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In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors: The Dakota Commemorative Marches of the 21st Century. Edited by Waziyatawin Angela Wilson.

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In the end, it is difficult to dispute Mason's conclusion that, in most cases, oral tradition is a weaker line of historical evidence than scientific data. But if the standard of measurement is the epistemology of science, this finding was predetermined. A more useful question (especially given the legal status of oral tradition as evidence under NAGPRA) would be "In what ways can oral tradition be useful to archaeology?"

Contemporary scholars have found much benefit in the use of oral tradition as a stimulus to new hypotheses that can then be investigated by conventional scientific methods. To be fair, Mason does point out that in many of his case studies, oral traditions encouraged scientific research in directions that proved valuable even if the research largely disproved the stories that inspired them. He sees this as the "quintessential role" for oral traditions: "to spark the imagination about matters not accessible by other means and to give impetus to thoughts of testing them" (248). This is well said and important, but it is not the book's primary message, which is more focused on the differences between oral tradition and scientific data.

There is a benefit to discouraging naïve interpretation of oral traditions as unwritten historical texts, and few readers could come away from *Inconstant Companions* with such an inclination still intact. But in North American archaeology—especially in the American Southwest, where collaboration with descendant communities is fast becoming the norm in academic research—many scholars are pursuing innovative combinations of archaeology and oral tradition that move beyond the "science versus myth" dichotomy emphasized in *Inconstant Companions*. Mason deserves credit for advancing the debate over the proper use of oral tradition in archaeology with this and previous publications, but it is exciting to think that the discipline may be evolving faster than some of its critiques.

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In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors: The Dakota Commemorative Marches of the 21st Century. Edited by Waziyatawin Angela Wilson. St. Paul, MN: Living Justice Press, 2006. 344 pages. \$29.95 paper.

Hau, mitakuyepi—hello my relatives. The history of European arrival in the western hemisphere is replete with atrocities committed in pursuit of one central theme: take the land by whatever means necessary. The aftermath of the so-called Dakota Uprising of 1862 remains a black cloud that hangs over the relatives alive today who listened to the stories of this genocidal act committed against their people. But as the book's title indicates, third- and fourth-generation Dakota survivors have taken on the task of reliving and relieving the trauma in order to learn lessons that can be used to teach Dakotas and all humanity several important lessons. That is this book's stated purpose. In this way, living American Indians who challenge the standard histories taught in school systems by integrating untold Indian histories into mainstream literature will retake American Indian history.

The book's four sections contain essays written by participants (not all Dakota) with different areas of expertise who range from spiritual leaders, counselors, teachers, tribal administrators, and psychologists to university professors. Strategically placed maps and photographs enlighten readers about the events and facts revealed in the narrative. The glossary of Dakota terms is an especially useful tool for non-Dakota-language speakers. One item in particular, the official 1862–63 US Army roster of the Dakota prisoners incarcerated at the Fort Snelling concentration camp, stands as a stark reminder to surviving family members and readers because family names put a human touch on the story. When we see the name, we recognize the human who carried it, and thus, by recognition, honor them as human beings.

At a 2001 conference at Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall, Minnesota, the idea of a commemorative walk was raised and discussed. It was decided that the march would honor the mostly forgotten memories of women and children who were also punished by government officials. After careful planning, the inaugural commemorative march that honored Dakota children, women, and men commenced on 7 November 2002. Participants retraced the footsteps of their ancestors, who on 7 November 1862 were forcibly removed from their Lower Sioux Reservation and herded on foot approximately 150 miles to a concentration camp located at Fort Snelling, Minnesota. The marchers' course was part of the same route used on 8 November 1862 when nearly four hundred Dakota men, shackled by twos at the ankles, were loaded onto wagons and taken from the Lower Sioux Reservation to Mankato, Minnesota to await punishment. Authorized by an executive order signed by Abraham Lincoln, 38 of the 307 warriors sentenced to death were hanged on 26 December 1862. Thus began the second phase of the shameful chapter of forced removal, ethnic cleansing, and loss of homelands.

The march was suffused with awakening and awareness. It began with an *inipi* (sweat lodge) ceremony, and each morning the march started with prayers and filling the peace pipe, which reminded the people of their purpose in marching, and ended that evening with prayers of thanksgiving and the smoking of the pipe. During the march, led by an eagle staff made and dedicated in memory of the thirty-eight hanged Dakota men, a wooden stake inscribed with the names of two household heads from the US Army roster and tied with a strip of red cloth and tobacco ties was driven into the ground at every mile. At prearranged stops for the night, the march coordinators provided food, beverages, and a place to sleep with donations from interested parties. Where possible, nightly forums were held with local community members invited to attend. Thoughts, ideas, and feelings were shared with all in attendance, and in this way the education process had its beginnings. The march ended at Fort Snelling on 13 November where a *wopida*, or thanksgiving feast, prayers, and open forum ended the physical re-creation of the seventeen hundred displaced Dakotas on the first part of their expulsion from their Minnesota homeland. Both the 2002 and 2004 commemorations were completed on a timely basis with considerably less interference than the 1862 marchers encountered.

What makes *In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors* an important contribution to North American historical literature is that the essays are written by noted professionals in their respective fields, many of whom are direct descendants of people who were handled so shamefully as a result of that war. They bring a fresh and Native perspective to focus on the events, and readers are exposed to the thoughts and feelings of the victims of this atrocity viewed through modern and diverse research and evaluation techniques. For instance, the oral histories still known and passed on to the next generation are carefully compared and analyzed against existing written records, and thus make the distinction between *collective* memory versus *collected* memory. Whereas collective memory is generally accepted as monolithic and top down, collected memory allows for individual memories that reflect the diversity of a group's memory (222). Diaspora and ethnic cleansing are powerful, meaningful words that describe the 1862 Dakota war aftermath which resulted when the US government did not fulfill its treaty obligations. Dakota people were forced out of the state of Minnesota and transported on a long perilous boat ride down the Mississippi River to the junction with the Missouri River, then north to barren grounds located in Dakota Territory. To guard against their return, bounties were placed on the scalps of any Dakota found in Minnesota. To rub salt in the wound, treaty money that was due to the Dakotas was used to pay the white settlers for Indian depredations, all treaties were abrogated, and Dakota were dispossessed of their lands, which were either sold to more immigrants or, in an ironic twist, given to veterans who happened to survive the civil war.

Admittedly, there are many documented stories of Indian tribes that suffered atrocities similar to the Dakota 1862 diaspora. The Tslagi, Nez Perce, Diné, and Cheyenne indigenous nations are arguably the best-known examples of ethnic cleansing and forced removals found in US history. But there are other less well-known examples. Author Amy Lonetree, in her essay "Transforming Lives by Reclaiming Memory: The Dakota Commemorative March of 2004," relates how her Ho-Chunk relatives were the object of multiple removals from the present-day states of Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota, and finally were able to call a small piece of land in northeastern Nebraska home. So the question is, what can and should we learn from these horrific events? What is the eternal lesson? If we examine it from the nationalistic/economic standpoint it is clearly revealed that Native peoples were excluded from the promises contained in the national constitution. American Indians were not made citizens of their own lands until 1924 and the new people who came to live on their lands did not give the Indian spiritual and cultural practices veracity; religious freedom did not exist for the Indian. From this book's narratives readers will find out how this commemoration's marchers began the process of learning to encounter these atrocities on an individual basis, share their thoughts with others, and go about their lives aided by these lessons and apply them to their interactions with other human beings.

This book's importance lies in its ability to give another side to the story of Indian-white relations found in standard American history textbooks. Although it is quite explicit in its description of horrific details of the US war against the Dakota in 1862, it presents the Indian point of view with

which dialogue can be established. As author Denise Breton points out in her commentary “Decolonizing Restorative Justice,” if we address these harmful events with an open mind and good heart, we can learn how to coexist with each other individually and collectively. For example, how does a Dakota person whose family member was one of the thirty-eight men hanged respond to the stone likeness of Abraham Lincoln carved into a mountain face located in the sacred Black Hills of South Dakota? This is an issue that still needs resolution. It is also evident that Dakota and non-Dakota suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, a malady extremely difficult to overcome. Restorative justice appears to have great healing potential, especially among the participants’ descendants, but it also has vast potential to help solve other types of injustices extant wherever human beings live.

In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors, along with any future works that address the Dakota perspective of this tragic and shameful episode of American history, should become a prominent part of every school curricula. It is especially important that young people learn this history, as it will serve as a guide for their future actions in life.

In the preface to a reprint edition of *Black Elk Speaks* (1988), visionary Lakota scholar Vine Deloria Jr. postulated that if Indian people ever decided to write a book that detailed their spiritual core, similar to the Bible, *Black Elk Speaks* would certainly serve as a meaningful start. *In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors: The Dakota Commemorative Marches of the 21st Century* is truly another book that would enhance that collection of wisdom that originates in the western hemisphere. Its story is one of hope and endurance for Dakota and non-Dakota people. It is my fervent prayer that the commemoratives that detail the 2006, 2008, 2010, and 2012 marches (2012 will mark the 150th anniversary) will be written in Dakota in honor of our relatives past and future. *Hau, mitakuye oyasin, hechitu yedo. Tahunska Tanka, Akichita Vietnam, he miye do.*

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Louisiana Creoles: Cultural Recovery and Mixed-Race Native American Identity. By Andrew J. Jolivet. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007. 129 pages. \$60.00 cloth; \$24.95 paper.

When I stayed at the Alabama-Coushatta Indian Reservation in east Texas while I worked on my dissertation research, some tribal members expertly (sometimes competitively) prepared foods such as gumbo and crawfish étouffée, which I was fortunate enough to enjoy. I was also impressed by the zydeco band from the Coushatta community in Louisiana that played at the Alabama-Coushatta Indian Reservation’s crawfish boil. After I read *Louisiana Creoles* I realized that my definition of Creole was a naïve understanding that this rich cultural exchange was the unidirectional influence of Creole culture on a Native American group. Jolivet argues for the recognition of Native American influence in the lives, history, and culture of Louisiana’s