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Indian peoples cherished by New Age literature, and dives deep into the controversy that the New Age movement has generated in many Indian communities.

Although I find *Spirit Wars* highly educating and very well done, I would have appreciated it even more had more space been given to a few more themes. For example, I find the single page that Niezen dedicates to the religious rights of Indian inmates seriously lacking. Since the entire book addresses the impact of colonization on Indian religion and analyzes the role of institutions such as boarding schools, hospitals, and sanatoriums, I would have expected a more thorough investigation of a contemporary institution such as the penitentiary. The material certainly is not lacking since much controversy surrounds the rules and regulations restricting the access that Native inmates have to their own spiritual traditions. Several of my friends who find themselves on the wrong side of the law would have plenty of stories to tell on this topic. Another issue that Niezen could have touched on more is the ambiguous role that academics play when it comes to Indian religious rights. Whereas Niezen criticizes early ethnologists and some contemporary archaeologists for their insensitivity to Indian religious feelings, he does not waste many words on the behavior of contemporary historians and anthropologists. It would be nice to think that Niezen overlooked this aspect because there is nothing to report, but I am afraid that is not the case.

Despite these minor critiques, I consider *Spirit Wars* an excellent text, and I feel that its merits far exceed its defects. I look forward to seeing more scholarship of this quality published in the future.

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Sustaining the Forest, the People, and the Spirit. By Thomas Davis. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000. 244 pages. \$17.95 paper.

“How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land?” Chief Seattle reportedly asked in the now famous speech delivered in the 1850s. This statement typifies the legend that private ownership was inimical to an Indian culture that revered nature and her bounty. Of course, it is now relatively well known that the oft-quoted speech contained not the words of Chief Seattle, but those of Ted Perry, who paraphrased William Arrowsmith’s translation of the speech. Though it was Perry and not Chief Seattle who wrote that “every part of the Earth is sacred to my people,” the underlying philosophy has been taken as historical evidence that an ethic of sustainability prevented Indians from despoiling and fouling their environment.

Thomas Davis continues this line of reasoning, arguing that Menominee culture conditions the way people in this society interact with nature. His description of Menominee institutions before European contact and these institutions’ evolution during trading, first with the French and then the English, is well done and informative. He identifies the resource

and technological constraints and explains how the Menominee reacted and interacted with them. As with other American Indian examples, the Menominee appear to have dealt as well as they could with natural limits; they adapted when faced with new constraints and opportunities inherent to trade with Europeans.

Like Perry paraphrasing Chief Seattle, Davis tries to weave the historical and modern Menominee culture into the rhetoric of sustainable development that permeates so much literature on natural resource policy. The book integrates quotes from Menominee resource management documents with quotes from sustainable development luminaries such as Herman Daly and Robert Constanza. Throughout the book, Davis asserts and reasserts that the Menominee have a different culture from the rest of American society, a fact that cannot be denied.

The book is filled with typical clichés about sustainable development and assertions that the Menominee have a sustainable economy and culture. But the fact that the Menominee have a different culture is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for sustainable development, whatever that might mean. Like other literature in this vein, *Sustaining the Forest, the People, and the Spirit* does not provide a working definition of *sustainable development* or a refutable hypothesis regarding what will cause sustainability. In Davis's words, "the tribe's long-term ethic calls for forest protection before economic needs" (p. 181). If long-term protection means not harvesting the bounty of the land, how are the Menominee to survive? If it means making tradeoffs between long-term protection and economic returns, what are the parameters of those tradeoffs? Davis provides no clue as to what would constitute sustainability or how, other than through an ethic, it would be attained.

Davis does not provide any evidence that the Menominee forests are sustainable. On the one hand, Davis concludes that "the Menominee have put themselves in an enviable position. Although reservation poverty still exists, it is lessening, particularly because of gaming, and the future looks bright" (p. 203). On the other hand, he notes "making this dilemma [of whether or not to harvest timber] worse is the current tightening of federal and state budgets. Since many reservation people survive on welfare programs, what is going to happen when the welfare dollars are reduced?" (p. 181) If "Menominee Forest, in its splendor, is healthier and more productive than at any point in history," because the tribe has gaming and welfare to help lift people from poverty, is this sustainable? (p. 203) Surely, no one would answer in the affirmative.

In addition to no workable definition of sustainability or hypothesis about what would bring it about, Davis fails to provide any details on the institutions that govern collective or individual action. Juxtaposing his ideas against the individualistic ideas of Milton and Rose Friedman in *Free to Choose*, Davis claims that the Menominee believe "in primacy of community over individual free will while still allowing complete freedom of expression" (p. 208). Whether a family or the Menominee tribe, there is no doubt that beliefs can limit individualistic behavior, but in complex issues of collective management of forest

or gaming resources, there must be more formal rules too. What are these and how do they interface with the sustainable ethic that Davis asserts exists in Menominee culture?

By adopting a narrow definition of private property, Davis argues that it does not exist in Menominee society and therefore ignores the importance of institutions guiding individual behavior for the good of the collective. As law professor James Huffman notes in his "An Explanatory Essay on Native Americans and Environmentalism," "it is not entirely true that Native Americans knew nothing of ownership. The language of the common law of property, like all of the English language, was unfamiliar to them. But the concepts of the tenancy in common was not foreign to bands and tribes who claimed and defended entitlements to hunting and fishing grounds. Nor was the concept of fee simple title alien to Native American individuals who possessed implements of war and peace, and even lands from which others could be excluded" (*University of Colorado Law Review* 63[4]: 907).

The time has long passed for scholars interested in explaining the failure and success of American Indian economies to stop building straw men in the image of Chief Seattle and to start considering the formal and informal institutions that weave individuals into collectives that can sustain themselves. It will no longer do to claim that Indian cultures are different, indeed superior, with respect to their interface with nature. The Forest Management Plan can assert that "The Menominee culture exists in harmony with Mother Nature, understanding the circle of life," but such a culture never has been and never will be sufficient to ensure efficient or sustainable resource use (quoted on p. 180). Markets and trade depend on a culture of respect for private ownership; otherwise conflicts would be resolved through police and courts, consuming vastly greater amounts of the surpluses generated from trade. Whatever the society, the rules of the game do matter; whether these rules matter more or less ought to be the debate. *Sustaining Forests, the People, and the Spirit* contributes little to the more-or-less debate because it leaves formal and informal rules out altogether, and provides little insight into whether the Menominee experiment is sustainable, and what other American Indians might learn from this experiment.

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Talking on the Page: Editing Aboriginal Oral Texts. Edited by Laura J. Murray and Keren Rice. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999. 122 pages. \$40.00 cloth; \$14.95 paper.

Those of us who actively edit Native oral texts face a multitude of dilemmas and concerns in our work. *Talking on the Page*—a collection featuring a series of papers presented at the Conference on Editorial Problems—does a superb job, for the most part, of examining these dilemmas and concerns from a melange of perspectives.