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REVIEWS

American Ethnic Literatures: Native American, African American, Chicano/Latino, and Asian American Writers and Their Backgrounds. Edited by David Peck. Pasadena, CA: Salem Press, 1992. 218 pages. \$40.00 cloth.

Over the past decade, educators have shown increasing concern over "diversity" and multiculturalism. If multicultural education is to become a reality, however, more multicultural reference and instructional materials need to be made available. This is the goal of *American Ethnic Literatures*: a single bibliography where teachers and students alike can find listings of the major primary literatures (for Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans), plus the most important secondary criticism of those literatures, including background sources—the best treatments of slavery, immigration, and American Indian history (p. 1). It is aimed at those in American studies and the humanities at the college level. This bibliography helps fill the multicultural void in higher education, but its usefulness for those interested Native American studies is in question.

Nonetheless, several positive things emerge in this work. Because it lists works on four of the largest American ethnic groups in one volume, this bibliography is unique. The book offers a short and comprehensive list of works, which is definitely convenient. Most of the entries are for works of literature and criticism, but a few historical and social science publications are also included. This is consistent with the editor's stated approach. The works of

history and social science are listed to aid teachers and students in learning the social and historical context that undergirds the ethnic literatures. There is also a fairly complete and up-to-date list of other bibliographies for specific ethnic groups, as well as a short listing of teaching guides and audiovisual materials. By starting with this volume, one could conceivably find just about anything written in the four ethnic literatures, although it might involve extensive searching.

Unfortunately, only a few journal names are provided, because the editor's compilation contains primarily books. No specific journal articles are listed. The number of chapters (eight) seems appropriate for a bibliography of this length, but the content of the chapters sometimes overlaps. This repetition is due to the large number of subheadings in each chapter. The table of contents in this short work is three pages long and contains 130 chapter subheadings—more than one subheading for every two pages in the book. Why an entry appears in one chapter under one subheading, rather than in another chapter under another subheading, is often unclear. The large number of overlapping subheadings in such a short bibliography is confusing, and a reader could miss some important source by failing to examine all relevant subheadings meticulously. Poor organization makes it difficult to browse through the entries of the book.

Perhaps organization would not be a problem if the index were more complete. It contains only journal names and the names of authors who appear in the citations and annotations. There are no topic headings in the index, and those topic subheadings that appear in the table of contents are rarely helpful. For example, Peck states in the introduction that his bibliography contains a list of the "best treatments of slavery and immigration" when, in fact, the words "slavery" and "immigration" do not appear in the table of contents or in the index. How one would find the works on these topics is unclear. Also, Peck's criteria for choosing the "best" works are not made explicit.

Once the user finds a particular work of interest, he or she is not likely to find the accompanying annotations very useful; they tend to be quite brief. Worse yet, annotations are provided only for bibliographies, anthologies, and works of criticism, history, and social science. There are no annotations or commentaries on any of the works of fiction, poetry, and biography by individual authors, even though these comprise the majority of entries.

This lack of annotations and commentaries is especially problematic for the chapter on Native American literature, because without it one cannot discern whether the works are in the oral or written tradition. Although this bibliography does list the most prominent works in Native American literature, the chapter devoted solely to Native Americans is the shortest in the book, comprising only twenty pages and 164 entries. The introduction to the chapter is not enlightening and completely ignores the religious foundation of much Native American literature. The closest Peck comes to acknowledging this religious connection is to say that "traditional tribal literature" is composed of "myth, songs, ritual chants, and so forth" (p. 48). A short essay on the intersection of religion and literature (with reference to some works in the bibliography) would have helped orient teachers and students toward this body of writing. Fortunately, the editor firmly acknowledges that American Indian literature was the first literature produced in North America.

The editor's goal of producing a comprehensive bibliography for the literature of Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans is admirable and ambitious but is not well executed. Regrettably, *American Ethnic Literatures* is primarily a listing of books without useful commentary. It would be difficult for a bibliography of only 219 pages to do justice to Native American literature, much less four bodies of ethnic literature. This book may be a useful starting point for some students and teachers, but for those in Native American studies, a better choice would be *American Indian Literatures: An Introduction, Bibliographic Review, and Selected Bibliography* by LaVonne Brown Ruoff.

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Black Elk: Holy Man of the Oglala. By Michael F. Steltenkamp. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993. 211 pages. \$19.95 cloth.

This book is the result of the collaboration between Lucy Looks Twice (1907–78), daughter of the famous Lakota holy man, Black Elk, and Michael F. Steltenkamp, a Jesuit priest who taught at the Red Cloud Indian High School on the Pine Ridge Reservation in