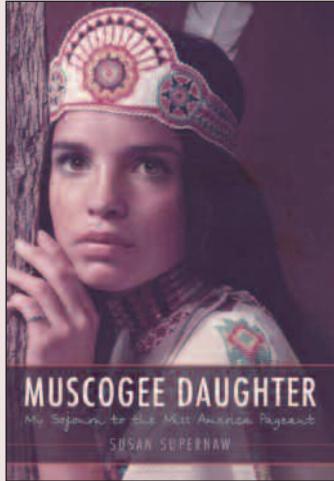


BOOKS IN REVIEW

Favorite Books by Native American Authors 2010

— by Heid Erdrich



An informal, and in no way scientific, survey of a group of Facebook friends resulted in nominations of dozens of titles as “Top Ten Books of 2010” written by Native American authors. Our judges represented from all four directions of the U.S. and at least ten tribes—you should not be surprised that there was no clear winner.

But let’s have a drum roll for the two books awarded several votes each. And the winners (tied for first) are...

- The Dance Boots by Linda LeGarde Grover. A novel from University published by Georgia Press and winner of the national Flannery O’Conner Award.
- The Assassination of Hole-in-the-Day by Anton Treuer. A history published by Borealis Books of the Minnesota Historical Society Press.

Other books honorably mentioned are listed below, by genre:

FICTION

- Extra Indians by Eric Gansworth (Milkweed Editions)
- Cheyenne Madonna by Eddie Chuculate (Black Sparrow Press)
- From the Hilltop by Toni Jensen (University of Nebraska Press)
- The Moon of Letting Go by Richard Van Camp (Enfield & Wizenty)
- Shrouds of White Earth by Gerald Vizenor (Sunny Press)
- The Ones that Got Away by Stephen Graham Jones (Trapdoor Books)

NON-FICTION

- In the Court of the Conquerors: The 10 Worst Indian Cases Ever Decided by Walter Echo-hawk details the legal cases that have determined the fate of Native America. (Speaker’s Corner Press)
- X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent by Scott Richard Lyons (University of Minnesota Press)
- Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England by Jeani O’Brien (University of Minnesota Press)

MEMOIR

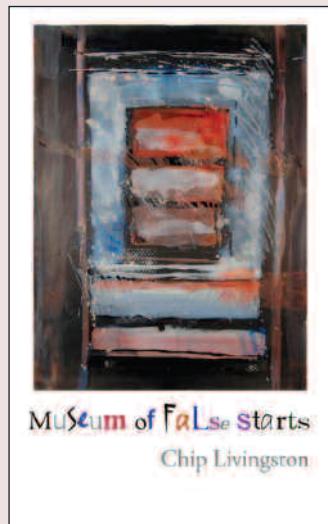
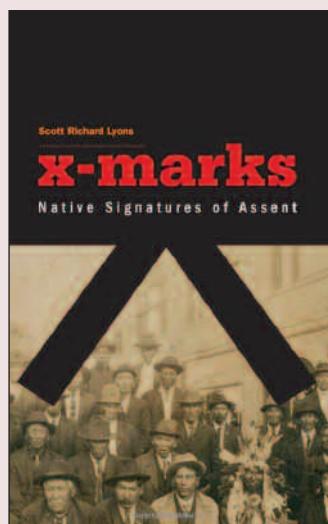
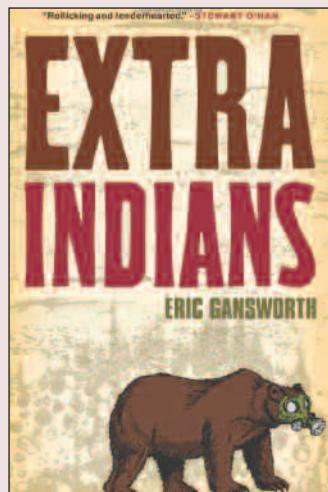
- Fatty Legs: A True Story by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton (Annick Press)
- Muscogee Daughter, by Susan Supernaw (University of Nebraska Press)
- Turquoise Ledge by Leslie Marmon Silko (Viking)
- Fried Fish & Flour Biscuits by Molly McGlennen (Salt Publishing)

POETRY

- Horse Tracks by Henry Real Bird (Lost Horse Press)
- Museum of False Starts by Chip Livingston (Gival Press)
- Ghost Stories of the New West: From Einstein’s Brain to Geronimo’s Boots by Denise Low (Woodley Press)

The eclectic panel of judges included, as you might expect, critics and writers, but also artists, and folks working for their tribes. They have in common their love for reading and a willingness to share the books they love.

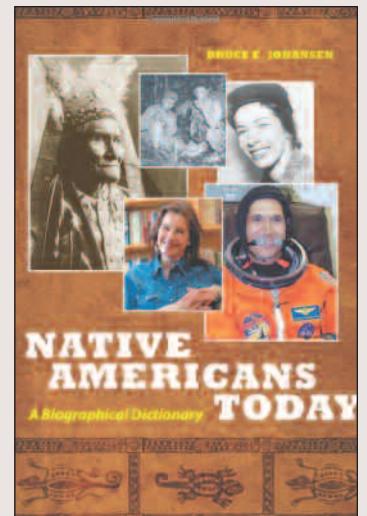
Because of them we learn that poet Henry Real Bird speaks his traditional Crow language and is the current Poet Laureate of Montana; that Molly McGlennen’s is a new Anishinaabe author; that “Fatty Legs,” a young adult story about an Inuit girl speaks to readers of all ages; that we nearly had an American Indian Miss America named Susan Supernaw; that Stephen Graham Jones is Blackfeet and a horror writer; and that the shelf that once held a year’s offering of new Native American literature will now have to be replaced by an annual bookcase.



Native Americans Today: A Biographical Dictionary by Bruce E. Johansen, Hardcover: 315 pages Greenwood, June 2010

Native Americans Today: A Biographical Dictionary focuses on the lives of contemporary Native Americans. The book focuses on Native American lives in the United States and Canada, mainly after 1900, though a few older figures are included because their lives evoke strikingly modern themes.

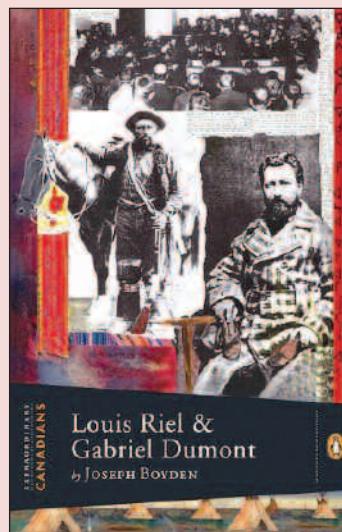
The author knows (or knew) several of the people in the entries, adding a special vibrancy to the writing. Among those profiled are former U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell, activist Eloise Cobell, controversial political prisoner Leonard Peltier, writer Louise Erdrich, and other writers, artists, and musicians. The compilation also includes non-Native Americans whose lives and careers impacted Indian life.



Extraordinary Canadians: Louis Riel And Gabriel Dumont

By Joseph Boyden
Hardcover, 224 pages
Penguin Canada, 2010

— Review by Jacob Croonenberghs



Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont is a story about revolution. Taking place in 1885 Canada; a great swath of land not yet organized into its modern provinces and territories, a history similar to the U.S. Indians, plays out to the north between land speculators, native tribes and the Métis, or mixed blood. Two Métis leaders stand out; Louis Riel, the spiritual leader, and Gabriel Dumont, the military and tactical huntsman.

Boyden takes great pains to not only explain the context of the decisions both leaders made, but places them in a story-driven narrative that is fresh to read and brings these characters to life. With all historical works, however, we know the struggles, hopes and dreams of the characters in it but cannot

change the inevitable conclusion. This book, then, finds its appeal with those unfamiliar with Canadian history; an important history which, in the U.S., we may conveniently forget affects us. Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont are not household names like Geronimo or Chief Joseph, but with Boyden’s work, we can learn to draw parallels between the lessons each of our countries must unearth from the past.

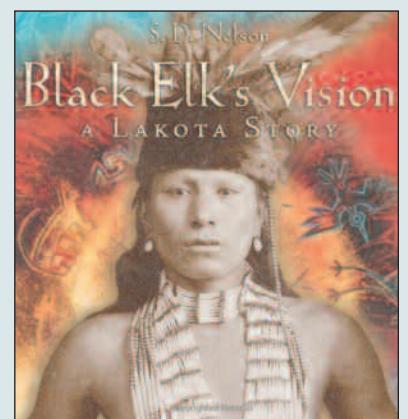
Boyden’s fast, sweeping voice takes us on a border-crossing-question-raising adventure. If there were any criticism to offer against Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont it is that the story Boyden weaves is truly all too brief, leaving us with questions we could and should ask ourselves. What is the best way to be heard? When is civil disobedience gone too far? When land is on the line, men and governments will truly go to any lengths. But the question is; is there a peaceful way to go about it? A question that, for all the past has given us, history cannot answer.

Black Elk’s Vision: A Lakota Story by S.D. Nelson Abrams Books for Young Readers February 2010, Reading level: Ages 9-12, Hardcover, 56 pages

Told in a first-person narrative, this handsome biography of Black Elk (1863–1950), a Lakota man who saw many changes come to his people, is adorned with vibrant acrylic paintings that depict the mystical images (spirit voices and visions) that Black Elk first experienced as a child.

Black Elk says that as a nine-year-old boy, he is blessed with a Great Vision. At 12, he fights in the Battle of Little Bighorn. After traveling in Europe with Buffalo Bill’s Wild West show and, later, experiencing the massacre at Wounded Knee, he retreats to a reservation, where he holds his vision in his heart and offers it to others.

Often quoting from Black Elk Speaks, Nelson makes vivid the painful ways life changed for the Lakota in the 1800s, and throughout he questions how Black Elk’s vision, which explains that humans must realize they are living in a circle of supportive life, juxtaposes against harsh reality. It is a question readers will ponder as well. Colorful, imaginative artwork, created using pencils and acrylic paints, is interspersed with nineteenth-century photos, underscoring that this dramatic account reflects the experiences of a man who witnessed history. Back matter includes an extensive author’s note, a detailed time line, source notes, and a source bibliography. A helpful, attractive map on the endpapers frames this unusual presentation.





Awesiinyensag Vol. 1
Wiigwaas Press
Nov. 2010
96 pages

– Review by Giiwedinoodin (Dr. Margaret Noori) University of Michigan

It's true what the animals say: "when we go in a good way together, we will understand." I was so happy to see this book, Awesiinyensag. Some wonderful Ojibwe speakers have written seven new stories that can be used to teach and I know they will be read by children and parents.

Everything the characters do is done carefully in Anishinaabemowin: they go to school together, they harvest wild rice, they sing, they fall into the water and dry off together, they play, dance and give each other hugs. The Afterword says "it was hard to get started" writing the book. When I started reading I found it was hard to stop because finally I had to think entirely in Anishinaabemowin.

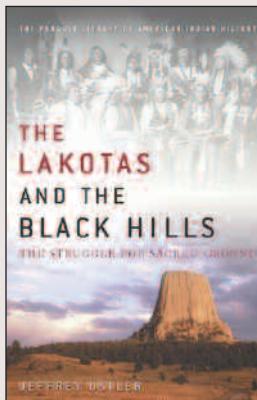
– Review by Dr. Rand Valentine, Lakehead University Thunder Bay

Those of us who work to help literacy efforts in Ojibwe recognize that the overwhelming need is for high-quality materials in the language for children. Awesiinyensag will have a prominent place in those efforts, both for the quality of its content, but more importantly, for the example that it sets. One of the seeming ironies of immersion approaches to language preservation and promotion is that literacy becomes so prominent. But this is as it should be. Just as English-speaking children learn the intricacies of their language and how to spell it, through extensive reading, so too must Ojibwe children. And to do so, they must have high-quality materials.

This book breaks my heart with its tenderness. I hope there are many more like it. I too am a lifelong learner of the language, having only the most modest understanding. I will learn from these Awesiinyensag too.

Debwegimad pii awesiinyensag gigidowaad, "weweni wiiikiwenyindidaa gaye nisidotaadidaa!" O'ow mazina'igan n'gii gichinendam pii gii waamdamaan. Ongow netaa-ojibwemogij gii zhibii'aanaawaan niizhwaaswi oshki-dibaajimowinan wii ji-gikino'o'amawindwaa minwaa gikendamaan binoojiinyag miinwaa gitizimog wii maamawi-agindaasowaad. Gakina gego ezhichigewag ongow awesiinyensag weweni-ezhichigewaad ezhi-Anishinaabemong: izhaawaad gikino'o'amaadiiwigamigong, manoominikewaad, negamowaad, bakobiig-waashkowaad miidaash abasandekewaad, odaminowaad, niimiwaad miinwaa gikinijwenidawaad. Ishkwaabii'igewin gigidoo, "gii sanagad ji-maajitaayaang." Pii maajigindaasoyaanh gii sanagad ji-ishkwaataayaanh zaam gegapii booch igo Anishinaabendamoyaanh eta.

Wiigwaas Press books are available only through www.birchbarkbooks.com order on-line or call the bookstore 612-374-4143.

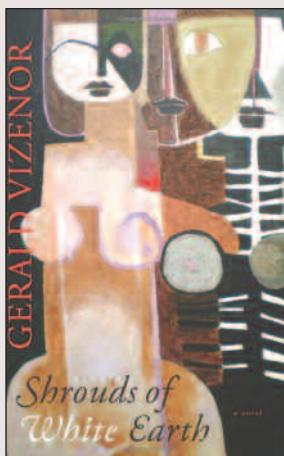


The Lakotas and the Black Hills: The Struggle for Sacred Ground
by Jeffrey Ostler
Viking Adult; Book Club edition
July 2010
Hardcover: 256 pages

The Lakota Indians counted among their number some of the most famous Native Americans, including Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse. Their homeland was in the magnificent Black Hills in South Dakota, where they found plentiful game and held religious ceremonies at charged locations like Devil's Tower. Bullied by settlers and the U. S. Army, they refused to relinquish the land without a fight, most famously bringing down

Custer at Little Bighorn. In 1876, though, on the brink of starvation, the Lakotas surrendered the Hills.

But the story does not end there. Over the next hundred years, the Lakotas waged a remarkable campaign to recover the Black Hills, this time using the weapons of the law. In *The Lakotas and the Black Hills*, the latest addition to the Penguin Library of American Indian History, Jeffrey Ostler moves with ease from battlefields to reservations to the Supreme Court, capturing the enduring spiritual strength that bore the Lakotas through the worst times and kept alive the dream of reclaiming their cherished homeland.



Shrouds of White Earth
by Gerald Vizenor
Excelsior Editions/State University of New York
August 2010
Hardcover: 151 pages

"The inventor of invention rides again. In this book, the master trickster takes on the disciplines of visual art, narrative, and song in his ongoing campaign against victimry, to set natives upright and to insure the truth of native survival. Gerald Vizenor is the healer of irony with his focus on the native paradigm. What a pleasure to ride into Vizenorland, where colors spread and horses fly. Vizenor is my chosen composer of words." --Diane Glancy, author *The Reason for Crows*

Pointed, absorbing novel about an indigenous artist's long journey of creativity and coming-of-awareness from White Earth Reservation to Paris.

The American Indian Experience (USA Today Cultural Mosaic)

by Liz Sonneborn
Reading level: Young Adult, 80 pages

Supplemented with quotes and articles from USA TODAY, *The American Indian Experience* shines a spotlight on American Indians and their contributions to America.

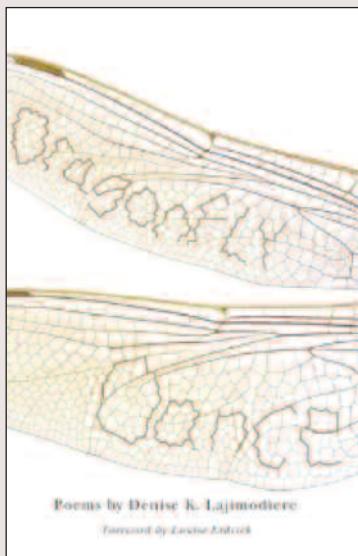
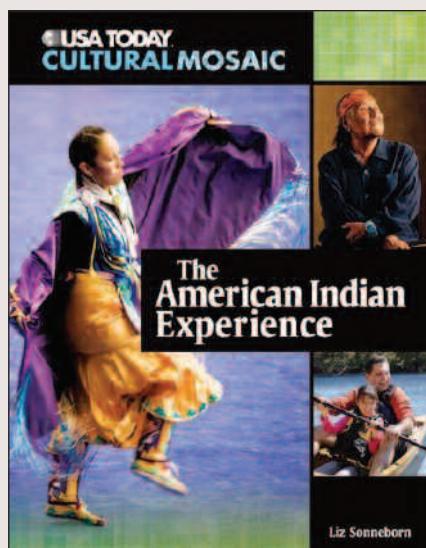
Novelists such as Louise Erdrich and Sherman Alexie offer enlightening and often humorous glimpses into their life experiences and tribal traditions.

Super athlete Jim Thorpe excelled in track-and-field, breaking down cultural barriers to earn gold medals in the pentathlon and the decathlon at the 1912 Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden.

SuAnne Big Crow displayed amazing skills as a basketball player for the Lady Thorpes, her South Dakota high school's team. She became a legend in 1988, when she performed the Lakota Sioux shawl dance on the court in Lead, South Dakota, silencing the crowd who had been shouting anti-American Indian slurs.

Buffy Sainte-Marie became one of the nation's best known folksingers, while actor-musician Floyd Westerman captivated audiences in the groundbreaking 1990 film *Dances with Wolves*.

Read this informative title to learn more about how American Indians contribute to the United States' cultural mosaic, enriching our nation with a wide range of traditions, customs, and life experiences.



Dragonfly Dance
by Denise K. Lajimodiere
Michigan State University Press
December 2010, 93 pages

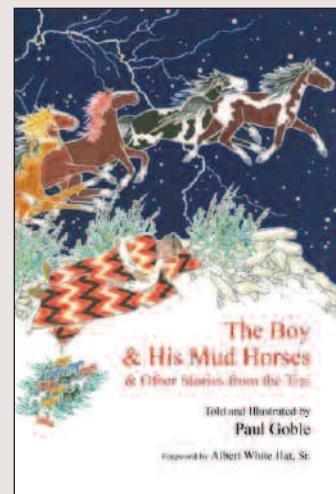
– Review by Jacob Croonenberghs

Dragonfly Dance is the first book of poetry by Denise Lajimodiere, an associate Poet Laureate of North Dakota. Enrolled in Turtle Mountain and engaged in the native community, Lajimodiere's work, nearly thirty years in the making, is a welcome sight to those who have read and known about her poetic talent.

The poetry in *Dragonfly Dance* is raw and deeply personal. There are signs of a traumatized childhood from which the voice of her own personal narrative seeks to heal. Old wounds and old memories are brought together in lines that will make you laugh, and Lajimodiere's past is explored in moments that will have you choking back tears. In particular, the poem "Drunkard's Mass" showcases Lajimodiere's ability to weave humor into the themes that trouble her throughout her writings: 'Tonight you'll put your soul in hock, Let it pour or rain sunshine, Because next week at five o'clock, You'll be forgiven one more time.'

It is interesting to see the way she employs formalist poetic styles now and then in what is mostly a collection of free verse. Perhaps she sees it as another way to tackle the issues she raises in her poetry. Alcoholism, the Catholic Church, racism, and Red Lake; all are themes of a larger significance we can never quite spell out in our lives; each is a wound she needs to heal. She does this through dancing; in the poetry she writes, and the steps she takes in life's circle.

I went to a poetry reading of hers and listened to Lajimodiere read poems like "Prairie Chicks" or "The Quilt" and realized she is a voice we had somewhere lost, but now more than ever desperately need; someone who can talk about the issues that affect us; sing for us, bleed for us, all while keeping it casual. Denise Lajimodiere has a heart from the grasslands and is tough as the Turtle Mountains. *Dragonfly Dance* comes from a champion jingle dress dancer and a grandma with a PhD. It comes from the heart and is well worth a read.



The Boy & His Mud Horses
by Paul Goble
World Reading Hardcover

Beautiful illustration of the boy and his mud horses. The boy is riding a horse, and the mud horses are following him.

More than just an oral tradition, the boy and his mud horses are a story, an experience, and a painting.

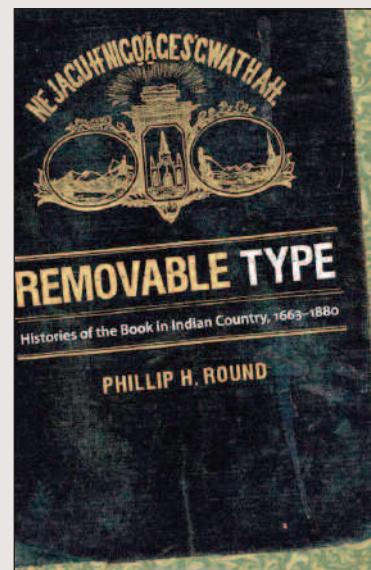
Beginning Dakota/Tokaheya Dakota Language and Grammar Lessons with Glosses
by Nicolette Knudson, Judith White, and Clifford Canku
Minnesota Historical Society Press
December 2010, 120 pages

Nicolette Knudson (Sisseton Wahpeton) and Judith White (Dakota) are students of the language, along with Dakota instructor Clifford Canku, share their expertise through lessons that organize the language at its most basic.

Twenty-four lesson plans build on each other and include cultural and historical information to increase understanding of the Dakota language and world view.

Exercises offer opportunities to practice writing and reading, increasing vocabulary and introducing grammar building blocks that enhance comprehension. Lessons are in English and back again. With these features and more, this book is a resource for speakers of all levels.

Removable Type: Histories of the Book in Indian Country, 1663-1880
by Phillip Round
The University of North Carolina Press
September 2010
Paperback: 272 pages



In 1663, the first mission in North America was established in the northeast. The first printed book in North America was published in 1684. The first Native American to publish a book was in 1847.

year period, uncovering the individual, communal, and political contexts for Native peoples' use of the press in the northeastern woodlands to the Great Plains. In the early days of alphabetic literacy and printed books mattered greatly. In the late nineteenth century, transitional cultural formations of indigenous peoples were shaped by European imperialism.

Removable Type showcases the varied ways that Native Americans produced and utilized printed texts over time, approaching both opportunity and threat. Surveying this rich history addresses such issues as the role of white missionaries, the dissemination of print in Indian Country, the establishment of "national" publishing houses, the production and consumption of bilingual texts, the importance of copyright in establishing Native intellectual property (and the sometimes corrosive effects of European imperialism) and the significance of illustrations.

by & His Mud Horses: & Other Stories from [Hardcover]
Paul Goble
Wisdom, March 2010
Age level: Ages 9-12
Cover: 48 pages

ully illustrated by award-winning author Paul Goble, y and His Mud Horses features a collection of 27 tra- stories from different Native American tribes, includ- Pawnee, Cheyenne, Blackfoot, and Lakota.

an two dozen short tales and poetic bits come from ditions. Many reflect the multifaceted importance of alo in these cultures, and of horses, snakes, and nimals as well. There are creation tales, nursery stod- episodes of enmity among the peoples, too. All are ong the artist's handsomely configured signature s.

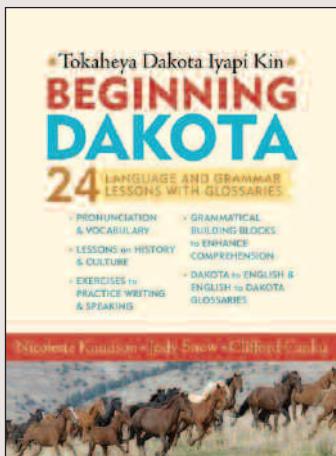
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And glossaries provide translations from Dakota to d more, Beginning Dakota is an invaluable tool for

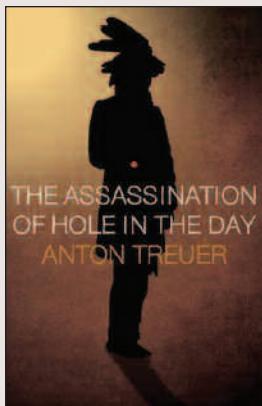


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at Native peoples roaching them as h history, Round missionaries and culture in Indian shing houses by ingual texts, the ntellectual sover- rinting thereon),



The Assassination of Hole in the Day
by Anton Treuer
Hardcover: 304 pages
Borealis Books
October 2010

After his father's death in 1847, Hole in the Day, at 19, inherited his father's role as leader of the Gull Lake Ojibwe. He negotiated with white traders, both Catholic and Protestant missionaries, and the staff at the Indian agency.

On June 27, 1868, Hole in the Day (Bagonegiizhig) the Younger left Crow Wing, Minnesota, for Washington, DC, to fight the planned removal of the Mississippi Ojibwe to a reservation at White Earth. Several miles from his home, the self-styled leader of all the Ojibwe was stopped by at least twelve Ojibwe men and fatally shot.

Hole in the Day's death was national news, and rumors of its cause were many: personal jealousy, retribution for his claiming to be head chief of the Ojibwe, retaliation for the attacks he fomented in 1862, or retribution for his attempts to keep mixed-blood Ojibwe off the White Earth Reservation. Still later, investigators found evidence of a more disturbing plot involving some of his closest colleagues: the business elite at Crow Wing.

While most historians concentrate on the Ojibwe relationship with whites to explain this story, Anton Treuer focuses on interactions with other tribes, the role of Ojibwe culture and tradition, and interviews with more than fifty elders to further explain the events leading up to the death of Hole in the Day. The Assassination of Hole in the Day is not only the biography of a powerful leader but an extraordinarily insightful analysis of a pivotal time in the history of the Ojibwe people. Treuer explores the life and death of the leader, and delves into tribal history and the intricate machinations of Ojibwe politics.

The Moon of Letting Go and Other Stories
by Richard Van Camp
Paperback: 224 pages
Publisher: Enfield & Wizeny
Published: February 2010

-Review by Melissa Olson

Flash and substance might be one way to describe a new collection of short fiction from writer Richard Van Camp, a Dene writer from Canada's Northwest Territories. The stories range from short experimental fiction to longer first person narratives, to stories voiced by community.

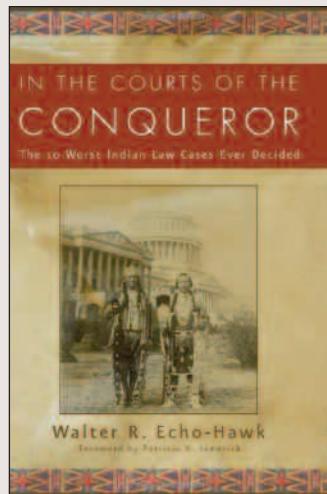
The title story, The Moon of Letting Go, is about a young mother and son saved from a certain death by an intervening, and otherwise very dangerous, medicine man. In the tradition of a DJ who spins and mixes records, Van Camp offers readers the familiar stories of loss and discontinuity, helping to bridge the concerns of an older generation of Native writers with his own. Van Camp's characters struggle to apply lessons of the past to the present moment.

I Count Myself Among Them is a beautifully rendered story about a young man working as a drug dealer who is led away by two men to a house of "not even counted Indians", to a ceremony performed to end in his death, and to the ecstatic moment of his resurrection.

Artfully, Van Camp moves between two generations of writers. The playful, intelligent nature of wolves inform many of Van Camp's stories where he writes of sexuality, health, and relationships between men and women. In this and other ways, Van Camp stories remain unapologetically informed by a community ethos centered on family, skipping the romance, and opting instead for stories of individual healing in loving relationships. In this work, Van Camp joins other contemporary Canadian writers in writing about decolonization at the level of sexuality. As with a well-paced movie or well-timed joke, there are many memorable, laugh out loud moments of personal victory in this collection.

A Darling Story tells of a young couple's decision to stay together in the most difficult of moments fighting together against what seem insurmountable challenges. Not to give away the ending to A Darling Story, should readers pick up this collection of stories, but many may laugh out loud to say the words, "Nelson Crummy!"

And the prose is pretty smooth, too. The Moon of Letting Go and other Stories is Van Camp's second collection of short stories in ten years. As a practitioner of the craft of fiction, Van Camp's story-telling voice is matched note for note by the ebb and flow of his writing.



In the Courts of the Conqueror: The 10 Worst Indian Law Cases Ever Decided
by Walter Echo-Hawk
Speaker's Corner, June 2010
Hardcover: 576 pages

The fate of Native Americans has been dependent in large part upon the recognition and enforcement of their legal, political, property, and cultural rights as indigenous peoples by American courts. In this in-depth examination, Walter Echo-Hawk reveals the troubling fact that American law has rendered legal the destruction of Native Americans and their culture.

Echo-Hawk analyzes ten cases that embody or expose the roots of injustice and highlight the use of nefarious legal doctrines. He delves into the dark side of the courts, calling for a paradigm shift in American legal thinking. Each case study includes historical, contemporary, and political context from a Native American perspective, and the case's legacy on Native America. In the Courts of the Conqueror is a comprehensive history of Indian Country from a new and unique viewpoint. It is a vital contribution to American history.

Echo-Hawk (Pawnee) was a staff attorney for the Native American Rights Fund for thirty-five years.

American Indian Studies Saint Paul Public Schools

We are very honored to have the opportunity to offer the following classes.

AMERICAN INDIAN MAGNET SCHOOL (PRE-K THRU 6)

Two full-time Culture and Language Specialists for Ojibwe and Lakota. Families choose which language that they would like their student to learn. From Kindergarten to 6th grade students learn in smaller classes (around 13 students). From AIMS, students are encouraged to continue their language and culture education at Battle Creek Middle School and then to Harding High School.

• **OPEN HOUSE: Friday, February 11, 2011; 1:30-3:00 pm**
1075 East 3rd Street, St. Paul. 651-778-3100 (www.aims.spps.org)

BATTLE CREEK MIDDLE SCHOOL (7-8)

Offers American Indian Art and Music, American Indian History and Culture, American Indian Support, Ojibwe Language and Culture, and Lakota Language and Culture classes. Also offers home school liaison.

• **SHOWCASE: Wednesday, January 14, 2011; 6:00-7:30 pm**
2121 North Park Drive, St. Paul. 651-293-8960 (www.bcms.spps.org)

HARDING HIGH SCHOOL (9-12)

Offers American Indian Art and Music, American Indian History and Culture, American Indian Literature, American Indian Support, Ojibwe Language and Culture, Lakota Language and Culture, and home school liaison.

• **SHOWCASE: Monday, January 25, 2011; 5:00-7:00 pm**
1540 East Sixth Street, St. Paul. 651-793-4700

GRADUATE WITH A "DISTINCTION IN AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES"

Saint Paul Public Schools is proud to announce the unveiling of our new "Graduation with Distinction in American Indian Studies" program. Much like college students choosing a major field of study, secondary students may choose to specialize in American Indian Studies (AIS). Students in the program have the same graduation requirements as their peers, but they elect to learn about Native culture and language, history and art, and they are involved in the Native community. With the successful completion of program criteria, students will earn the "Distinction in American Indian Studies" mark on their final transcripts, and their honor will be noted at the Indian Education and Harding High School graduation ceremonies.

STUDENT APPLICATION DEADLINES:

Elementary: **March 4, 2011**

Secondary: **Feb. 28, 2011**

FEB. 11 & MARCH 11 - POWWOW:

Check out our booth at the St. Paul American Indian Education Monthly Powwow at the American Indian Magnet School.

Grand entry is at 6 p.m.

JAN. 8 - PARENT INFORMATION FAIR:

River Center in downtown St. Paul.

9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

To enroll your student now contact the SPSS Student Placement Center at **651-632-3701**.

