

People of the Big Voice: Photographs of Ho-Chunk Families by Charles Van Schaick, 1879–1942, by Tom Jones, Michael Schmudlach, Matthew Daniel Mason, Amy Lonetree, and George A. Greendeer. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2011. viii, 288 pp. 330 illustrations, maps, appendix, notes, name index, subject index. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer Jane Simonsen is associate professor of history and women's and gender studies at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois. She is the author of *Making Home Work: Domesticity and Native American Assimilation in the American West, 1860–1919* (2006) and "Descendants of Black Hawk: Generations of Identity in Sauk Portraits" in *American Quarterly* (2011).

Scholarship on images of Native Americans often emphasizes the subjects' passivity in the face of the photographer's agenda: images are "taken," rather than made for or treasured by the subjects. Although this perspective is crucial to our understanding of photography as a tool of colonization, it downplays the subjects' own agency. Challenging conventional readings, this beautiful collection of portraits by Black River Falls, Wisconsin, photographer Charles Van Schaick presses viewers to apprehend Ho-Chunk people not as "racial types" but as multidimensional individuals embedded in familial relations, whose negotiation of the realities of their lives is inscribed in these powerful portraits.

People of the Big Voice is a collaborative effort to present 330 of Van Schaick's photographs made during a period when the Ho-Chunk were re-establishing themselves in Wisconsin after decades of forced removal and illness. Brief opening essays by Matthew Daniel Mason, Amy Lonetree, and Tom Jones provide orientation to Van Schaick's life and work, Ho-Chunk history and resilience, and methods of photographic interpretation. They assert that the Ho-Chunk were not passive but "presented themselves to the camera the way they wanted to be seen" (26). The essays are followed by seven "galleries" organized by themes such as "Families and Kinship," "Religion and Clans," and "Traditional and Contemporary Dress." A foreword by Truman Lowe and afterword by Janice Rice, written in both Ho-Chunk and English, emphasize connections between past and present members of the Ho-Chunk nation.

These essays set up what the collaborators recognize as the book's crucial contribution: a visual record of the Ho-Chunk's astute negotiation of codes of self-presentation—both Euro-American and indigenous. The images include some street scenes and photographs of Ho-Chunk work and religious practices, but, in a seeming paradox, it is the studio portraits that best illustrate the role photography played in asserting Ho-Chunk identity. We see family members posing in Ho-

Chunk regalia and again in western dress, in cloches and derbies, blankets and turbans, with the long locks of Wild West performers and the cropped hair of New Women. Against the floral, classical backdrop, they pose with props from Van Schaik's studio: guns and pets, birds and bikes, books and whiskey. The visual codes tell stories, some clear, some unintelligible: in an 1898 image a man poses with a bankbook; a self-referential image from 1893 reveals a cabinet card photograph as a prop. Veteran Ruby Whiterabbit poses, in the 1940s, with an eagle-feather war bonnet reserved for warriors. Gazing straight into the camera, often touching one another, the subjects display self-assurance, community, and sometimes a sense of playful self-performance.

Even as a compilation of studio portraits taken by a single photographer, quite apart from their subject matter, the collection is remarkable for its scope, visual appeal, and the intimacy with subjects who appear and reappear in the studio across decades. That the images are all of Ho-Chunk in a period of upheaval lends new dimension to our understanding of the cultural work of portraiture. The book stands as a testament to the possibility of regional archival collections and as a model of collaborative work, particularly in the area of indigenous studies. The work of the collaborators is particularly prominent in the meticulous identification of nearly every subject with both anglicized and Ho-Chunk names, so that family relationships can be traced over time and to emphasize "the visual evolution of Ho-Chunk culture" (31). The images suggest the possibility of new directions in scholarship on indigenous photographs—particularly those in local and regional archives—as such collections may reveal the intimacy, familial connections, and complex realities of indigenous life as the subjects themselves experienced it.

A Generation at War: The Civil War Era in a Northern Community, by Nicole Etcheson. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2011. xii, 371 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Reviewer Kenneth L. Lyftogt is a lecturer in history at the University of Northern Iowa. He is the author of several books on Iowa and the Civil War, including *From Blue Mills To Columbia: Cedar Falls and the Civil War* (1993).

The great challenge of Civil War scholarship is to find the reasons behind the violent passions that divided the nation and plunged it into war. Nicole Etcheson, author of *Bleeding Kansas: Contested Liberty in the Civil War Era* (2004), a truly fine study of the role of the Kansas crisis in the making of the Civil War, puts her talents to this challenge.