thus the length and level of coverage of the topics addressed. For example, Robert Wells's essay on transforming American Indian education is a mere eight pages, while Ralph Johnson's' essay on Canadian and U.S. Indian policy is over one hundred pages (including footnotes). Moreover, essays are included from popular sources such as *The Atlantic* and *Audubon,* as well as more scholarly outlets such as *Human Organization,* the *Journal of Ethnic Studies,* and several law review journals. In spite of this lack of overall balance in the collection of essays, each still makes a unique contribution to our understanding of the scope and degree of the Native American resurgence and renewal over the past few decades.

In anthologies of this nature, however, editors should include an introduction to each essay that provides a context in which to view the original material. This pedagogic method can help to shore up gaps in the literature, add important factual information that has occurred since the essay was written, or both. To his credit, Wells does this with approximately one-half of the essays included in the book but, unexplainably, does not provide similar introductions in the remaining ones.

Finally, given my inclination to utilize the book in my American Indian studies courses, I was troubled by the high price of the book and the fact that it is not available in paperback. Unlike a college instructor or researcher, the typical, economically challenged undergraduate student may not be able to justify the purchase of this wide-ranging reader with an extensive bibliography. Perhaps Scarecrow Press should reconsider the profit margins and provide a less expensive paperback version.

Donald E. Green
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

Nch'i-Wána "The Big River": Mid-Columbia Indians and Their Land. By Eugene S. Hunn, with James Selam and family. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990. 378 pages. $22.50 paper.

Nch'i-Wána, the Columbia River, is a magnificent natural wonder. It flows out of Canada into the United States, ultimately forming the boundaries between Washington and Oregon. "Big River" is the lifeblood of Yakima, Wanapum, Wenatchi, Wishrom, Walla Walla, Palouse, and other native peoples living along or

near it. This is particularly true of the Sahaptin-speaking Indians of the mid-Columbia River, people who have revered Nch'i-Wána since the beginning of time. The major focus of Eugene S. Hunn's remarkable book is the people of the Columbia River and their intimate relationship with their environment. However, the volume has broader implications, because, in many ways, Hunn provides a Native American approach to his research. Indeed, his work demonstrates that an interdisciplinary study of American Indians is the most informative one available to scholars.

Hunn successfully weaves together oral history, literature, geography, demography, language, zoology, botany, religion, and other fields. He understands clearly that the first discipline of the Americas was American Indian studies, and, like Native Americans, he realizes that there is little understanding of native peoples without first accepting the fact that Indians think differently from Euro-Americans about the earth, rivers, plants, animals, and places of this land. Thus, when Hunn offers a discussion of Native American plant use on the Columbia Plateau, he ties the discussion of botany to song, story, spirits, ceremony, and economy. This is a difficult task for most scholars who are narrowly trained in prescribed methodologies and formal presentations that take the native out of Native American studies.

Hunn worked closely with James Selam and other Native American elders and collected rich insights into the cultural life of Plateau Indians. The author arranges his study topically, in broad categories. In the introduction, Hunn explains his approach, methods, sources, and personal involvement in the project and his association with Selam. He provides a short ethnohistory and ethnography of mid-Columbia Indians before offering a survey history of the people. He emphasizes demographic information, including material on population decline and disease. He deals with selected periods of Plateau Indian history, including the Walla Walla Council of 1855 and the treaties formed there, the Plateau Indian War of 1855–1858, and the reservation era. This historical discussion anchors the study, but the strength of the work is in Hunn's new work.

Hunn analyzes the Sahaptin and Salish languages, providing a well-written discussion that emphasizes the diversity and commonality among many groups of Indians. Hunn particularly uses his knowledge of Sahaptin to enrich his narrative with words, phrases, and ideas deeply rooted in language. Like many topics, Hunn's work on language draws on the present and past experi-

ences of the people. He places Native Americans in a contemporary setting, and his work is absent of any hint that Indians are "vanished" Americans. Hunn's chapters on ecology, plants, and animals are the most important. He discusses native uses of the land, the people's reverence for places, plants, and animals, and the nutritional value of resources. He examines the significance of seasonal rounds, as Indians of the Plateau hunted, fished, and gathered in diverse places throughout the year. Hunn details many methods of food-getting and preparation, including Selam's construction of a dip net. This is one of several examples of firsthand knowledge passed down to Hunn through the oral tradition.

The study encompasses many aspects of native society, including kinship, gender roles, political organization, inter- and intratribal relationships, and slavery. Far more important is Hunn's work on Plateau Indian religion, an element of native life closely tied to plants, animals, places, power, spirits, and ceremony, The author is respectful of spiritual beliefs and mindful not to compromise sacred knowledge shared with him by the people. Still, readers will learn a great deal about the "law," those elements of life that were put in motion at the time of creation and have been taught for generations through sacred oral texts. Ghosts, Indian doctors, death, spirit power, and prophecy are all part of the law, and Hunn deals with each in relation to past and present beliefs. His details about the sweat lodge demonstrate the author's personal knowledge of the holy act.

Hunn concludes his book with a chapter entitled "From the Treaties to Today," which surveys selected aspects of Plateau Indian life from 1855 to the present. Hunn carefully constructs this chapter to deal with topics often ignored by scholars, including the relationship of reservation Indians to those living on other reservations, Indian homesteads, and communities far and near. He portrays Indian life on the reservations, arguing that reservations have provided the vehicle through which cultural continuity has flowed. He briefly deals with allotment, tribal councils, and health, but he offers far more details about fishing rights. The book ends abruptly and would have been strengthened with a conclusion. However, the volume is nearly four hundred pages long, including an excellent bibliography and a detailed index. Although some scholars and tribal people will quibble with Hunn's depiction of Kamiakin, his discussion of apes, and his use of anthropological models, few will deny that the volume is a

major scholarly contribution that should be widely read and studied. Hunn's understanding of Plateau Indians is keen, perceptive, and analytical. He has authored an important book, one of the finest ever written about the native people living near the banks of Nch'i-wána.

Clifford E. Trafzer
University of California, Riverside

The Ojibwa of Western Canada, 1780 to 1870. By Laura Peers. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press and Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1994. 288 pages. $32.95 cloth; $15.95 paper.

Those who have studied the descendants of the groups of Ojibwa who migrated west of Lake Superior beginning in the late seventeenth century have generally dealt, in one way or another, with a common set of issues. One major issue involves the motivation for the continuing migration that led some of these Ojibwa to venture westward, ultimately arriving onto the Plains of Canada and the United States. For many people, the fur trade was the crucial factor. In this view, Ojibwa people were tied to the fur trade as suppliers, middlemen, and consumers, dependent on European material goods for their survival. They went west because of declining numbers of fur animals and their desire to fill a crucial need. Once on the Plains, they were transformed by environment to become a Plains people in clothing, housing, and society. Such a simplistic view is not that of Laura Peers in this major new study of the Ojibwa who began arriving in the region west of the Red River of the north in the late eighteenth century.

A historian who has gone on to study anthropology since writing the ambitious master's thesis on which this book is based, Peers approaches her topic with an eye for historical detail and an anthropological methodology. She uses written records, oral history, archaeological data, photography, and other evidence in a variety of imaginative ways to document the migration of the Ojibwa and their adjustment to the area west of the Red River in what would become the Canadian provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Early in her study, Peers makes clear the misleading nature of the idea of "culture area," which is often used to suggest that groups can be typified by their natural environment. Many of the