himself with the Native peoples, I would have liked the author to reveal more of himself. If you read this book in its entirety, you will understand, and have compassion for, the Native peoples who underwent and continue to experience the trauma of racism and imperialism. I highly recommend this book as a way to look at present-day trauma that is rooted in history and past abuses of Native peoples.

*Mary Hampton*
University of Regina

**Tribal Television: Viewing Native People in Sitcoms.** By Dustin Tahmahkera. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014. 262 pages. $27.95 paper; $22.99 electronic.

John F. Kennedy was neither sinner nor saint in regard to Native Americans. He listened to Native concerns, but he wanted Native votes. He seemed to care about Native people, but he also supported the Kinzua Dam construction, which violated a treaty and forced six hundred Senecas to relocate. His inauguration parade showcased Native/settler collaboration, but his first New Frontier speech praised pioneer roles in settler colonialism. Indeed, his imagery seemed fueled by Hollywood, and in turn, our mass media soaked up his age like a sponge. In his intriguing new book *Tribal Television*, Dustin Tahmahkera moves chronologically through six decades to examine the complex relationship between TV sitcoms and social, political, and cultural currents, and how they impacted Native representations. Tahmahkera is sensitive to the many nuances, making it a fascinating study.

Initially, Native depictions took their cue from slapstick movies featuring "violent and nonsensical Indians" (44). Typically, a Lucy Ricardo or Fred Flintstone might mistake an Indian actor for a reincarnated nineteenth-century warpath warrior. In the wake of Kennedy's New Frontier, however, these TV Native/settler interactions were ambiguously reshaped. Natives might be likeable, but they were still coded "Indian" and ethnocentrism still governed narrative. In a riveting section, Tahmahkera deconstructs three different *Andy Griffith Show* episodes on the founding of Mayberry. In the 1961 "Beauty Contest," Mayberry is a "promised land" claimed from a "savage wilderness" without any specific reference to Natives (53). In the 1964 "Pageant," the founding now includes fleeting Native resistance that realigns into support of settler colonialism. The 1966 "Battle of Mayberry" features a *Rashomon*-like conflict regarding which Mayberry ancestor was the real hero in a battle against Native Americans. Tahmahkera tips his hat to an unexpected line of dialogue that breaks cultural ice: Opie wonders what the Native point of view might be. We are then treated to one, but the breakthrough is aborted when the Native voice proves just as subjective as the others. According to the author, the episode never questions the invasion of indigenous homelands, and instead papers over guilt by offering "New Frontier fictions of peace and nonviolence" as ideal audience aspirations (61).

By the second half of the 1960s, sitcoms had absorbed enough of Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society to propose assimilation via Native/Caucasian business partnerships. A Native character may no longer be "the Other," but sitcom plotlines did make Native workers "occupationally dependent on and inferior to settlers" (62). In the 1970s, the American Indian Movement (AIM) pursued a more visible and active role in political discourse, while Richard Nixon extended the "sporadic steps" taken by his predecessors, and further nudged the culture toward accepting Native self-determination. Meanwhile, print sources unleashed a stream of narratives privileging a Native perspective (such as Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* and Deloria's *Custer Died for Your Sins*) together with films and even ads sympathetic to Natives. The sitcom's response was to offer a liberal multicultural brew in which racial harmony was achieved—often via a great white father figure like *Brady Bunch*'s Mike Brady or *Diff'rent Strokes'* Phillip Drummond. In the process, recognizably Indian characters are accepted as being "almost the same, but not quite" (76).

Tahmahkera excels at breaking through progressive veneers to expose how sitcom narratives are not as progressive as they want to be. But he also doesn't consign all comedy to the scrap heap, either. He digs, for instance, into the genuinely progressive *Barney Miller*, revealing how cast member Jack Soo made a final season contract stipulation requiring one more episode on Native themes. The result was "Bones," in which a character played by Mark Banks (brother to AIM cofounder Russell Banks) breaks into an archeologist's office to reclaim Mohawk remains. The character, notes Tahmahkera, "shakes up the boundaries of what constitutes Indianness on American television" by being autonomous, culturally competent, and intolerant of injustice toward Natives (93).

Tahmahkera closes the twentieth century with an essay on *Saved by the Bell* in which he astutely compares the white protagonist to Kevin Costner's character in *Dances with Wolves*. He then pushes fully into the twenty-first century. He deems *King of the Hill*'s Redcorn as "arguably the most developed and complex indigenous character in U.S. sitcom history," and in a chapter that by itself warrants purchasing this book, he examines how the show simultaneously submits to and resists established TV Indian characterizations (106–107). He also explores the Canadian sitcom *Mixed Blessings*, which was co-created by a member of Alberta's Métis Nation and centers on a marriage between a Cree waitress and a Ukrainian plumber.

Each scholar must choose between tilting a book toward an academic audience or a more general one, such as Sierra S. Adare's *"Indian" Stereotypes in TV Science Fiction: First Nations' Voices Speak Out*. Tahmahkera too could have gone that route, and periodically he lets rip with searing, vivid prose. For instance, he grabs onto readers by opening with "Television's first famous Indian never made a sound or moved a muscle" (1). He describes his appearance with panache, attests that he commanded more screen time than Milton Berle or Ed Sullivan, and quotes a humorist who once called him "the hardest working Indian in the business." He then uncorks his identity: TV's first Indian superstar was the Indian Head test pattern. On balance, however, Tahmahkera is more attuned to his academic audience, one that has already been schooled in cultural studies. This choice pays dividends: compared to Adare, it allows Tahmahkera to be far more

deconstructive in his analyses, with a wider range of nuanced responses. His study also addresses a broader range of television history, bringing readers all the way to 2010.

On the minus side, when the academic focus detours into dense prose, this can lead to some rough sledding, as when the author writes a ninety-word sentence on sitcom Indian-settler cooperative ventures (42). Nonetheless, the book belongs on university library bookshelves, and professors grounded in cultural studies will value owning it. It is certainly accessible enough for upper-level and graduate school seminars, but might not be a good match for lower-level introductions to mass media representation or cultural studies. This is a shame, because the book's many insights deserve dissemination. If at the lower level the book itself is a risky fit, its content still can and should be harnessed, perhaps by distilling its arguments into lively PowerPoint slides that are accompanied by video clips of the *Andy Griffith Show*, *Barney Miller*, and *King of the Hill*. Presented in this way, Tahmahkera will deliver much valuable food for thought to introductory classes.

*Douglas Heil*
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

**Viewing the Ancestors: Perceptions of the Anaasází, Mokwič, and Hisatsinom**. By Robert S. McPherson. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014. 256 pages. $34.95 cloth.

This book's title reveals the author's approach: Robert S. McPherson discusses the Ancestral Pueblo peoples of the American Southwest using the oral histories, traditions, and mythology of the Navajo, Ute and Paiute, and Hopi. These tribes call the ancient Puebloans the Anaasází, Mokwič, and Hisatsinom, respectively. With his stated purpose "to give the Navajos' and other Native American tribes' oral traditions a new look" (14), McPherson's basic argument is that while archaeology can tell us with a fair degree of accuracy *what* occurred in the past, and *when*, one must use nonscientific data to understand and explain the *why*: that is, oral history, tradition, and mythology. This approach to understanding the past is not new: Jesse Walter Fewkes employed the technique in his "Tusayan Migration Traditions" (1900) and so did Edmund Nequatewa in his *Truth of a Hopi* (1936), both cited by McPherson. Others have followed the same path, including this reviewer in working with the Hopi story of Pata'tkwabi, the "Red Land of the South" (1995).

Following a lengthy introduction titled "Defining the Limits: Oral History as Proof," McPherson makes his case, with considerable overlapping information, in seven chapters: (1) "Identifying the Anaasází: Physical Proof, Evaluating Tradition"; (2) "Beginning Relations: Underworld and Emergence"; (3) "Abandoning the Sacred: Conflict and Dispersal"; (4) "The Great Gambler Icon of Destruction: Example for the Future"; (5) "Anaasází Sites: Places of Power, Places of Contact;" (6) "Anaasází Artifacts: Objects of Faith and Spirit"; and (7) "Traders and Archaeologists: From the Sacred to the Profane." Using Navajo oral history and tradition, reinforced by interviews with Navajo elders and additional materials from the Ute, Paiute, and Hopi,