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Viet Cong at Wounded Knee: The Trail of a Blackfeet Activist. By Woody Kipp.

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The very last poem in this attractive collection, "His Birth," is a lyric in which the poet, in a dream, witnesses the birth of Nature, of Tséyi'. The concluding couplet captures the haunting grandeur of the canyon: "His heartbeat strong like a basket made of clouds / woven from the silence of the desert" (45).

Photographer Stephen Strom lends his excellent skills to this collection and a color photograph accompanies every poem. Although an astronomer by occupation, Strom has spent the past twenty-seven years photographing the landscape of the American Southwest. He has similarly collaborated with Joy Harjo.

*Tséyi', Deep in the Rock* is a gorgeous fusion of poetry, photography, and design. The book is a piece of art. Similar to the canyon, it is a thing of extraordinary beauty.

*John E. Smelcer*

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

**Viet Cong at Wounded Knee: The Trail of a Blackfeet Activist.** By Woody Kipp. Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2005. 176 pages. \$24.95 cloth.

Woody Kipp, the author of this slim yet rewarding autobiography, is a rare kind of academic. Currently an English instructor at Blackfeet Community College in Montana, Kipp is also a self-proclaimed warrior/storyteller. A member of the Blackfeet Nation, Kipp was born on the reservation in 1945, the year in which World War II ended. In this book, he covers only the first thirty years of his life. It is a tale or, more appropriately, a cacophony of tales and vignettes, both serious and comical.

The first two-thirds of Kipp's often disjointed narrative provides a valuable and rare look into how one Indian male brutally came of age in Montana; learned to brawl, whore (his word, not mine), and drink as a Marine; and eventually see combat in Vietnam. Along the way, the author wooed Indian and non-Indian women, wed one, fathered two children, and went to university on the G.I. Bill after his military discharge. We learn, in the final thirty pages of text, that Kipp found his calling as a Blackfeet activist when he joined in the largely urban-based American Indian Movement (AIM) whose leaders occupied the Oglala Sioux Pine Ridge Reservation hamlet of Wounded Knee, South Dakota in 1973.

Anyone who knows anything about American Indian history will know that Wounded Knee was the site of the infamous massacre of hundreds of Lakotas in 1890. The AIM takeover more than eighty years later was not a random act, but rather a deliberate rebuke to the US government's and the corrupt local tribal council's claims of sovereignty over this hallowed battleground. Thus it is not surprising that Wounded Knee should appear in the title of the autobiography. Indeed, it is Kipp's juxtaposition of Vietcong and Wounded Knee that gives this memoir its power. In the book's final chapter, Kipp is among the AIM activists defending Wounded Knee from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Indian Bureau authorities who were determined to lay siege against these militants. As Kipp recalls:

Suddenly a popping sound punctuated the night. I was shocked—I knew that sound. I had heard it every night for twenty months in Vietnam as the security forces defended the air base at Da Nang, unleashing flares to light up the Vietnamese night to see if Victor Charlie was coming through the concertina wire. In that moment in the ravine, I realized the United States military was looking for me with those flares. I was the gook now. No wonder the Vietnamese, looking at the Indian tattoo on my arm, had presciently told me, You same same Viet Cong. (126)

This passage, coming nearly at the end of the book, encapsulates Kipp's most memorable theme. It completes the story he set out to tell. It's difficult to find fault with the analogy as a morality tale, except perhaps to acknowledge the sad historical fact that, unlike the Indians, the Vietcong defeated the United States.

That said, Kipp's autobiography gains momentum only in the last parts of the narrative. He finds his true voice once he finds a less self-destructive and marginally less violent and brutal (especially toward women) cause, when as a journalism major he convinces his professor at the University of Montana to allow him to cover AIM. Before this turning point, as the memoir sadly recounts, Kipp led a largely aimless life, punctuated by wounds that were sometimes self-inflicted such as getting into numerous bar brawls or, more typically, wounds resulting from the largely racist attitudes of cowboys and other whites he encountered along the way. Early on, Kipp writes rather simplistically, "Not all white adults disliked Indians" (15). He occasionally singles out those non-Indians who tried to help him, from the sympathetic basketball coach who encouraged him to go to college on an athletic scholarship to the teacher at the university who awakened Kipp's love of poetry. But these examples do not undercut the author's main and largely accurate view that Indians like him in the mid-twentieth century were the victims of unmet treaty obligations, "the public school system, the churches and the media who had work[ed] their dark magic upon us" (96).

Throughout the text, there are some important subthemes that Kipp touches on but does not develop. The first of these is alcoholism and its impact on Indian life. He notes with wry humor that "Indians can be broke when the phone bill arrive, but they somehow always seem to come up with money when its time to drink" (111). In an especially interesting and largely unknown anecdote about AIM's policies, Kipp writes, "Native American activists in the sixties and seventies recognized the necessity of sobriety. The cry for sober Native people became a mantra; it remains a mantra. The sobriety movement has been wide reaching and effective" (140). Recent data I have seen contradicts this positive image, but Kipp's own battles with alcoholism, and those of his friends, deserve a more in-depth treatment.

A second subtheme that deserves greater attention revolves around Kipp's self-identity as a fighter. Given his identification with the warrior culture of the Blackfeet, it is hardly accidental that he landed in the Marines, even when he had other options. "I was the only Indian in our outfit, and I went by the generic

name of Chief and it didn't bother me, as I was proud to be an Indian" (35). (In my own research on Indians in the military in World War II, the use of the term *chief* to describe Indian soldiers was ubiquitous. Most Indians welcomed the stereotype even when they came from largely nonwarrior cultures such as the Hopi or Oneida. It was seen by many as a way to gain the respect of whites.) Even when Kipp identifies with the Vietnamese, it is the Vietcong, the fighters, with whom he feels an affinity. The fact that his own warrior self-image may have trapped him in a set of misogynistic behaviors is, sadly, never explored in this frequently self-critical but not critical enough memoir. One wishes Kipp had spent more time making clearer the difference between his indulgent "bad boy behavior" and the genuine substance of being a warrior.

*Allison Bernstein*

Ford Foundation

**White Justice in Arizona: Apache Murder Trials in the Nineteenth Century.** By Clare V. McKanna Jr. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2005. 223 pages. \$27.95 cloth.

Historians are well aware that residents of the Arizona Territory hated Apaches. They killed them eagerly in the Camp Grant massacre, they were thrilled when the Chiricahuas were sent to Florida in 1886, and territorial newspapers were filled with anti-Apache rhetoric. Did those attitudes disappear after the departure of Geronimo and the Chiricahuas? How did Arizonans treat Apache groups that remained in the territory? What happened when Apaches confronted the Arizona judicial system and were they treated impartially? These are questions that interest San Diego State University historian Clare McKanna Jr.

By focusing on four murder trials in which Apaches were defendants, McKanna analyzes the fairness of the judicial system in the territory and, in a broader sense, the prevailing attitude toward Apaches while also illuminating cultural differences between whites and Apaches. He uses a case study approach and describes in some detail four cases from the late 1880s and early 1890s.

In 1888 members of Captain Jack's band killed several armed members of another band on the San Carlos Reservation in apparent retaliation for the earlier killing of three band members, perhaps including Captain Jack's father and brother. Although this was a traditional way of settling differences in Apache culture, Captain Jack and several others were tried and convicted in US district court and sent to prison in Ohio. The US Supreme Court eventually freed the prisoners because the trial had occurred in the wrong legal jurisdiction, and soon thereafter the group was retried and convicted with the exception of Captain Jack. The absence of a transcript for the second trial leaves it unclear as to why Captain Jack was found not guilty, although evidence in the first trial indicated that he might not have participated in the shooting.

In 1887 a number of Goshayee's band, including the Apache Kid, who was an Apache scout in the army, participated in a *tiswin* party. Under the influence of this alcoholic beverage, the Apache Kid and four other scouts killed an