

UCLA

American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

Kiowa Voices I: Ceremonial Dance, Ritual and Song. By Maurice Boyd./Kiowa Voices II: Myths, Legends and Folktales. By Maurice Boyd.

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9617w6bm>

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 9(2)

ISSN

0161-6463

Author

Velie, Alan R.

Publication Date

1985-03-01

DOI

10.17953

Copyright Information

This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License, available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

for a better future. His study, however, sheds little light on the success of the Iroquois constitutions and charters of incorporation. Hauptman only briefly mentions the affects of the IRA on the Oneida and Seneca-Cayuga. The overall impact and the long-range effects of the Indian Reorganization Act designed to enable them to act as responsible governments and/or small businesses, needs more thorough examination. After all, it is this aspect of the New Deal that has become controversial among historians, and not the temporary New Deal programs that were terminated as a result of the Second World War. Since Hauptman's study does not offer a complete look at tribal reorganization and incorporation, it is unclear how successful the IRA was among the Iroquois. In light of this oversight, one finds it difficult to agree totally with Hauptman's conclusion that the overall Iroquois New Deal was a success.

Ramona Soza Hansen
University of Washington

Kiowa Voices I: Ceremonial Dance, Ritual and Song. By Maurice Boyd. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1981. 164 pp. \$29.95 Cloth.

Kiowa Voices II: Myths, Legends and Folktales. By Maurice Boyd. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1983. 324 pp. \$39.95 Cloth.

These two volumes—there is a third in preparation—collect and annotate information about the history, mythology, art and ceremonies of the Kiowa. They are both comprehensive and authoritative, and are an invaluable resource to scholars, as well as a highly accessible and attractive source of information for lay readers, both white and Indian.

The *Kiowa Voices* series is the result of the project initiated by the Kiowa Tribal Council in 1974 when they formed the Kiowa Historical and Research Society to preserve the tribe's historical and cultural heritage. The Kiowas enlisted Maurice Boyd, a history professor at TCU best known for his work on the Tarascan Indians of Mexico, to assist them.

The two volumes that have been published are unique in their scope, attractiveness, and accuracy. To my knowledge there is

nothing comparable for any other tribe, and certainly nothing like them for the Kiowas. Scott Momaday's *The Way to Rainy Mountain* alternates historical and mythic selections with personal reminiscences, and it is illustrated by Scott's father Al, but it is short and highly selective rather than comprehensive. There are histories extant of many American Indian tribes—Oklahoma University Press has a series of volumes, for instance—and there are also collections of myths and legends for many tribes, either in editions issued by university presses like Nebraska, or in the Bureau of American Ethnology publications. Few of these collections include as much information about history, tales, music, and ritual, and none are so profusely illustrated. The *Kiowa Voices* volumes have illustrations on every page and many are in color. There are photographs of Kiowa leaders, reproductions of 19th century pictographic calendars and drawings on animal hides, and full color plates of paintings by contemporary Kiowa artists.

The Kiowas are probably the most artistic of tribes; certainly they have more painters than any other tribe. From the time that six Kiowa artists enrolled at the School of Art at the University of Oklahoma in the twenties, Kiowas have been famous in the Southwest for their paintings, and so Boyd had a wealth of artworks to choose from. His apparent intention in his selection of illustrations was to be as inclusive as possible, which is commendable historically, but it does raise some aesthetic questions. With the exception of Scott Momaday, whose paintings were perhaps too recent to be included in the first volume, but certainly should have been in the second, the best of the Kiowa artists are represented: Stephen Mopope, Al Momaday, Blackbear Bosin, and Robert Redbird. But there is also a great deal of what the best of Indian painters, Fritz Scholder, calls "Bambi art"—sentimental paintings and drawings which look like attempts by Norman Rockwell to depict Indian subjects. Boyd's reluctance to exercise any judgments of quality in choosing illustrations tends to diminish the impact of the good art in the book.

The strongest part of the volumes is the invaluable oral history that it makes available to the reading public. The Duke Foundation funded an extensive oral history project at the University of Oklahoma, and much Kiowa oral history was preserved there. Unfortunately very little of it has been published; it molds unseen in the basement of Oklahoma's Western History Collections. In *Kiowa Voices* Boyd provides a great many Kiowa narratives, and he supplies historical information and back-

ground material as context for the narratives. By and large Boyd does a good job of annotating and filling in, but he is capable of some very fusty prose, some of which sounds as if it were written when the Kiowas were still chasing buffalo. "As the Kiowas danced and roamed free amidst nature's bounty, discordant notes arose as the tribe faced the white man's expansion onto the fenceless plains," is probably the worst example.

All in all, however, this is an exquisite and invaluable set of volumes, and Boyd and the Kiowas are to be commended for the job they have done.

Alan R. Velie
University of Oklahoma

The Politics of Indian Removal, Creek Government and Society in Crisis. By Michael D. Green. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982. 237 pp. \$21.50 Cloth.

Michael Green has authored a political study of the traditional Creek government and its society from 1814 to 1836. During those turbulent years, the Creek Indians found themselves faced with the issues of war against the United States, treaty-making, inter-tribal strife, removal, and the fall of their once powerful confederacy that had dominated a large area in the southeast. The leadership and factionalism in the National Council is analyzed in depth, thereby exemplifying the Creek response to these issues.

The conflict between town leaders involving leaders from the Upper Town division under Big Warrior of Tuckabatchee and the Lower Towns under Little Prince is carefully examined. Both attempted to assert their influence on the National Council for personal gain. In spite of their rivalry and the political ambitions of other leaders, William McIntosh tried to lead the entire tribe as its principal spokesperson. In fact, McIntosh and Big Warrior were also political rivals. Illustrating the prominent and shrewd roles of these Creek leaders is relevant since tribal studies typically focus on the actions between white and Indian leaders.

Focusing on individual Indian leaders who vied for political gain during the early nineteenth century could easily be susceptible to misinterpretation, but this was not the case. The leaders were examined in enough depth, so that one could understand