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Cry of the Eagle. By David Young, Grant Ingram, and Lise Swartz. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989. 145 pages. \$19.95 Cloth.

Russell Willier is a Woods Cree healer who believes himself chosen to preserve and revive Cree medical practices. He was in his thirties when this book was in preparation (1984–1989). Willier wants to establish on his reserve a healing center where collaboration with Euro-Canadian medical doctors will provide the best of both Cree and European medicine to natives and non-natives.

The book grew out of a project by the senior author, David Young, and fellow anthropologist Gertrude Nicks to document native craft techniques in northern Alberta. Asking for someone expert in hide tanning, they were directed to Russell Willier and his wife, Yvonne. Young returned with two photographers to record moose hide tanning by the Williers. During the weeks the project required, he learned that Russell Willier practiced native healing. Young is interested in psychology as well as crafts, so he welcomed the opportunity to become more familiar with Cree healing. Young was genuinely sympathetic to Willier's dream of building an integrated healing center, and discussions between the two led to the creation of the Edmonton Psoriasis Research Project, designed to demonstrate Willier's methods and their outcome.

Because skin diseases such as psoriasis seemed to respond well to Willier's curing methods, could be easily documented, and are not life-threatening, psoriasis was chosen to be the focus of the experimental project. Beginning in late 1984 and continuing until June 1985, the project served a total of thirteen patients at an Edmonton clinic. They were examined by Edmonton medical doctors, then met with Russell and Yvonne Willier, who explained the Cree treatment, which uses prayer, herbal tea and salve, and sweatlodge. Patients could pray according to their own religious practice as Russell prayed aloud in Cree, but each was required to give a tobacco and print (piece of cloth) offering to the Cree spiritual forces invoked, and each was expected to thank Willier with a gift at the end of the series of treatments. At the conclusion of the experiment, a medical doctor again examined the patients. The doctor agreed with Willier that seven evidenced significantly lessened psoriasis, while four seemed no better (one patient dropped out of the experiment and one failed to show up for the

final examination). The experiment was recorded on videotape, copies of which are available for purchase.

Cry of the Eagle contains much more than a bald account of an experiment. Young and his junior authors, both graduate students in anthropology, recorded Willier's worldview, his methods from the gathering of herbs to the building of sweatlodges and altars, his experiences as a shaman, and his ambition to master and in turn teach the Cree healing arts. Willier is the great-grandson of the Woods Cree leader Moostoos, whose medicine bundle was given to the seventeen-year-old Russell, a youth who had early exhibited an unusual interest in the plants and creatures of the natural world. Willier's fluency in English allowed the authors to quote him directly in regard to his beliefs and goals; thus he was an active participant in the writing. The sense that Willier is engaged more than simply observed is heightened by the division of the book into three sections, each written in the first person by one of the authors. In these sections, the authors describe honestly their fears and failings as well as the facts of the study.

Drama enters the book in Young's chapter on two patients treated by Willier outside the Psoriasis Project. One was a Cree woman declared by medical doctors to be on the brink of death from cancer; Willier's efforts, combined with acupuncture by a Chinese physician in Edmonton, seemed to arrest the disease for nearly two years. The other seriously ill patient was Young's wife, whose high fever did not respond to hospital treatment. Young and Willier sneaked some herbal tea to the critically ill woman, and her fever abated. Whether Willier's herbs and prayers saved her life, no scientist can say. Young is properly careful in trying to describe this case objectively, but that he is more than a detached ethnographer is obvious.

Collaboration between practitioners of the Cree and European medical traditions is Russell Willier's hope. With assistance from Young, he has founded the Traditional Native Healing Society and is attempting to construct a healing center on the Sucker Creek Reserve. Having concluded from the Edmonton Psoriasis Project that a series of visits to a city clinic is less efficacious than the residential treatment usually obtained by Indian patients from their native healers, and having successfully treated a non-native child whose parents came with her to his home, Willier wants patients to live for several days in mobile homes near his house. He would like to work at the center with other Indian medicine

men and women, as well as with the Chinese-Canadian doctor. Willier is ready to refer patients to European medical practice when he judges this to be best for them; in return he would like physicians to refer appropriate cases to him for native healing. Whether this hope is realistic is debatable: Yvonne Willier, Young tells us, is pessimistic, but the readiness of the volunteers at the Edmonton Psoriasis Project to receive Cree treatment suggests that the public is not an obstacle to the development of a collaborative relationship.

Reading *Cry of the Eagle* (the title refers to Willier's spirit sponsor) conveys quite well the sense of transition taking place among Indian people today. Willier's beliefs and methods are traditional for these western frontier Cree of the Alberta parklands; his use of a bison skull on his sweatlodge altar is not necessarily pan-Indian borrowing, for his people hunted bison. Willier is endeavoring to gain the shaking tent to solidify his spiritual power. His jobs as trapper, hunter, guide, and manager of Sucker Creek Reserve's herd of bison have been relatively traditional, yet he does not hesitate to drive to Edmonton or other cities, and is at ease with non-Indians.

Deeply committed to continuing the culture remembered from his noted great-grandfather, Moostoos, Willier thinks co-option of non-native institutions—health clinics, the Fish and Wildlife Service, logging, Heritage Act protection for land—is the means to remain native. On his own reserve, some of his band worry that he is too ready to work with outsiders, that his activities have drawn disapproval from spiritual forces and perhaps caused deaths in his extended family. Anthropologist Young makes no judgment.

There is an interesting parallel between Russell Willier and Nicholas Black Elk. Black Elk welcomed John Neihardt to record and publish his vision of the road for his people; Willier wanted to find someone to play such a role for him. Both Indian healers felt a mission to save their heritage and believed they had found instruments for the purpose in the academics who appeared at their homes. Russell Willier has not had as colorful and astoundingly varied a life as Black Elk's (Raymond DeMallie's *The Sixth Grandfather* marvelously presents that life), and *Cry of the Eagle* will never be the "Indian Bible" that Vine Deloria, Jr., terms *Black Elk Speaks*. It nevertheless could be argued that the 1990s are as critical a time for Indian peoples as the 1890s. A century ago the

peoples west and north of the Mississippi were just beginning to adjust to life bounded by reservation perimeters. Now, with a population thoroughly familiar with the cities and televised national culture, a number of sophisticated Indians have entered the arena of the dominant society. Russell Willier is not alone in asserting the worth of native tradition, insisting it should take a place among the great traditions honored and supported by the Western world. Black Elk could not, in his lifetime, overcome the marginalization of his people. Willier's generation is not going to be pushed back.

Cry of the Eagle reads like a work in progress. It does not tell us whether chemists have analyzed Willier's herbal medicines; it cannot tell us whether his Traditional Healing Center will be built; it cannot predict whether he and Young will succeed in getting a natural preserve in the Swan Hills. Raising these questions, publishing this account of a truly contemporary Cree healer, the book "tells it like it is." Indian readers will find it interesting and perhaps inspiring. Other readers—college students, the general public—will gain a better sense of what it is to be an intelligent, caring Indian person today.

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Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada. By J. R. Miller. Toronto/Buffalo/London: University of Toronto Press, 1989. 329 pages. \$35.00 Cloth.

James Miller, who teaches history at the University of Saskatchewan, has filled a long-felt void in Canadian studies by giving us an up-to-date overview of the place of the native peoples—Indians, Inuit, métis—in the unfolding of the nation's political, social, and economic development. As academics always have known, at least in general terms, it is not a pretty picture, in spite of all the rhetoric about Canadians never forcibly removing thousands of Indians to make way for white settlement, or turning the cavalry on the displaced persons when they resisted further intrusions. At least until 1701, Canadians were nurtured on the myth of the nasty Iroquois, who seemed determined to destroy