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Author

Bahr, Diana Meyers

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Indian culture changes, and events within and among the tribes. Place the Indian in the role of the main actor, not in a supporting role. Part of the ignorance among Indian youth is caused by their parents' lack of awareness of their own heritage and culture, because Indian history is not being written nor taught.

Ronald E. Craig
Fort Peck Community College

Molly Spotted Elk: A Penobscot in Paris. By Bunny McBride. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995. 360 pages. \$24.95 cloth.

Molly Spotted Elk: A Penobscot in Paris is a book that requires careful reading for a full appreciation of its richness of detail, both personal and historical. These details are the result of two significant factors: the author's access to Molly's remarkable diaries and the impressive research. The author notes, "Molly's diaries withstood an intensive veracity test when held against oral histories and personal correspondence, as well as written and photographic records. . ." (p. xvi). When these diaries are set into historical contexts provided by the author, the result is a first-rate documentary in a neglected area of American Indian studies, that of Indians in show business.

The remarkable character of Molly's diaries is dramatically depicted in the fact that she continued to write in them even immediately following a traumatic separation from her husband, who was forced to flee Nazi occupation of his native France. "After a sleepless night haunted by thoughts, tears, memories and the vivid face of J. [her husband] with tears in his eyes . . . I felt desperately alone with Jean [her young daughter]. . . . [After] those sad moments of farewell I would not have wanted to live much longer. But there was and is Jean" (p. 265).

This entry is unique in divulging deeply felt emotions in a diary that otherwise yields meager insight into the very private, wary, even impenetrable Molly. Despite the pervasive masking of emotions, the facts of Molly Spotted Elk's existence justify the author's assertion that her life "defied the stereotype of a woman born in the early years of this century—particularly of an American Indian woman" (p. xiv). Independent and ambitious, she performed in vaudeville at age fourteen, studied Flaubert, H.G.

Wells, Proust, and Joyce as models for her own writing, danced topless, starred in a docudrama about the Ojibwa, delighted Parisians with her dancing, fell in love with a French journalist with whom she had a daughter before being married, escaped the Nazi occupation of France by hiking over the Pyrenees with six-year-old Jean, recovered from mental illness following her husband's death, and, despite her frailty, insisted on trying to work again in New York before finally returning to the refuge of her homeland, Indian Island, Maine.

Being successful in the white world without surrendering her heritage was a lifelong struggle in which "genuine art and love had provided an ethereal bridge on which she traveled between two cultures on equal footing" (p. 284). Ironically, although she defied stereotypes in her life, she found herself perpetuating them in her art. One of the major contributions of this book is the depiction of Indian performers acting out white images of Indians. The inner life of Indian entertainers, "inextricably linked to the independent and viable lifeways of their precolonial ancestors," bore no resemblance to stage performances. Aware that men in the audience fantasized about her exotic "sexy savage" dancing, Molly complained in her diary, "I am an injun in the flesh parade . . . Feel terrible about being bare . . . but I must work" (p. 136). Molly accepts the reality that to succeed as entertainers, Indians had to act out the Hollywood Indian: "There is no romantic appeal to the modern white in an eastern tribe. . . . When they want a Sioux, oop, I'm one—the universal Indian."

Nowhere is colonial racism and imperialism more dramatically depicted than in the exotic "human showcases" of international fairs in which indigenous peoples were brought to fairgrounds and exhibited as animal-like creatures to confirm the validity of social-Darwinism. Music and dance concerts by indigenous performers were also exploited to reinforce colonial assumptions of progress. In the 1931 Colonial Exposition in Paris, Molly performed with the Indian Band, largely composed of college graduates. Expo organizers decided it would be "quite fitting to have an old buck and his squaw accompany the band" to demonstrate the "progress" of Indians in the United States (p. 153).

The characteristic detail evident in descriptions of the Paris Expo is at times a strength of the book but at other times a flaw. The thoroughness of the author's research sometimes results in digressions. The accounts of Thoreau's visits to Maine, only peripherally pertinent to the early history of the Penobscot, become a

distraction when extended to four pages. In a later section the author attempts to ascertain the impact on Molly's life of anthropologist Frank Speck, who encouraged her to pursue a university education and invited her to live with his family temporarily. Perhaps because Molly's diaries of the period have not survived, this impact is suggested by tracing the relationship of Speck with Gladys Tantaquidgeon, a Mohegan classmate of Molly's. Despite the author's efforts to integrate Tantaquidgeon's life story with Molly's, the account becomes a digression.

Conversely, given the restrained nature of Molly's quoted diary entries, there are instances when the reader hungers for more. Molly's reaction to her husband's confession of an affair is reported thus: "Venting her fury and frustration in a letter to Jean, she accused him of betrayal..." (p. 234). Had the intensity of these feelings been reported in Molly's own words, the reader might have gotten a little closer to the essential Molly Spotted Elk.

Although there are innumerable volumes on the history of the Penobscots and on Americans in Paris during the 1930s and 1940s, and there is a considerable body of literature on cabarets and speakeasies in the 1920s, all of which are cited in the excellent bibliography, there is a critical lack of work on Indians in show business. The author relies heavily and effectively on such sources as oral histories, unpublished papers, newspapers of the period, and nightclub reviews in *Variety* to provide this vital context. *Molly Spotted Elk* is unique, not only in integrating these historical contexts but also in allowing the previously muted voices of individual Indian performers to be heard.

Diana Meyers Bahr

Native America in the Twentieth Century: An Encyclopedia.
Edited by Mary B. Davis. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.,
1994. 787 pages. \$95.00 cloth.

Arguably the most commonly asked question recited like a mantra by schoolteachers everywhere whenever the subject of American Indians arises is, "Where can we find out more?" The question speaks, of course, to the continuing need for an adequate teaching guide or resource book covering a broad range of Indian subjects at an introductory level. Editor Mary Davis has taken a major step toward addressing this question by creating an encyclopedia of