

Book Reviews

selection of victims in the 1862 "massacre." More important, his treatment of fictive kinship as an adaptive strategy, and of the reasons for the ultimate breakdown of that strategy, suggests an interpretive framework that should be useful to ethnohistorians who deal with a variety of contact situations. His work makes clear both the complexity of cultural interactions on the frontier and the flexibility of tribal people in coping with novel challenges and opportunities.

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MARY YOUNG

The People Named the Chippewa: Narrative Histories, by Gerald Vizenor. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984. 172 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index. \$22.50 cloth, \$12.95 paper.

The authors of tribal histories are generally non-Indians who spend most of their time combing archives and special collections for documentary evidence about particular tribes. Historians usually come to know their subjects only through written records, the vast majority of which non-Indians compiled. Too often historians do not interact with their human subjects; they neglect the rich oral traditions of Native Americans. The major focus of Gerald Vizenor's volume is the oral histories of the Anishinaabeg, people commonly called the Chippewa. Interspersed with analysis of the written literature associated with the Chippewa, Vizenor has woven numerous oral traditions, ranging from the creation story of his people to narratives about Dennis Banks. Thus Vizenor has based an American Indian history on the documentary evidence which the Indians themselves present.

Vizenor, a professor of Native American literature at the University of California, Berkeley, is a member of the Minnesota Chippewa tribe and the author of several books, articles, and plays. *The People Named the Chippewa* is in no sense a "traditional" academic history, but is nonetheless a scholarly work of considerable value. Vizenor deals with a variety of topics, including Chippewa origins, the importance of medicine people, and the significance of dreams. Many of his oral histories also discuss issues of Indian education in Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Catholic schools. The author uses the reminiscences of selected individuals to illustrate aspects of Chippewa life. For example, he uses the words of Rose Shingobe Barstow to examine the feelings of Indians attending school for the first time. Barstow remembered that when she attended a BIA boarding school ridicule frightened her into silence. In third grade she decided not to say anything at school ever again because she feared students and

teachers. They had never permitted her to speak her own language, and she stopped speaking English so that others would not laugh at her manner of using it. She also remembered the shock of seeing Indians depicted in textbooks as bloodthirsty savages always threatening whites. This experience led Barstow to deny her tribal origins, a sociocultural problem which she had to overcome.

Vizenor's book is not filled with words lamenting the Chippewa past. Some of the most significant information in the work is associated with the spirit world, death and dreams, animals and power. One of the most intriguing excerpts is the case of Cora Katherine Sheppo, a mixed blood Chippewa who killed her grandchild because he had been "spawned by the devil." Vizenor's discussion and analysis is very "Indian" and thus very unique. His examination of Sheppo's struggle with evil forces is just one of many that will help non-Indians understand the different perspectives of Native Americans. His book is certainly an interesting contribution to Chippewa history and will be of use to anyone attracted to American Indian studies.

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CLIFFORD E. TRAFZER

Oklahoma Seminoles: Medicine, Magic and Religion, by James W. Howard in collaboration with Willie Lena. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984. xix, 279 pp. Notes, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$29.95 cloth.

James W. Howard, an anthropologist on the faculty of Oklahoma State University, presents in this volume the traditional culture extant among the Seminoles of Oklahoma. The culture and beliefs of the Oklahoma Seminoles resulted from the diffusion, after the War of 1812, of Creek culture among the Florida Seminoles. Because the Creek-Seminoles refused to remove to Oklahoma (then Indian Territory) the United States waged three wars, ending in the 1850s, against them. By far the greatest number of Seminoles arrived in Oklahoma between 1827 and 1842. When the removals from Florida ended, about 3,100 people constituted the Oklahoma Seminoles and perhaps five hundred Seminoles remained in Florida. Before describing the medicine, magic, ceremonials, dances, and games of the Seminoles, Howard writes a brief history of the tribe or nation from standard historical sources.

Willie Lena, who Howard depicts as an "arch-conservative" Seminole, provides most of the information in this book (250). Raised by culturally traditional grandparents, Lena at age twenty-four became a *heniha*, or assistant town chief, and later became a *mikko* (town

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