately to my acknowledged preference for a sociological point of view.

It is important to note, however, that the inclusion of essays on Indian gaming, urban Indians, and the use of reservation land as garbage landfills is a significant and timely contribution to the literature on American Indians, since these topics are very much a reflection of the current political discourse about American Indians among both Indians and non-Indians. The book also includes a glossary of terms and an enhanced, categorized bibliography, all of which makes it a useful textbook choice for introductory classes that include American Indian culture and society in the course content. I plan to adopt the book for courses I teach on contemporary issues of the American Indian.

Although the 1994 publication date suggests that these essays, focusing on what Wells generally refers to as American Indians' quest for true self-determination, include the most up-to-date information available, this is not necessarily the case. With the exception of two contributions from the volume editor, lamentably the most recent essay was previously published in 1991, and the remaining selections were originally published in the middle to late 1980s. Given the rapidly changing nature of the American Indian experience, this lag time in the coverage of selected substantive areas is a notable drawback of the book.

Another problem worth mentioning here is that the essays vary considerably in terms of their originally projected audiences and

thus the length and level of coverage of the topics addressed. For example, Robert Wells's essay on transforming American Indian education is a mere eight pages, while Ralph Johnson's' essay on Canadian and U.S. Indian policy is over one hundred pages (including footnotes). Moreover, essays are included from popular sources such as *The Atlantic* and *Audubon*, as well as more scholarly outlets such as *Human Organization*, the *Journal of Ethnic Studies*, and several law review journals. In spite of this lack of overall balance in the collection of essays, each still makes a unique contribution to our understanding of the scope and degree of the Native American resurgence and renewal over the past few decades.

In anthologies of this nature, however, editors should include an introduction to each essay that provides a context in which to view the original material. This pedagogic method can help to shore up gaps in the literature, add important factual information that has occurred since the essay was written, or both. To his credit, Wells does this with approximately one-half of the essays included in the book but, unexplainably, does not provide similar introductions in the remaining ones.

Finally, given my inclination to utilize the book in my American Indian studies courses, I was troubled by the high price of the book and the fact that it is not available in paperback. Unlike a college instructor or researcher, the typical, economically challenged undergraduate student may not be able to justify the purchase of this wide-ranging reader with an extensive bibliography. Perhaps Scarecrow Press should reconsider the profit margins and provide a less expensive paperback version.

Donald E. Green
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

Nch'i-Wána "The Big River": Mid-Columbia Indians and Their Land. By Eugene S. Hunn, with James Selam and family. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990. 378 pages. \$22.50 paper.

Nch'i-Wána, the Columbia River, is a magnificent natural wonder. It flows out of Canada into the United States, ultimately forming the boundaries between Washington and Oregon. "Big River" is the lifeblood of Yakima, Wanapum, Wenatchi, Wishrom, Walla Walla, Palouse, and other native peoples living along or