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## Reviews

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**A Stranger in Her Native Land: Alice Fletcher and the American Indians.** By Joan Mark. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988. xx + 428 pages. Illustrations, notes, bibliographies, index. \$35 Cloth. \$16.95 Paper.

In this carefully researched book, Joan Mark presents an engaging and balanced portrait of Alice Cunningham Fletcher (1838-1923). The book's main strength and appeal come from the fact that it is both an important biographical and historical work. Readers come to know and understand not only Alice Fletcher, but much about federal Indian policy, American anthropology, and some of the women prominent in philanthropic and intellectual circles during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This book will be of particular interest to American Indian historians, anthropologists, and those interested in women's studies.

Mark has rounded out the picture of Fletcher that she presented in her earlier work (*Four Anthropologists*, 1980). Documentation on Fletcher's personal life is fragmentary compared to the record of her professional career. Yet, utilizing Gertrude Stein's notion that people reveal themselves through their "repeatings," Mark traces through diaries and correspondence the central emotional themes in Fletcher's life and provides insight into her character and motivations. What emerges is a picture of a strong, competent and determined woman who nonetheless encountered struggles against male power and who often felt alone in the world. Mark is particularly sensitive to the influence of Fletcher's gender and to the transformations that occurred in Fletcher's life and in her thinking.

Joan Mark's understanding of Alice Fletcher is also shaped by

Harry Stack Sullivan's theory of the developing self, which led Mark to look at how Fletcher revealed herself through and was influenced by her interactions with other people. Mark shows the profound influence that close friends and associates such as Francis La Flesche, Frederic Ward Putnam, and E. Jane Gay had on Fletcher. Mark argues that through her anthropological work and her long and close personal associations with Indians (particularly Francis La Flesche), Fletcher developed a deep understanding of and respect for Indian culture. These also filled certain needs in Fletcher's life and eventually helped her to shed some of the cultural prejudices of her own society.

American Indian historians will be particularly interested in the informative background Mark provides on the political currents and ideological underpinnings which shaped 19th century Indian policy. Readers learn about pressures from white settlers to have Indians removed or confined to reservations so they could obtain western land. Indians had no say in policies that affected them, and Mark shows how this led some of them to seek influence through white reformers like Alice Fletcher. Mark discusses how strong sentiments supportive of Indian assimilation guided most of the Indian Reform Movement at the time, but she notes differences within this movement as well. Indian policy was deeply rooted in the ideologies of economic development and progress, westward expansion, and Protestant ethic individualism, and Mark examines how Indian reformers such as Alice Fletcher were influenced by these ideologies. She shows Indian reformers were also influenced by theories of social evolution, such as that put forth by Lewis Henry Morgan, and by their own assumptions that white European society was the high point of that evolution.

Joan Mark's explanation of the role that Alice Fletcher played in shaping the Dawes Severalty Act (1887) and in allotting land to the Omahas, Winnebagos, and Nez Percés is especially interesting. Mark demonstrates how Fletcher's growing reputation as an Indian expert and her involvement with the Lake Mohonk Conference of the Friends of the Indian enabled her to ensure that the final version of the Dawes bill did not provide for a tribal land patent or for tribal consent before land could be allotted. Fletcher was against patenting land to tribes, because she believed it was necessary to break the tribal bond and communal ownership of land before Indians could be integrated into white

society. She opposed the provision for tribal consent based upon the difficulties she had encountered in allotting land to the Omahas (under the Omaha Allotment Act of 1882) and upon the opinion that Indians should be assimilated as rapidly as possible. Mark analyzes the paternalism that lay behind reform efforts and Indian policies such as these. She clearly documents Fletcher's own maternalistic sentiments toward Indians and Fletcher's conviction that change had to be forced upon unwilling people for their own good.

Mark's account of the impacts of the Dawes Severalty Act enriches this part of the story. She points out that the allotment policy directly violated Indian treaties. She shows how this policy was resisted by some Indians and how it divided families and resulted in factionalism within tribes. Mark also discusses the long-term results of allotment. Even though it provided some short-run prosperity, Indians were the first to be squeezed by the economic depressions of the late 1800s, and farming never took hold on most reservations. Allotment led to complicated heirship problems and eventually much Indian land was leased, sold, and lost. During Alice Fletcher's lifetime, the devastating results of allotment were already becoming apparent. Mark discusses how Fletcher herself began to doubt the possibility of its success while working on the Nez Perce allotments and, years later, was forced to confront the fact that the program for Indian civilization that she had supported had been a disaster. Mark interprets Fletcher's subsequent avoidance of Indian politics and her concentration on scientific anthropological inquiry as a reaction to the realization that her efforts to help the Indians had been a mistake.

Anthropologists in general will be interested in this biography for the frank assessment it contains of the contributions made by Alice Fletcher and some of her contemporaries. Mark credits Fletcher on several accounts: for her role in pioneering field work as a research methodology; for her contributions to knowledge about the Omaha, Winnebago, Pawnee, Sioux, and Dakota; for her insights into American Indian music, ceremonies and religious life and for her interest in relating her own findings to contemporary problems, theoretical questions, and comparative work in anthropology. Mark looks at the people and ideas that influenced Fletcher's work, the biases that came from Fletcher's ideological outlook, and the judgments that were made of her work by some of her peers.

Mark's account of Fletcher's anthropological activities also contains insightful information about the persons, activities, professional associations, institutions, and concerns that shaped American anthropology from about 1880 to 1920. Through her work, Joan Mark has attempted to rescue from obscurity some of the early leaders in American anthropology and to combat the tendency for American academics to trace their intellectual origins to Europe. This book does much to further her efforts. One of the interesting aspects of Mark's account of the early years of American anthropology is the role that patronage, friendships, mentors, and an apprentice-like system played. Mark also gives readers an indication of some of the changes that occurred as anthropology became more organized, formalized, and professional. Readers see something of the rivalries that occurred as anthropology departments were established at major universities and as prominent anthropologists attempted to carve out both institutional and academic domains of influence. Women in general, and Fletcher in particular, felt the brunt of this transition, especially since they were excluded from most universities.

People interested in women's history certainly will want to read this biography. Mark notes that by 1889, Fletcher was the preeminent woman scientist in the country (page 207), and by 1898, she was widely recognized as one of the seven or eight preeminent anthropologists in America (page 259). She held offices in several prestigious associations which indicated she was held in high esteem by her peers. Fletcher's achievements are worthy of attention and quite remarkable, particularly since she always operated from the fringes of the academic world (page 348), a world of male domination against which she often struggled. The difficulties she encountered as a woman in the academic world are best illustrated in Mark's discussion of her fellowship with the Peabody Museum at Harvard.

In addition to the individual achievements and experiences of this one woman, Mark's book is interesting for what it reveals about the ways in which some women had influence, despite the restraints that were imposed on women as a whole. Wealthy women such as Mary C. Thaw, Mary Hemenway, and Phoebe Hearst funded anthropological research, expeditions, and departments, often furthering the work of other women. Women from privileged families had educational opportunities and the chance to participate in organizations, reform movements, and informal

associations that were important avenues of influence. Mark notes that Fletcher's entrance into federal politics was often through "the wives and daughters of official Washington" (page 72) and her political effectiveness was, in part, due to her associations with other prominent women. Fletcher herself became very influential in Washington, D.C. and in various intellectual circles. This enabled her to advise politicians, affect government policy, rebuke colleagues, and eventually play a key role in establishing the School of American Research in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Overall, this is an engaging, informative, and admirable work and a welcome addition to the University of Nebraska Press series on Women in the West. Joan Mark has done a fine job portraying and assessing Alice Fletcher.

*Joanna L. Endter*

**Blackfoot Dictionary of Stems, Roots, and Affixes.** By D. G. Frantz and N. J. Russell. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989. 470 pages. \$60.00 Cloth.

Technical knowledge and description of the native languages of this continent have increased enormously during the past fifty years. One of the most studied and best known of the linguistic families of North America is the Algonquian, to which Blackfoot belongs. Yet, despite the vast expertise on this family and its immense (relatively speaking!) literature, Blackfoot continues to be one of the least known of the family members. It is therefore a real pleasure to welcome the appearance of this dictionary, produced by a team who have both technical expertise in linguistics and dictionary making and excellent competence in the Blackfoot language.

The first dictionary of the language was produced an even century ago by a Protestant missionary, the Reverend John William Tims (*Grammar and Dictionary of the Blackfoot Language in the Dominion of Canada*; London, 1889). This dictionary was a missionary production typical of its time, and it is noteworthy mainly because it was heavily mined by subsequent scholars, but also because Tims was the first to recognize the importance of imperatives for establishing the form of verbal stems.