

the broader colonial forces that fomented the medicine men's desire to advance their own understandings. Indeed, Garner even shows how Marquette University, located 750 miles from Rosebud, has functioned as gatekeeper and interlocutor of the archival materials that the medicine men hoped would be readily available to the Lakota people and other interested parties.

Throughout the monograph, Garner addresses a range of theorists, effectively working with some (e.g., Jodi Byrd and Franz Fanon), while smartly rejecting others (e.g., Elizabeth Cook-Lynn). Through this process, she builds a nuanced interpretation of the medicine men's goals and accomplishments, as well as the various forces that have historically impeded them. She also incorporates the Lakota historical experience that medicine men echoed in their own way. Particularly effective are Garner's periodic discussions of Ella Deloria's mid-century efforts to explain Lakota culture to the broader American audience.

In 1986, Stoltzman published his own interpretation of the MMCM, a problematic account entitled *The Pipe and the Christ: A Christian-Sioux Dialog*. Garner only discusses the book in passing, which is consistent with her general approach. However, since *The Pipe and the Christ* is the only other published account of the MMCM, perhaps a more thorough engagement with it could have shed light on the obstacles the medicine men faced and offered a more direct corrective to Stoltzman's work.

That critique notwithstanding, *To Come to a Better Understanding* is an important and insightful work. Garner offers readers a critical look at established Lakota medicine men of the 1970s, who too often have been shunted to the margins as valiant but hobbled resisters of colonialism, leftover curios from a prior era, or as supporting cast/spiritual guides to the movers and shakers in the American Indian Movement. In this book, they are given the focus they deserve as Garner takes care to understand them on their own terms, instead of through an outsider's lens.

Akim Reinhardt  
Towson University

**Warrior Nation: A History of the Red Lake Ojibwe.** By Anton Treuer. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2015. 456 pages. \$19.95 paper; \$9.99 electronic.

If now it is rather unremarkable to pull up behind a car with a tribal license plate around Indian country, it was audacious in 1974, when Roger Jourdain "saw no need to get permission from a state government to drive a car" and issued tribal plates for members of the Red Lake Ojibwe (279). Today those plates show the distinctive outline of Upper and Lower Red Lake, the largest body of water enclosed by Minnesota and the sacred source of spiritual and economic sustenance for the community. They also depict the seven clans of the original hereditary chiefs and even the clan affiliation of the car owner. As Anton Treuer makes plain in *Warrior Nation: A History of the Red Lake Ojibwe*, the plates today are emblematic of two important lessons of Red Lake's history and that are of urgent significance to those interested in the

history of any Native American community. First, as leaders of successive generations came to realize, “sovereignty was what people insisted upon. When they didn’t, it was systematically eroded” (216). Second, Red Lake’s unique accomplishments in terms of political sovereignty have crucially relied on its insistence on cultural, religious, and linguistic sovereignty.

On the one hand, *Warrior Nation* is a remarkable book because the Red Lake Nation has a remarkable history. One of only two “closed” reservations in the United States, Red Lake leaders drew on the spiritual foundations of their lake and the political foundations of their Anishinaabe tradition with uncommon savvy to resist any allotment of their unceded lands, to allow government schools and missionaries only on their insistent terms, and to create, in 1918, “one of the first modern representative tribal political structures in the country,” whose original constitution stipulated that Ojibwe would remain its official language. Despite contemporary challenges, Red Lake today has the highest fluency rates in language, ceremony, and culture among Ojibwe communities in the United States, Minnesota’s cleanest aquifer, and well-deserved pride in the many ways that Red Lake creatively asserted sovereignty (341). How this came to be, and against such great odds, is the story, told in and through a series of biographies of Red Lake leaders in successive generations that serve as “a window into the evolving political culture of the Red Lake nation” (417).

*Warrior Nation* is also a remarkable book due to Treuer’s intellectual and methodological dexterity. Methodologically, Treuer brings together archival research in public, private, and tribal archives with impressive collections of oral history sources, many in the Ojibwe language and many generated by Treuer himself through his extensive relationships with key elders, in order to craft an insider’s history that “merges the archives and the Indians” (420). “As much as possible,” Treuer writes, “I try to tell this story with native sources and perspectives, and then try to exhaust the archives for a well-rounded authentic, and reliable history” (420). Notably, the book was commissioned by the Red Lake tribal council, which shared in making editorial decisions, but Treuer manages to deliver a history that neither avoids nor whitewashes trickier figures and events.

With respect to intellectual dexterity, Treuer’s narrative and interpretive voices take direction from indigenous teachers. Even as he frames the political history as a series of biographies of leaders, a move that at first glance might seem old-fashioned, he consistently demonstrates how the political is also the cultural, the linguistic, the ecological, and, crucially, the spiritual. Various Red Lakers’ assertions of sovereignty over the years are told in these multiple registers because the various political acts engaged those multiple registers. For instance, a tribal court judge rendered a 2006 opinion only in Ojibwe, requiring a defiant white truck driver who long ignored tribal speed limits and injured a tribal member to find his own translation. Although the truck driver won on appeal in a federal court, Treuer notes that he no longer speeds through the reservation.

Each of the book’s six chapters focuses on representative leaders that help frame, in successive eras, the common narrative of a profound fidelity to Anishinaabe tradition, which finds expression in pragmatic adaptation and creative resistance that defies easy

dichotomies between progressives and traditionalists. Indeed, Treuer begins not with the realities of the American presence or US Indian policy, but with a leader whose story serves as an emblem for the establishment of Ojibwe control of 20 million acres around Red Lake and the resource-rich Red River Valley region in the late eighteenth century. This land was won from the Dakota, with whom Red Lake has maintained a complex relationship, now a friendly one. White Thunderbird, born a Dakota, was found orphaned in a failed raiding party by an Ojibwe warrior who took him in as a son and raised him. He was recognized as a member of the Kingfisher clan, a spiritually directed innovation that gave such Dakotas and their descendants a place in the Ojibwe community, and he went on to become a forebear of many subsequent leaders at Red Lake in way that suggested how the Red Lake Nation was characterized by “metamorphosis” long before contact with non-native people. “The Red Lake Ojibwe were an ancient people,” Treuer writes, “but they were something new at the same time” (11).

He Who is Spoken To was the leader that Treuer calls “the nation builder” for the deft authority by which he brought together the leaders of dispersed autonomous villages around the Upper and Lower Red Lakes—whose political culture Treuer describes as “libertarian”—to speak more as one voice in their dealings with the United States after the treaty-making era ended. The last decades of the nineteenth century brought enormous pressure on Red Lake, as elsewhere, from allotment of land and cultural and religious assimilation. He Who is Spoken To was an Episcopalian who knew how to call on allies, but insisted on engaging the church and the United States on Ojibwe terms. All came down to the 1889 Nelson Act, through which Congress applied the principles of the Dawes Act to consolidate and allot Minnesota’s Ojibwe reservation lands, but this required tribal agreement. The revered chief led resistance to the allotment of Red Lake and devised a plan “to keep the sacred lakes in Red Lake hands” (98). He offered Ojibwe agreement to considerable land cessions of the Nelson Act that gave American access to timber as long as “Red Lake got the lakes,” and maintained its independence from the other Minnesota Ojibwe tribes whose reservations were being allotted (99). He Who is Spoken To brought two copies of his own map to the negotiations with boundaries of the unceded reservation lands fully enclosing both Upper and Lower Red Lakes. But the copy later burned in a fire and with time, the United States insisted that the agreed-upon boundaries of the ceded lands had offered non-Native access to Upper Red Lake, and this remains an issue of enormous sensitivity in the walleye wars of northern Minnesota.

To better understand Red Lake’s resistance to the other tools of assimilation policy—boarding schools, missionary encroachment, and civilization regulations—Treuer turns our attention to Nodin Wind, a spiritual leader in the village of Ponemah, who, along with elderly chiefs in that community, insisted on the maintenance of traditional language, ceremony, and culture. He organized petitions in opposition to the enforcement of the Code of Indian Offenses against the Grand Medicine ceremony at Ponemah, and acceded to the intense pressure for a government school in the village only if the United States promised that Ponemah leaders could choose the location, retain title to the site, and retain the right to appoint the principal. Nodin Wind had not been

a hereditary chief, but such leadership commended his recognition as one of the seven formally acknowledged chiefs of the Red Lake Nation under its 1918 constitution.

The 1918 creation of this representative government on the basis of Ojibwe traditions was the work of Peter Graves, perhaps the most remarkable figure in this book. Born in 1872, Graves went to the government school at Red Lake and went on to education in the East. Forgoing a baseball scholarship at Princeton, Graves returned to Red Lake, eventually working as a career Office of Indian Affairs insider but always remaining conversant in the Ojibwe-language world of Red Lake. Graves saw to the creation of the General Council of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians, a government that recognized the power and place of seven hereditary chieftainships together with twenty-five council members, but also provided a modern structure for administration of their direction, strengthening Red Lake's ability to negotiate with the United States as a sovereign nation. Graves was also responsible for the forward-thinking economic development of Red Lake's collectively owned Red Lake Fisheries Association, and for insisting and litigating in the 1920s against the state of Minnesota's efforts to regulate Red Lake's copious walleye population, decades before the fish-in campaigns in the salmon rivers of the Northwest.

Treuer manages to consider—while containing the reach of that consideration—just how contested and controversial the long leadership of Peter Graves or his successor, Roger Jourdain, has been at Red Lake. But the breadth of Treuer's source material allows us to see even these controversial figures as guided, like their forebears, by profound spiritual commitments to the land, the language, and the lake. "Even when I am dead," Graves told his family, "I will haunt the shores of these waters. My spirit will never be at rest until all of the lake is back in the hands of my people" (239).

The chapter on Roger Jourdain, who led Red Lake with charisma and political creativity for thirty-two years, considers Red Lake's national leadership on the recognition of sovereignty. Among other things, Jourdain successfully fought Public Law 280's state law enforcement on Red Lake, worked to contain the reach of relocation policy, regained control of vast portions of land that had been contested after the 1889 cessions, and led the charge for the 1975 Self-Determination Act-issued license plates and visitors' passports to "guests" of the tribe entering unceded Red Lake territory.

The closing chapter, the only one that focuses attention on the leadership of Ojibwe women, profiles the compelling figure of Anna Gibbs, a spiritual leader with whom Treuer had worked for more than fifteen years. Gibbs has carried her spiritual gravitas with humor and creativity: for example, she improvised on the traditional funeral liturgy to help her community heal from the devastating losses of a 2005 mass shooting. The concluding focus on Gibbs seals Treuer's message that Red Lake's accomplishments in the area of political sovereignty are consistently grounded in the spiritual gravity of land, language, and lake. "Every time they tried to bury us," Anna Gibbs tells a man who brought her tobacco to interpret a dream that made reference to the dispossession of the land and the lake, "they didn't realize that we were the seeds."

*Michael D. McNally*  
Carleton College