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Conservation Refugees: The Hundred-Year Conflict between Global Conservation and Native Peoples. By Mark Dowie.

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**Author**

Garrett, James J.

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Buick's book is groundbreaking in its reinterpretation of Lewis and her art; it would have been even more impressive had Buick not relied so heavily on quotations from other scholars and articulated her own voice in relation to their writings. Perhaps the most surprising omission is Buick's lack of engagement with Charmaine Nelson's *The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America* (2007). Buick neither cites Nelson in the text nor lists her in the bibliography. Nelson adeptly discusses Lewis's place in Rome within the context of other women artists working in the city and dedicates a chapter to a reinterpretation of Lewis's *The Death of Cleopatra*. I'm not sure what this omission means, but it is glaring. Martin Berger's *Sight Unseen: Whiteness and American Visual Culture* (2005) is also missing as a reference. Berger's book is an important intervention in American art scholarship; it explores how a white subject position suffuses American art of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; he argues that "whiteness" profoundly affects modes of seeing and internalized beliefs about race during that period. Despite these small shortcomings, *Child of Fire* is a significant book because it reminds us to consider cultural context over simpler readings that merge racial and gender identity with interpretation of an artist's work.

Renée Ater

University of Maryland

**Conservation Refugees: The Hundred-Year Conflict between Global Conservation and Native Peoples.** By Mark Dowie. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2009. 341 pages. \$28.95 cloth.

In this treatise on the state of global biological conservation efforts, the investigative journalism of Mark Dowie gives those interested in conservation and Native people much to think about. *Conservation Refugees* explores the role of conservation groups from northern industrialized countries that assume the right to designate tracts of land belonging to others as "ecological hotspots" and then removing, oftentimes forcibly, the original inhabitants in order to create protected areas. He supports this notion through the American proclivity and policy to designate "wilderness" as in need of separation from humans, also known as the Yosemite Park model. Whatever man touches turns to ruin, and, therefore, humans, especially indigenous people, should not be allowed to utilize the land.

The author describes the origins of the Yosemite Park model as one in which humans are excluded from the ecosystem in order to "save" the beauty, biodiversity, or ecological integrity of the so-called protected area. This

conservation model has become known as fortress conservation, in which all human inhabitants are excluded from the ecology of the landscape that is designated as a park or wildlife refuge. This very model set the stage for legislative efforts that eventually became the US Wilderness Act of 1964, which recognized and protected certain federally owned tracts of land as pristine areas free from the abuses of man. This legislation expressed the notion that the land would be untrammelled by man and a place where man is a visitor and does not remain. Assuming that the rest of the world must adhere to this definition of wild areas reflects real arrogance, but that is what conservationists are expecting the rest of the world to do, especially indigenous communities.

This uniquely American model has thus become the guiding principle and philosophy of many, if not most, of the world's large international conservation groups such as The Nature Conservancy and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (originally called the World Wildlife Fund) to name but a couple. Dowie documents that the five biggest international nongovernmental organizations garner 70 to 80 percent of the funds that are marked for conservation worldwide.

As the subtitle states, the book chronicles the long struggle that has occurred between the conservation movement and Native people. Dowie provides the reader with prime examples of the arrogance, bullying, and often-times violent tactics used against many indigenous groups on almost every continent. The usual practice has been for the conservation organization, along with the world's financial institutions, to offer the host government a conservation-for-debt swap in which loans are forgiven if land is set aside as a protected area. All this is done with conservation groups denying that they had anything to do with the displacement; however, as Dowie points out, they did nothing to stop it either. Frequently, the participating BINGO, or big international nongovernmental organization, ends up with a sweetheart deal from the host government to manage the newly established protected area. This exclusionary-type conservation model has displaced many Native communities around the world, such as the Maasai in eastern Africa and the Karen of Thailand, from their homelands in the name of saving and enhancing the world's biological diversity. This model has placed the survival of millions of Native people throughout the world in jeopardy by turning them into refugees and subjecting them to severe social injustices.

Only with the proposal, and the subsequent passing, of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007 have these superconservation groups begun to acknowledge this injustice. Some conservationists who are members of these organizations are beginning to voice their disagreement with actions, and a few have admitted to turning a deaf ear despite knowing that those being displaced were good conservationists. It is becoming increasingly apparent that indigenous people's ecological practices

have contributed to the high biodiversity that exists. An indigenous delegate to the Fifth World Parks Congress held in Durban, South Africa, in 2003 said, "First, we were dispossessed in the name of kings and emperors, later in the name of state departments, and now in the name of conservation" (xv). Dowie has superbly researched the indigenous perspective of this issue and provides the reader with excellent examples of the displacement that has occurred.

As a Native person and an ecologist, I am extremely alarmed at these conservation group's neocolonialist actions toward indigenous peoples. Although the attitude and behavior displayed is not totally surprising, it is shocking how widespread it actually is. Apparently, the world is in big trouble if it is forced to depend on Western scientists that do not understand social justice issues as the only method to help save the world's biodiversity. This is especially so when one considers that the industrialized countries of the world already have a tremendously sad and dismal record of causing many extinctions and near-extinctions of wildlife and Native people. One of the Maasai elders asks, in reference to the Western conservationists, "How is it that supposed experts and guardians of nature come here after having failed to conserve trees and wildlife in their places of origin?" (29).

I believe that the author has achieved his goal of enlightening readers about the controversial nature of the large conservation groups' treatment of Native people throughout the world. His research is exemplary and unbiased. He affords the reader the opportunity to witness that not all Native people are conservationists extraordinaire and that not all Western conservationists are bad guys. But Dowie tells it like it is when he states that people who are kicked out of their homes and off their land will misbehave because of survival issues, and when they do, the conservationist has no right to call them criminals. It was especially pleasing when the author affirmed the fact that where indigenous people have resided for centuries or millennia is exactly where the ecological hotspots are, and there are very good reasons for it being so. To put it bluntly, it is because the people who live there take good care of their homeland and is precisely because they are the primary stakeholders who have nothing to gain and everything to lose if they abuse their ecosystem.

It is my belief that had the UN declaration not been passed, it would be business as usual with these large, international conservation groups. Indigenous communities would still not be allowed to become involved with conservation efforts in their own lands and would still be expected to get out of the way. However, with the passage of the declaration, one hopes that indigenous communities will no longer be pushed out of their homes and off their land, and that they will be given more opportunities to govern and control their own conservation efforts in their homelands. This book is one that I would recommend to every person who has a stake in wildlife

conservation anywhere in the world, which really is everyone. I would especially encourage all those who donate funds to conservation groups to read this book and question where and how their money is spent. At the very least, I would hope donors would begin insisting that conservation groups deal with Native peoples in a much more morally equitable and ethical manner. In the words of Byron Mallot, a Tlingit elder, "We were not given land, we gave you land" (235). The author of this book has given voice to the Native and indigenous communities around the world in regard to their abilities to conserve the biodiversity in their territorial homelands. It is hoped that this book will assist in making things right with Native people wherever they live, and that the world will begin respecting Native people's traditional knowledge of the land. It is unfortunate for many Native people that their world has been turned upside down, seemingly forever, by some of the world's conservationists and others who believe that no one understands biodiversity except for them. Let us hope that the conservationists eventually see this as the injustice that it really is.

*James J. Garrett* (Ho Hwoju Lakota)  
North Dakota Association of Tribal Colleges

**Delaware Tribe in a Cherokee Nation.** By Brice Obermeyer. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 2009. 340 pages. \$45.00.

This is an ethnographic study of the Delaware tribe in the Cherokee Nation that documents the persistence of the tribe in maintaining its independence from the Cherokee Nation in spite of being enrolled as citizens and having physical inclusion within the geographic area of the Cherokee Nation. Brice Obermeyer followed the classic anthropological methodology of observer-participant as an employee by the Delaware tribal government in its Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act office and by participating in community activities on a daily basis.

Obermeyer presents the background of the Delaware tribe and the Cherokee Nation, showing their common history of forcible exile to eastern Oklahoma by the federal government. The Cherokee Nation was exiled through a trans-Mississippian death march, usually referred to as the Trail of Tears, from prison camps in Tennessee. The Delaware were removed through a series of temporary relocations across the Midwest and Texas. During this ethnic cleansing, portions of the Delaware communities split off and went to Canada, Kansas, Idaho, western Oklahoma, and a land area within the Cherokee Nation.