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Oklahoma Seminoles, Medicine, Magic, and Religion. By James H. Howard in collaboration with Willie Lena.

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folklorish admiration of their artistic creations" (p. 11), which suggests a more complete view of the culture than one based on art and tradition. He also suggests that the social inequalities of the earlier hierarchical systems have given way to "an egalitarian form of social existence," but he does not develop or illustrate this idea. (Does he mean private ownership and capitalism within the Canadian and United States system?) It could be argued that the book as a whole, in its stress on continuity and its celebratory use of beautiful visual images, fails to give a sufficiently diverse picture of these cultures to prevent the general reader from developing a rather totalizing and reductive view of what cultures in general, let alone these cultures, really are. Probably I am demanding too much from this particular book, though, since these are not problems peculiar to Bruggman and Gerber; they pervade the larger discussion of cultural difference and self-determination within which this attractive and informative book inevitably has to be set.

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**Oklahoma Seminoles, Medicine, Magic, and Religion.** By James H. Howard in collaboration with Willie Lena. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990. 279 pages. \$12.95 Paper.

This book on the Seminoles of Oklahoma was first published in hardcover in 1984, and it is now available in paperback. Full of information about the culture and lifeways of this tribal people, who were removed from Florida during the 1830s, this volume is a useful reference about a nativistic society surviving into the twentieth century. More precisely, the focus here is on the Seminoles of the Muscogean background, once an offshoot of the Muscogee Creeks (not to be confused with the Seminoles of Florida, who are mostly Mikasuki). Usually, books about Indian groups tell us about their heritage and their history involving military relations with the United States, but this study provides significant insight into Seminole life. With traditional Indian cultures dwindling with each generation, this ethnography is a pertinent addition to collections about American Indians.

In recent years, the Seminoles have been the focus of major

studies: the late J. Leitch Wright, Jr.'s *Creeks and Seminoles: The Destruction and Regeneration of the Muscogulge People*; Brent R. Weisman's *Like Beads on a String: A Cultural History of the Seminole Indians in North Peninsular Florida*; and Harry A. Kersey, Jr.'s *The Florida Seminoles and the New Deal, 1933-1942*. Unlike these books, Howard's study is about the Seminoles in Oklahoma and their struggle to contend with modern life while retaining traditionalism. The late professor of anthropology James Howard and Willie Lena, a Seminole medicine man well known in the Wewoka area in Oklahoma, shared a bond in their effort to reveal the Seminole world to their readers.

Illustrated with eighty-one plates and twenty-seven figures, this study describes native ceremonies, sorcery, social norms and lifeways, Seminole interpretations of herbal remedies, the Green Corn ceremony, dances, sports and games, mortuary practices, and the Seminole interpretation of the world. Howard accumulated a massive amount of information from Willie Lena. In fairness, almost all of his notes derive from his interviews with Willie Lena. To compensate for this narrow dependency, the author reinforced Lena's information with the earliest possible observations about the Muscogee Creeks, whose original homesite was in present-day Alabama. Howard cited the writings of late eighteenth-century travelers among the Seminoles and Muscogee Creeks such as James Adair and William Bartram, and the work of early ethnologist Clay MacCauley (1887).

General readers will appreciate this book, although experts on the Seminoles and the Seminoles themselves will find minor discrepancies in the book's descriptions of cures and cultural meanings, because Seminole community life has evolved a bit differently among the various bands throughout Oklahoma. Nonetheless, the book is a successful revelation of Seminole culture in a modern age.

The author has completed other ethnographic studies, including *North American Indian Cultures* (1978); *The Dakota or Sioux Indians: A Study in Human Ecology* (1980); and *Shawnee! The Ceremonialism of a Native American Tribe and Its Cultural Background* (1981). This last publication is a genuine tribute to the Muscogean Seminoles of Oklahoma and to the late Dr. James H. Howard.

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