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**Author**

LaGrand, James B.

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## REVIEWS

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**American Indian Quotations.** Compiled and edited by Howard J. Langer. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1996. 260 pages. \$49.95 cloth.

Believing that memorable quotations serve as the "building blocks of popular history," Howard J. Langer has collected nearly eight hundred quotations by American Indian people to make their voices more accessible to both general readers and teachers. The result is a useful reference work that includes quotations spanning from the seventeenth to the late twentieth century and addressing a wide range of topics including diplomacy, removal, views of land and nature, warfare, family, religion, and political activism.

Some of the quotations included are well known, for example, Conassatego's offer to train English boys and make men of them, rather than sending his young people to English schools that made them "ignorant of every means of living in the woods" and "totally good for nothing" (p. 7). Some are more obscure and will be of interest to teachers and scholars. The collection displays many examples of lofty and beautiful oratory with which Indian people have often been associated in non-Indian popular culture. Other quotations display humor, anger, affection, and countless other emotions.

Some of the most moving sections, not surprisingly, concern the loss of land and depopulation resulting from disease and warfare. The reader hears Dragging Canoe in 1775 state,

"Whole nations have melted away like balls of snow before the sun" (p. 10). William Shorey Coodey in 1838 describes the scene as those Cherokees about to embark on the Trail of Tears say their farewells, "shaking the hand of some sick friend or relative who would be left behind" (p. 43). And the reader hears The Four Bears in 1837 describe the horrors of smallpox that had made his "face rotten that even the wolves will shrink with horror at seeing me" (p. 34).

Several quotations favorably contrast Indian ways with white ways. Flying Hawk, for instance, in supporting his people's use of tipis notes, "If the Great Spirit wanted men to stay in one place he would make the world stand still" (p. 90). Other quotations illustrate degrees of cultural mingling and acculturation. In urging Cherokees to sign removal treaties with the U.S. government, Elias Boudinot refers to the Bible and John Ridge to the English King Richard III.

The reader learns bits of information about the entire life span of American Indian people from birth to death. Nineteenth-century Potawatomi Chief Simon Pokagon tells of a pedagogical exercise meant to discourage children from ever touching liquor. He shows them beautiful red-colored "whiskey eggs" that in their hands break open and reveal frightening snakes. From contemporary times, Tlingit elder Emma Marks speaks of how difficult it is to pass down stories in an age of mass media. Concerning the end of life, James Kaywaykla describes the environment in which thousands of American Indian people lived during the late nineteenth century when he says starkly, "Until I was about ten years old I did not know that people died except by violence" (p. 117).

In this chronologically arranged book, Langer devotes a significant amount of space to quotations from twentieth-century American Indians. The last half of the book contains quotations from a wide variety of groups and occupations. Athletes such as Jim Thorpe, Jack Dempsey, and Billy Mills are here. So are writers, including N. Scott Momaday, Gerald Vizenor, James Welch, Michael Dorris, Louise Erdrich, and Leslie Silko. The book also includes quotations from several politicians and political activists such as Clyde Warrior, Vernon Bellecourt, Dennis Banks, Melvin Thom, Russell Means, Vine Deloria, Jr., Peter McDonald, Ben Nighthorse Campbell, and Larry Echohawk.

The organization of the book is excellent. Three different indexes—organized by author, subject/keyword, and tribe—

are helpful and thorough. They will enable readers even with the barest of background knowledge to find what they are looking for. For example, a neophyte struggling to remember perhaps the most famous American Indian quotation of all time would have a couple of options. With the name "Chief Joseph," he could use the author index to find the Nez Perce leader's statement of surrender. Alternatively, if he remembered even one word from the speech—that it concerned not fighting and mentioned the sun, for example—he could look under "fight" or "sun" in the subject/keyword index, and find the quotation in this way.

In general, Langer has done a good job in choosing quotations. Some time periods, tribes, and groups are slighted, but this is primarily due to gaps in the record and lack of materials. A few of the quotations chosen, however, are simply too brief to be of any use. Perhaps Langer believed that the forcefulness of these two- and three-word quotations would make up for their brevity. However, hearing John LaVelle simply state "religious imperialism" will probably confuse rather than enlighten most readers. Langer's brief biographical and explanatory notes which introduce each quotation are generally accurate and helpful, except for his constant use of the term "the white man" to refer to everyone from eighteenth-century settlers to members of the Reagan administration.

Teachers may choose to use this book in several different ways. Some of the quotations here would certainly add a human face to American Indian history lectures. Also, sections of the book could be assigned to students. Accompanied by more general readings, they would present a good introduction to several topics and themes in American Indian history. In the end, then, this book succeeds in its straightforward goal of presenting readers with a wide range of American Indian quotations.

Beyond this, it also addresses several issues by inference, including that of translation and transmission. Some of the quotations in this book originated in a Native American language and others in English. Some were written down by eyewitnesses or immediately became part of oral tradition, while others were recollected years later. Langer, aiming primarily at the general reader, understandably does not delve into these issues. Yet they will concern teachers and scholars of American Indian history, who may have questions about some of the quotations. A few of the inclusions have the ring of Hollywood

or the 1960s white counterculture to them, for example, Red Dog's undated statement: "We are all poor because we are all honest" (p. 103). The citation of *Black Elk Speaks* within a section of quotations by Spotted Tail will especially remind readers of how complicated and controversial the process of transmission and translation can be.

It is also interesting to note the various uses to which these quotations have been put outside of Indian society. Langer assembles his quotations from a wide variety of sources, many of them non-Indian organizations, books, and magazines. He cites everything from "the Rotarian" to "the War Resisters League" to "Penthouse" over the course of the book. Langer himself is most concerned with the basic rhetoric of American Indian speakers and writers. Readers, though, may also use his list of sources as a jumping-off point to think about how non-Indians have perceived Indian people throughout history. The collection ends with a quotation found posted on refrigerators and bulletin boards in homes across the United States—Indian and non-Indian alike. The "traditional" anonymous proverb instructs, "You cannot judge another person until you have walked a mile in his moccasins." It is this type of quotation that may leave readers of Langer's fine collection thinking about the cultural history of American Indian oratory, as well as about its beauty and power.

*James B. LaGrand*  
Messiah College

**American Indian Sports Heritage.** By Joseph Oxendine. Lincoln, Nebraska: Bison Books (University of Nebraska Press), 1995. 334 pages. \$39.00 cloth; \$16.95 paper.

There's a trace of sadness in the tone of Joseph Oxendine's assessment of the history of participation—or lack thereof—of the American Indian in the sports and culture of mainstream America. "In a situation devoid of the traditional Indian ritual, many Indians seemed to lack interest in performing beyond the obvious requirements of a particular task" (p. 9). This statement underlies his argument that Native Americans are often alienated and therefore unmotivated to perform at their best in popular non-Indian sports in the U.S.—basketball, baseball, and so forth. "For instance, while playing major league baseball with the New York Giants, Jim Thorpe was accused of