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tionships. Coyote the trickster has been summoned to settle a dispute between Business and his exploited partner, Technology. In the end the dispute goes unsettled and the audience is left to question whether humanity will ever learn to coexist with the natural order. Both of these plays can be produced with color-blind casting and are appropriate for adolescent to adult audiences from.

Shattered Dream is the most fully realized play in this collection. In it Two-Rivers brings together his environmental and social justice themes, as well as exploring issues of cultural identity, race, sexual orientation, generational division, and frictions between urban and reservation culture. The play tells the story of community activists organizing against the expansion of a hydroelectric project on a reserve in Ontario, Canada. Two-Rivers states in his preface that the play was “inspired by the Hydro Quebec issue in Canada” (p. ix). This play contains many incidents that will be familiar to those cognizant of Native issues such as corporate exploitation, broken promises, tribal government corruption, violence, police intimidation, and false accusation. The play ends with a measure of justice, and though he is not totally triumphant, the “regular Indian guy” does win a victory and survives to carry on the struggle. *Shattered Dream* shares many thematic elements with Hanay Geiogamah’s *49*, (Hanay Geiogamah, *New Native American Drama: Three Plays*, 1980:91–133). Both plays examine cultural identity, generational division, violence, police intimidation, and false accusation, but Geiogamah draws on the past and delves into metaphysical realms while Two-Rivers focuses on the present and remains in concrete reality.

Briefcase Warriors: Stories for the Stage is an important addition to the publications in American Indian drama, and E. Donald Two-Rivers is an important new voice in the theater. He draws sensitive portraits of real Indian people dealing with real problems in contemporary society. These are multi-dimensional characters whose identities do not need to be bolstered by feathers and beads to validate their Indian-ness. If you are looking for stereotypical icons of Indian culture you won’t find them here, but you will find human beings involved in struggles that should concern all of us.

For further reading and research in American Indian theater this reviewer suggests *Seventh Generation: An Anthology of Native American Plays* (Theatre Communications Group, 1999), *Stories of Our Way: An Anthology of American Indian Plays*, (UCLA American Indian Studies Center, 1999), and *American Indian Theatre in Performance: A Reader* (UCLA American Indian Studies Center, 2000).

Jeffrey R. Kellogg

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Common and Contested Ground: A Human and Environmental History of the Northwestern Plains. By Theodore Binnema. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001. 263 pages. \$29.95 cloth.

Ethnologists and ethnohistorians have long recognized that tribes are not homogenous sociological constructs that exist in space and through time.

Rather the social construction of “tribes” is often composed of peoples of multiple ethnic and sometimes distinct linguistic origins. As multiethnic entities, it is not surprising that their intra-ethnic and interethnic interactions would be multidimensional, complex, and, sometimes, contradictory. Using an impressive array of primary documentation, Theodore Binnema focuses on the history of human interaction between A.D. 200 and 1806 across the northwestern plains, emphasizing the political, diplomatic, military, and environmental dimensions of indigenous history. Binnema’s thesis confirms the established premise that tribal societies of the region are not homogenous cultural and linguistic constructs. Quite the contrary, indigenous communities were quite often multi-ethnic entities that entered into complex relationships with each other and later with Europeans, basing their decisions on the ever-shifting cultural landscape.

Binnema sets the stage for his thesis in chapters one and two. He provides a solid synthesis of the ecological conditions of the Northwestern Great Plains. In a common-sense style, he outlines the multifaceted web of environmental variables that dictate the region’s rhythm of life. After weaving together the major climatological, geographical, and ecological variables that comprise the northwestern plains, the author reaches the conclusion that every indigenous community that came to reside in the region relied heavily on a bison-hunting and gathering subsistence strategy. The objective material conditions, that is, the regional ecology and climate, made other subsistence strategies tenuous.

Having established the environmental conditions that regulated human activity on the northwestern plains, the author turns his attention to detailing the spectrum of warfare, trade, and diplomacy through time. Examining the early historical period, the author extends his discussion of this web of relationships into the archaeological era. He notes that since A.D. 200, the late prehistoric period, diverse indigenous communities migrated to the northwestern plains, forming dynamic relationships with each other. Each society made alliances, fought, engaged in trade, and intermarried with each other. Arguing the archaeological evidence masks ethnic diversity, Binnema notes that many ethnic communities speaking different languages and dialects resided in the region. Knowing the history of these multiethnic communities is essential, he argues, to fully comprehend the early equestrian era.

In the next chapter he outlines the major migrations of various societies that would emerge from the archaeological record into the historical record. Moving between the historical documents and the archaeological record, Binnema connects various historical “tribal” societies with particular archaeological phases. Although connecting archaeological traditions to historically identified indigenous communities, he also notes that these communities have continuously incorporated “foreign” groups and individuals into their societies, along with “foreign” cultural materials (p. 74). Despite acknowledging the multidimensional complexity of tracing specific ethnic entities across space and through time, the author locates and associates specific indigenous societies across the protohistorical northwestern plains.

In the next chapter, Binnema details the diffusion of gun and horse use among northwestern plains societies. Largely following the ethnohistorical chronology originally crafted in Frank Secoy’s 1953 classic work, he provides

a much richer historical picture of the impact of these two introduced tools. Drawing on primary documents, Binnema examines the ebb and flow of indigenous relations within the evolving regional and international political economy. Most impressive is the folding of European colonization into the region as a variable of social change.

From the mid-eighteenth century, northwestern plains societies witnessed massive changes. Various populations migrated into the region; other societies left forever. The introduction of guns and horses continuously altered indigenous relationships. Moreover, the permanent European presence, along with the fur trade, realigned indigenous affairs. In chapters six and seven, the author succinctly outlines those variables and their implications for northwestern plains indigenous communities. Indigenous communities witnessed radical shifts in military and economic advantage with each other and Europeans. They also experienced demographic and sociological upheavals introduced by European-borne infectious diseases. One consequence of these factors, the author argues in chapter seven, was the rise in warfare and conflict among Northwestern Plains societies. Binnema argues that the penetration of the fur trade led to the formation of two competing alliance blocks. These alliances, he contends, struggled for dominance and control of the growing fur trade, using every military advantage they had at their disposal. Those struggles ultimately resulted in the emergence of the northern coalition as the regional dominant force.

The next chapter, "The Apogee of the Northern Coalition, 1794–1806," discusses the factors that led to the northern coalition's emergence as a force across the northwestern plains. Building on his previous arguments, Binnema demonstrates that more-dependable access to valuable resources, demographic superiority, as well as evolution of the economic landscape with respect to the distribution and access to European resources conspired to weaken severely the southern coalition. However, as his epilogue points out, the northern coalition's regional supremacy was short-lived. Once again, the political economic landscape shifted, dictating an alteration in power and alliances; the northwestern plains had entered a "new era" (p. 197).

There are certainly a number of points discussed in this work that will raise scholarly eyebrows. Some scholars will question Binnema's interpretation of the region's archaeological data, particularly ascribing singular, historical ethnic identities into the late prehistoric period. Others will note his lack of theoretical depth in understanding ethnogenetic theory. Some scholars may also take issue with the simplicity of his conclusions. These criticisms, while worthy of further discussion and debate, should not overshadow this work's major contribution.

Common and Contested Ground: A Human and Environmental History of the Northwestern Plains draws attention to the intimate relationships societies maintained from the late prehistoric period until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Drawing on a wide array of historical resources, Binnema skillfully uses an impressive array of primary sources to highlight significant points of trade, warfare, and diplomacy while simultaneously weaving each unique experience into the wider political and economic climate of the region. As

this work continually points out, Northwestern Plains societies interacted with each other within the context in the evolving political economic infrastructure of the northwestern plains. Unlike previous historical studies that focus on specific events or issues, Binnema paints with a broad regional brush. While his macrohistorical analysis does gloss over critical points and leaves some arenas unexplored, it is a valuable addition to the region's indigenous history. In an objective, yet synthetic fashion, Theodore Binnema has laid bare the driving forces of indigenous relationships within a regional context. I recommend this work to anyone interested in Native American history of the northwestern plains.

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Creation Myths and Legends of the Creek Indians. By Bill Grantham. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002. 337 pages. \$55.00 cloth.

In the time before Columbus arrived, the Muscogee Creek people formed one of the largest groups of people in North America. They were at the core of a major confederacy of tribes in the southeastern states before the forcible removal of most of the members to Indian territory, now called Oklahoma, in connection with Indian removal or the Trail of Tears in the Jacksonian era in American history. The Creek Confederacy was able to weave together a large multiethnic number of tribes, with a considerable diversity of languages, customs, and values. In its diversity, however, core and common ways of doing things and making common decisions also developed side by side with the core Muscogee Creek values. Differences in values and languages among the member groups were generally respected.

The contact with Europeans provided a major challenge to the Creeks in dealing with the clash of civilizations that was to follow. The depth and complexity of Creek values and organization is an important part of human history. The differences in weapons technology—guns overcame bows, arrows, and clubs in the decisive Battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814,—made way for Creek removal. In addition to the military and economic threat to the survival of Creek ways, internal divisions of mixed bloods and full bloods contributed to the erosion of Creek tribal values.

A key to the survival of the Creeks was their reorganization after removal and the attempt to maintain the coherence and continuity of Creek values. The latter are still treasured by many Creeks in Oklahoma and parts of the Southeast. The major rituals still survive, especially in the stomp grounds of Oklahoma. There they maintain their oral traditions the best they can without depending on academic scholarship to know how to be a Creek. Many Creeks today research their own traditions and write about them and also enshrine them in stories, poetry, plays, and music. However, there remains the legacy of earlier ethnographic work on Creeks, which has mixed usefulness in understanding the traditional and contemporary world of the Creeks.