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meld" (p. 170). Even Spock could not have described Erdrich and Dorris better.

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**Cultivating a Landscape of Peace: Iroquois-European Encounters in Seventeenth-Century America.** By Matthew Dennis. Ithaca, New York, and London: Cornell University Press, 1993. 280 pages. \$37.95 cloth.

Matthew Dennis's *Cultivating the Landscape of Peace: Iroquois-European Encounters in Seventeenth-Century America* is a thought-provoking study of cultural interaction in seventeenth-century North America. The book is effectively divided into two parts. In the first, Dennis presents essential background information for his analysis while discussing the emergence of Iroquois culture from its Owaskan predecessor. According to Dennis, the transition from a hostile, village-centered culture, characterized by internecine warfare, to one of intervillage alliance and later multinational confederacy involved the creation of a "landscape of peace." It is Dennis's contention that the Iroquois League of Peace arose in response to intervillage fighting that had made the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries hostile, fearful, and, hence, intolerable, times. He writes, "[I]nternecine fighting . . . did not annihilate communities or create empires but instead provided the incentive to invent peaceful solutions" (p. 68).

Dennis uses the term *create* (and its derivatives) often and purposefully. He asserts that Iroquois were not passive but instead "promoted and pursued an active program of ecological, social, and political change" (pp. 86–87). It is Dennis's assumption that the reference point for the program for change within Iroquois culture was, and is, the epic of the founding of the League, the Deganawidah Epic. Throughout the book, he analyzes the epic, building on the premise that not only do actions and events shape cultural interpretations, but they actually take on reality based on those interpretations. In the seventeenth century, therefore, "the text [Deganawidah Epic] and Iroquois behavior were both factors; each helped form and reflected the other" (p. 114).

According to Dennis, the landscape of peace was not merely functional or utilitarian, but cultural. He explains that an important component of it, for example, was the concept of balance. An interactive balance between beings—human and nonhuman—must be maintained in order to cultivate the landscape of peace. By the seventeenth century, human beings with other cultural perspectives had entered the Iroquois universe. This multicultural environment is the focus of Part II of the book.

Before moving onto this, however, Dennis briefly explains his methodology—what he calls a cubist approach to ethnohistory. This involves presenting multiple perspectives (Iroquois, Dutch, French, etc.) As he phrases it, "Borrowing techniques of analysis and interpretation from anthropology and literary criticism, one may hope to discover and translate the discourses—of words and deeds—within and between these societies and to write a historical account that presents multiple visions yet begins to explain the coherence, not simply the tumult, of early America" (p. 9). Although he does not present a prescription for how one goes about this, Part II of the book demonstrates his use of such an approach. He concentrates on seventeenth-century Iroquois-European relations, particularly those of the Iroquois with the Dutch and the French. In the process, he effectively reevaluates and explores both Iroquois-Dutch and Iroquois-French relations.

Although Dennis borders on overusing the landscape of peace motif in Part I, he is not romanticizing. In his analysis of historical data in the second part of the book, he does an admirable job of providing convincing culturally specific interpretations of data.

Dennis's hypothesis that the Iroquois League of Peace was created as an alternative to warfare and hostility is not without relevance to current issues in contemporary Iroquois culture, such as the role of warrior societies. Given this, I found it somewhat disappointing that he did not deal, at least in a footnote, with how his interpretation might relate to the current Warrior movement in Iroquoia. It certainly applies to current debates about the historical development and antecedents of the Great Law of Peace and the relations of war and peace to one another in Iroquois culture. The work would only have been richer had it been placed in contemporary terms. The seventeenth century, though, is the focus of the book; and it is in his treatment of seventeenth-century data that Dennis provides his most valuable insights.

In analyzing Iroquois-Dutch relations, Dennis shows that they consisted of more than the trade, commerce, and economic ties

sought by the Dutch. The Iroquois attempted to structure these relations in terms of kinship and alliance and ended up playing a considerable role in regulating and controlling the nature of their relations with the Dutch. For the Iroquois, attempting to extend their landscape of peace, "Trade was not the motivation for alliance so much as a by-product; exchange functioned symbolically as well as materially to cement alliances between friends and kinspeople" (p. 132). In the seventeenth century, however, the Dutch resisted Iroquois attempts to incorporate them within the framework of Iroquois kinship and political relations. According to Dennis, they did this by keeping their distance from the Iroquois. They did not actively attempt to settle among the Iroquois, for example, and did not adopt as wholeheartedly as other Europeans the nominal use of Iroquois rhetoric and cultural symbolism. Although this was frustrating to the Iroquois, who often perceived the Dutch as "having no sense," it is Dennis's observation that relations between the Dutch and the Iroquois did not meet with the violent confrontations that erupted out of the mutually exclusive expectations of the Iroquois and the French.

Unlike the Dutch, the French often embraced Iroquois rhetoric and cultural symbols for their own purposes, and French missionaries sought to reside among the Iroquois, to make Roman Catholic converts of them. According to Dennis, Iroquois and French met head on as each tried to assimilate the other. The employment of Iroquois gift-giving, adoption practices, and kinship terminology by Ursuline nuns, for example, "probably suggested [to the Iroquois] an openness to Iroquois culture and practice, perhaps even a readiness to accept a place under the spreading branches of the Tree of Peace" (p. 185). To the Ursulines, on the other hand, they were means to the end of conversion: "frenchification." The Iroquois sought the inclusion of the French—particularly missionaries, who seemed to them to be more than willing participants—in their culture. Their invitations to French missionaries to reside among them, for example, involved expectations that they would become Iroquois much as adopted native people did. The French, however, "never intended to become Iroquois kinsmen. And few among the Five Nations were inclined to submit to the Jesuits' assimilation plans" (p. 213). Conflict ensued.

Although there is nothing necessarily definitive about *Cultivating the Landscape of Peace* (some aspects of Iroquois relations with French Jesuits, for example, have been studied in more detail

elsewhere), the perspectives offered are too insightful not to merit the attention of scholars and other students of Iroquois history and culture. In his epilogue, for example, Dennis suggests that a modification in Iroquois expectations for multicultural relations from incorporation to alliance—a shift to fictive, or symbolic, over literal kinship, and social separation rather than amalgamation” (p. 268)—took place during crises facing the Six Nations at the end of the seventeenth century. This hypothesis is tantalizing and deserves further study. It may prove to be a more convincing explanation for changes that took place within Iroquoia during this period than current hypotheses suggesting that the changes were caused by shifts in leadership. Also important is Dennis’s reevaluation of French interpretations of what they perceived to be Iroquois “treachery” as part of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Dennis analyzes diplomatic rhetoric in terms of the cultural expectations associated by the Iroquois with the extension of their league, their landscape of peace. His analysis allows this rhetoric to take on dimensions not usually attributed to it in historical works. Rhetoric is often seen as symbolic, a metaphorical way of speaking of relationships. Within Dennis’s interpretation, the symbols and metaphors are seen to have a “real” (i.e., literal) dimension. For example, in speaking of Iroquois-French relations, he asserts, “The Iroquois used the words and rituals of Condolence because they saw them as appropriate, that is appropriate among parties who would occupy the same extended lodge. The Five Nations pushed for a real amalgamation by the formation of kinship ties based on French and Huron residence among them and a mixing of blood. It is in this context that we must understand the Five Nations’ earnest requests for a French colony and mission among them” (pp. 234–35).

I found Dennis’s evaluations of seventeenth-century data along these lines to be noteworthy. There are many instances in *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace* where his analysis of seventeenth-century data proves illuminating. The book makes worthy contributions to scholarly dialogue about the history of multicultural relations in North America.

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