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Author Charles Wilkinson has tried to make the point that Billy Frank's legacy is not in his accomplishments as an individual but rather his active and purposeful embodiment of a worldview. His life has spanned a critical time in Indian fishing rights. His father lived through the traumatic experience of being evicted from his home, but came back to establish a base along the river of his ancestors. The son struggled with the law for over thirty years before treaty fishing rights were guaranteed, then set about trying to restore the salmon to the greatest possible degree. Others struggled along with the Frank family for similar causes, but the reader can appreciate the full impact of the story by focusing on these individuals. A particularly evocative set of photographs brings life to this book. The hand-drawn maps provide a sense of place even for readers not familiar with the territory. *Messages from Frank's Landing* is a valuable addition to our understanding of the relationship between Native people and their environment and how traditional beliefs can inform us in the modern world.

*Carolyn J. Marr*

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**The Native American Oral Tradition: Voices of the Spirit and Soul.** By Lois Einhorn. Newport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2000. 121 pages. \$55.00 cloth.

This book is a challenging study of oral tradition among Native Americans and attempts to build a bridge between philosophical thoughts both Native American and Judeo-Christian. There is a strong feminine compassion that defines and brings attention to fundamentals of Native American expression such as prayer, music, oratory, metaphors, family, and nature or the holistic world. Among the strengths of this book are its attempts to allow readers to view a world other than their own and its extensive bibliography of resources supporting the study. It is difficult to articulate the diversity of the Native American experience without the knowledge of the number of tribes or nations and hundreds of views pertaining to the subject. For this reason, the book, unlike most studies, it is more poetic and general, and often seems to present the author's personal interpretation.

From a traditional academic viewpoint, the material introduced in this book would be considered conventional and appropriate. For practicing Native Americans, there is some apprehension toward the fundamentals introduced in this study, such as language, culture, and political experiences, especially since these terms are being defined by a nonmember of the community or specific tribe. In some ways, the book patronizes the Native American experience, barraging the reader with adjectives, metaphors, and personifications that oversimplify what to Native Americans is common sense.

The author does an excellent job of comparing cultural assumptions and values. This book provides appropriate contrasts for an introductory reader of Native American oral tradition, philosophy, and political experience. Furthermore, the author takes a risk in challenging the existence of a generic

Native American worldview . It is inspiring to see her defiantly attack the Western world of materialism and individualism compared to the sense of community and utility experienced by tribal groups. Throughout the discussions of oral tradition and language, there are numerous descriptions of religious ideology and the contrasting views experienced by the mainstream and Native Americans. Other arguments delve into literary topics including the written word, oratory, storytelling, and music.

From an Apsaalooke (Crow) perspective, I feel that validating the oral tradition in contemporary mainstream literature is important and critical to respecting and understanding the identity of Native peoples. At the onset of reading this book my expectations were far different from the actual topics discussed throughout the study. In some respects, it is important to have friends such as Einhorn in the academic world, yet there remains a lack of publishers printing Native peoples writing about their own experiences. Again, we ask, why does it seem more appropriate or valid when a non-Indian says something educational about Native Americans? Why are Native Americans seldom given the opportunity to express themselves the way they choose? There is still the struggle for people to respect and understand that differences are not barriers or reasons to ostracize grassroots communities or tribal peoples by not allowing them to participate in mainstream literature.

My impression of the title was the hope for justice and validation. As a lifelong student of oral tradition, my assumption is that anything coming from "spirit and soul," as expressed in the title, is truth, whether it serves to build or destroy. To that purpose, there were huge issues surrounding oral tradition that did not even surface or come under discussion.

Certainly, this book may serve mainstream introductory academic interests, but for a grassroots or tribal audience whose needs are vested in liberation and empowerment through validating their own experiences, it is inappropriate, except for the bibliography and the excellent contrasts between values and cultural differences. Only once was oral tradition emphasized as an educational process; even then it was described as "informal." There seems to be an implication that the oral tradition is marked by randomness. In the practice of oral tradition there is an important emphasis on protocol and process (ritual), to the point of formal license. For example, among the Apsaalooke, not just anyone has the right to speak publicly. A person must first acquire the right and exercise the proper exchange for this license to speak in public or sing particular songs. This is also the custom of other Plains tribes. It is for this reason that much of the information presented in this book only scratches the surface of oral tradition and Native American knowledge.

Einhorn just looks at the apple and does not bite into it. She misses the opportunity to present oral tradition as an educational learning process. Even though she celebrates holistic views of the world and nature, the biggest void in this study is the lack of any indication that Native Americans have an educational system and maintain a huge knowledge base of experiences that could be compared to other institutions in higher education. Although there are some assumptions that Native Americans have not formally documented their ideals and knowledge, this does not necessarily indicate that the formal

education process must be confined to a physical building. The educational structure of the Native American world is intertwined throughout the universe. Even though presumably informal, a story told around the fireplace is as valid and important as a lecture in a major university. The knowledge exchanged by the caretakers of the medicine of healing and daily meals is a formal curriculum, just as a press conference presents news impacting the nation.

Oral tradition is the primary medium for interactive teaching among Native Americans. The importance of humor is also critical, for we can get through the learning process laughing and smiling or we can get through it being whipped with fear. The importance of humor is not given enough credence throughout discussions in this book. Views and practices of humor throughout North America differ vastly. Among the Crow and Hidatsa nations, as well as the Dakotas, humor often involves teasing. Yet other tribes may be offended or intolerant of this custom. This type of oral tradition is for social and behavioral practices particularly with younger men, because the older brothers point out humorous situations so that younger ones will be respectful and obedient, rather than foolish and troublesome.

There are special times when specific stories and songs are told; the text does not offer such specificity. For the Crow Indians, there are some stories that are only told when there is snow on the ground. In other cases, there are certain times of the night when stories are told. This also includes particular songs, whether social or religious. It is difficult for Native Americans to clear the haze of ignorance embellished by the attitudes of the mainstream, just as it is a challenge to provide insight to non-Natives into Native Americans' formal institutions of knowledge, education, economy, and spirituality. Emphasizing these facets of oral tradition are important because there is a need to understand that Native Americans have formal and structural processes in the educational system of learning and teaching delivered via oral tradition.

From a Native American perspective, this book may appear intrusive with all the New Age assertions used to articulate grassroots, holistic, and Native American philosophies. In some sense it seems stereotypical that all Natives speak in the rhetoric described in the research. The narrow focus does not allow for readers new to the Native American experience to understand the diversity and complexity of these nations. One word seemingly absent throughout the study is a foundation of the oral tradition among the Apsaalooke: respect. This concept is the link to all interrelated aspects of the universe; for a student of Native cultures to miss this point is like not saying anything at all.

Overall, the research shared in this book contrasts psychological and cultural differences between mainstream and Native American peoples. There are excellent examples of value differences that other mainstream literature fails to express. This book is a dedication to the efforts of people coming to understand each other, replacing ignorance with a full bucket of general knowledge and positive aspects of Native American culture. The text contains excellent citations of past and present leaders or educators from various Native nations. The political experiences with the Western world described by past medicine people or chiefs lends a personal perspective to the recent political struggles and consolations made by the Native nations dealing with US policies. This book would

be recommended reading for a new student of the Native American experience, but less appropriate for more avid students of Native American culture.

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**Native American Spirituality: A Critical Reader.** Edited by Lee Irwin. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000. 334 pages. \$24.95 paper.

In passionate and lucid prose, the fourteen essays collected in *American Indian Spirituality* create an engaging dialogue, allowing the reader to listen to Natives and non-Natives reveal, critique, cajole, and persuade in what feels like a large family gathering. These writers take on difficult issues pertaining to Native religions, while practicing a multivocal discussion of complexity, richness, and scope.

Even though editor Lee Irwin clearly intends that the audience for this collection be a knowledgeable member in the field, I suggest that a reader, particularly a more general one, might profit from reading Irwin's essay "Freedom, Law, and Prophecy: A Brief History of Native American Religious Resistance," which succinctly chronicles the dense history of Native resistance to white/Christian domination and documents current pressures placed on Native religious practitioners, such as the present-day obstacles to Native religious practice, the First Amendment right to freedom of religion notwithstanding. This basic human right continues to be denied to Native people, even after its reiteration in the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 that affirmed federal US protection and American Indians' inherent "right of freedom to believe, express, and exercise [their] traditional religions" (p. 295). Irwin also supplies the reader with the "Declarations against the Sale or Appropriation of Native Ceremonies by Non-Natives," part of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Traditional Elder's Circle. Their words clarify how, where, and who may properly speak of "the processes and ceremonies of the most Sacred Nature" (p. 310). They decry the selling of ceremonial items and rituals, and the exposure of sacred traditions.

Ronald L. Grimes discusses this theme in "This May Be a Feud, but It Is Not a War: An Electronic, Interdisciplinary Dialogue on Teaching Native Religions," where he begins with an anecdote: A Native woman remarked after a lecture by a non-Native professor, "Much of what you say is probably true, but suppose you were a Jew and you had just heard your spirituality or your history presented to you by the grandchild of a Nazi. How would you feel?" (p. 78) Contemplation of this question led him to create three websites where he posted questions pertaining to whether Euro-Americans should be teaching courses on the Native religions of North America. Grimes comments on the varied postings, then offers a personal response: Yes, non-Natives should teach Native religions when Natives are not in place to teach them, because it is better than the message inferred by not offering these courses at all (that they are not worthy), but the teaching must be done with "humility, collegiality, and sensitivity" (p. 92).