The large gatherings of Comanches noted by colonial administrators and traders prior to the reservation era appear to be episodic and strategic events focused on a specific activity rather than a self-replicating system of power dispersement.

Although this book lacks a strong theoretical basis and has a number of interpretative weaknesses, it is an outstanding source of information on the endeavors of Spanish, Texan, and American colonial officials. Kavanagh provides excellent accounts of the region's changing colonial policies. In addition, the author's reliance on a variety of colonial documents facilitates his discussion concerning the Comanches' political structure. For example, his decipherment of the various uses that Spanish, Mexican, and Anglo Texans gave to terms such as *capitan, capitancillo, jefe, general, principal,* and *chief* will be helpful to future research (p. 3). Adding to the book's importance is the use of numerous historic documents. Kavanagh's own meticulous translations of Spanish sources offers new insights into Spain's colonial occupancy of the Southern Plains. The large number of historic sources included in this book clearly contribute to our knowledge of the Southern Plains during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Martha McCollough
University of Nebraska

Coyote's Council Fire: Contemporary Shamans on Race, Gender, and Community. By Loren Cruden. Rochester, Vermont: Destiny Books, 1995. 164 pages. $14.95 paper.

Loren Cruden has completed a work that was somewhat difficult to review academically; however, she raises some significant issues for the study of American Indian religious traditions and the larger academic study of religion as a whole. Since there are uncited references made to scholars such as Eliade and Jung, terms and concepts from various tribal groups with generalized definitions, and no bibliography, readers in the academic community might be tempted to dismiss the reading as unfounded, unclear, unprofessional, and unimportant. I must admit that I almost stopped reading several times due to the above concerns, but I think that Cruden does provide some preliminary ideas for future scholarship dealing with such concepts (as the title denotes) as race, gender, and community. In other words, I would characterize this book as "meant to be not an academic

[enterprise] but just a generalized working [model]" useful for scholars to explore important issues at greater depth (p. 119).

Cruden's comparative model is helpful for readers to gain different perspectives on the three topics of discussion (race, gender, and community) and the relationships of these concepts to the practitioners of what she terms the "shamanic community" (p. 1). Her model begins in each section with her own reflections on the concept to be discussed and then allows a selected group of practitioners to respond to the concept in their own words given via a previously conducted questionnaire or interview. This method is helpful in that she allows her respondents to give their opinions and ideas to the same questions without direct comparison to the other contributors, but indirectly by placing them alongside each other allowing for a complementary yet diverse discussion. She makes no comments or attempts to summarize each respondents' comments and provides some questions at the end of each section that inspire readers to reflect (what she terms "looking within") on their own perspectives of the concept at hand. The value of the above model is a comparative method that does not attempt to mold a definitive answer on the topics, but allows the reader to realize the importance of such discussion and the many perspectives that exist in the community itself. Again, placing her generalized terms and definitions aside—such as "heyoka," "coyote," and "shaman"—one does find some important questions being asked that are under current debate and that need to be addressed by scholars in the academic study of religion and especially within the study of American Indian religious traditions.

Current controversial debates within both of the above fields have often centered around such concepts as appropriation of Native ceremonies by non-Native practitioners and concerns about non-Native and Native scholars' work on their subjects. Cruden does deal with the first topic directly (and the second topic indirectly) quite effectively by allowing her respondents (both Native and non-Native) to comment, but her ideas need further exploration. For example, Cruden elaborates on the idea that European and Native perspectives on ritual and ceremony are different since Europeans tend to "intellectualize and emotionalize spiritual experience," allowing a different model of ceremony that may incorporate Native ideas but provide European cultural meaning and reference (pp. 20–22). I would argue that indeed European ideas of ceremony may be different, but her general discussion needs more convincing study to reach the above conclu-

sion. Cruden carries the same general argument to her main concepts of gender, race, and community without substantive backing, but her questions are more important than her method.

It is no question that gender, race, and ideas of community should be discussed within the study of religion, particularly within Native traditions; however, Cruden's model needs to be expanded. Specifically, one would have to do much more work on each of these topics to provide the reader with a clearer perspective of the issues and, more importantly, within specific Native traditions instead of the overarching concept of "Native American Religions." I agree that "each culture...has something to offer" but I would argue that specific studies of Native traditions (numbering in the hundreds) would be necessary to provide a more concise and in-depth comparison of the concepts of gender, race, and community to the reader complete with specifics from culture groups in their own terms instead of general referents as "heyoka" or "coyote" without definition and context (p. 19).

I agree that this sounds like a tremendous amount of scholarship to be completed and have admitted that Cruden's work is not what one would view as "academic" per se. However, scholars within the study of religion should reflect on the ideas that Cruden presents briefly and expand on them. It is well known that few scholars in the field of religious studies have completed work on American Indian traditions (the most work has been done in anthropology), but the field is growing and much work needs to be done to continue. I think Cruden has hit upon some key ideas discussed within the larger academic study of religion (particularly the concept of gender with scholars such as Caroline Bynum and Rosemary Radford Ruether, to name a few), but within the smaller field of American Indian religious traditions, her questions contain more potential to change current ideas of scholarship as a whole and complexification of concepts of vital importance to Native "religions."

In short, Cruden has provided a framework for considerable discussion and formidable "transformation" (p. 157). As mentioned, her work was meant to provide more questions than answers; however, her work is valuable in that it brings to the forefront often "taboo" topics in academics. I have gained some insight into the various perspectives on her topics of gender, community, and race that are useful for future study. Again, I would emphasize that considerable study is needed. However, the value of the book lies in the potential for the study of American Indian religious traditions and the larger academic

study of religion to transform its ideas on these topics and perform some formidable and much needed work in these areas. In addition, while doing such work, scholars can transform their ideas about themselves and remain self-critical in their own perspectives, allowing new ideas to generate more discussion with others. In other words, scholars need to explore such controversial issues that Cruden presents since "[t]he brighter the fire gets—the more shadows and vulnerabilities become visible—the more imperative it becomes to embrace" such issues and begin to change.

Jason Gilbreath
University of Colorado, Boulder

Crow Dog: Four Generations of Sioux Medicine Men. By Leonard Crow Dog and Richard Erdoes. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1996. 243 pages. $13.00 paper.

In a world in which books are popping out of every nook and cranny at a speed that defies description much less reading, Richard Erdoes brings some illumination to those who have something to say but don't write; to those who voice the pre-Columbian mindset; those who have not yet joined the dubious honor of being in the Gutenberg brigade. Lame Deer. Mary Crow Dog. And now, Leonard Crow Dog, medicine man turned political activist through the circumstances thrust upon him by the American Indian Movement.

Crow Dog will become, for future generations of Natives, an increasingly important figure; as Natives return to their spiritual heritage they will sense the strange dichotomy of what it must have been like to be Leonard Crow Dog in the 1970s; what it must have been like to have been raised in a traditional Lakota family that knew the value systems of the Lakota while the majority of their own people were reaching for the values of the white mainstream.

There are a few families within each tribal nation who, like the Crow Dog family, held to their ancient ways while all about them swirled with tribal dysfunction. Since the end of the military campaigns in the late 1800s, the war on the Indian reservations has been a war of attrition, a war for the minds of the children, an old dog, in this case an old Crow Dog, being hard to teach new tricks.

The bureaucrats, sitting comfortably in their offices in