

Native and non-Native historians is great but promises great rewards... (pp.57-58).

These comments are a fitting conclusion to this book. It is small in size but overflowing in encouragement and optimism for those interested in First Nation life and history. I hope that both the renewed vision of the Champlain Society and the opportunity for similar colloquia and ensuing papers continue well into the future.

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Marshall III, Joseph. *Winter of the Holy Iron*. Santa Fe, New Mexico: Red Crane Books, 1994, ISBN 1-878610-44-9 Cloth USA \$19.95.

Joseph Marshall III is a Lakota storyteller whose fictional account of the post-contact arrival of firearms among his people has a resonance which extends far beyond its historical setting to touch readers in the latter half of the 1990s. This is a novel about cultural and technological conflicts. Most of all, this is a novel about people and how they react to change.

The people within Marshall's fictional world are developed through his deft use of narrative. By giving voice to the spoken words as well as the interior thoughts and feelings of a variety of characters, the South Dakota author successfully depicts the world of the Native people of the American plains at a time when European culture and technology were having an enormous impact on their way of life.

The Elders of the Wolf Tail Band such as Spotted Calf and Wild Crow weigh carefully the implications for their people interacting with the encroaching White society and its cultural and technological accoutrements. Leery of change, Spotted Calf nonetheless indicates that not all change is bad. His people had obtained their first horses and the new mobility it provided their hunters from the Whites. More youthful warriors in the novel are seen as confused about the changes brought about by non-Aboriginal people. Some of the younger warriors, such as Bear Heart and his followers, seek the power and new opportunities which the "holy iron" of the White Men will bring. Others, such as Whirlwind, the chief warrior of the Band, are afraid of the dangers change can create: "The weapons seem to change people" (p.229) he says. "The holy iron can have a power over a man's mind" (p.281). Ultimately the introduction of new weapons is "a fork in the

road" for the people of the Band (p.253), and the central focus of the plot is the characters' consideration of whether or not to use the "holy irons." The principal character of the novel is Whirlwind. His heroic tracking and capture of the White ambusher Bruneaux provides an adventurous plot. Whirlwind, however, is not a stereotypical character in a larger than life adventure story. He is three dimensional. He cares about his people, their tradition, and their nomadic hunting culture based upon the prowess of the hunters. For others who ultimately abandon the Band, such as Bear Heart, the "holy iron" represents a means to compete and surpass their enemies. In contrast to Bear Heart's simplistic view of new weapons being a panacea for the development of his people, Whirlwind states: "We should always try to improve" (p.219) but "the holy iron cannot replace the heart of a warrior"(p.223). Whirlwind is a thoughtful leader who weighs all the implications of the new technology before he passes judgement on its usefulness for his people.

This is not a book in favour of Luddites and against progress. Indeed, the multi-dimensional nature of cultures and technologies in conflict is presented well in a balanced manner. Despite the undeniably negative effects of non-Aboriginal technology on the Lakota people, Whites are not depicted as being obsessed with the destruction of Native people. Indeed, the greedy Bruneaux ambushes a fellow White man as well as an Aboriginal woman. The White victim, de la Verendrye, is depicted as a fair man who allies himself with Whirlwind in seeking to capture Bruneaux. Similarly, the Native people are not seen as naive victims who rally around Whirlwind and his approach to change. In fact, residents of twelve of the fifty-four lodges leave the Band and follow Bear Heart in opposition to Whirlwind.

The issue of whether or not to accept the new technology, and in effect change, is in no way a clearly "good" or "bad" choice. Whirlwind questions his philosophy of life throughout the novel as Elders, middle-aged men, and youth all evaluate the need and/or desire for the new technology of the guns.

As stated at the outset, this is much more than a period piece with philosophical/psychological implications for a time long past. The cover blurb notes how for Americans the story is "as modern as the Brady Bill." For Canadians, the recent gun control legislation and the controversy it created come to mind as well. More than a study about guns and the dubious philosophy which posits that only increased weapons provide increased protection, this is a novel about change. It is a novel about people and how careful thought should be given before new technology is accepted without question for increased power. Today, all too often governments, manufacturers, advertisers, and educators demand that the public immediately accept new technology simply because it is new and because if they

do not accept it immediately they will fall behind their competitors. Marshall's *Whirlwind* speaks of how acceptance of change without knowledge is not wise. Change for short term gain in power can have negative effects, on an individual or on an entire society. With proper knowledge, change can be managed in a way which will not destroy the very way of life it is supposed to enhance. Managed change is not Utopia; yet managed change is all *Whirlwind* is able to achieve at the conclusion of the novel.

Holy Iron is contemplative fiction with historical roots in the Native cultures of the American plains, yet it has relevance as well to contemporary Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures in the late 20th century. It is a novel which teaches without being overtly didactic. Joseph Marshall III is indeed an effective storyteller.

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McGovern, Dan: *The Campo Indian Landfill War: The Fight For Gold in California's Garbage*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995, ISBN 0-8061-2755-4 Cloth USA \$24.95.

The author, Dan McGovern, is a former chief environment official of the United States Environmental Protection Agency for Region 9 (Arizona, California, Hawaii and Nevada). In writing which successfully balances between glib newspaper style and highbrow rhetoric, McGovern popularizes the politics of garbage. The author tells this American tale of environmental justice and racism in twelve chapters, structured under four broad headings. The first section, *A Theatre in a Wider War*, sets the stage of the conflict over a landfill project proposed for development by Mid-American, a large waste firm, on the Campo Indian Reservation in San Diego County, California. At first glance the two parties in conflict are the Campo tribe of the Kumeyaay Indians and the Backcountry Against Dumps (BAD), a grassroots group of local (mainly non-Indian) land owners. BAD's main contention is the landfill will inevitably cause groundwater contamination, while the Campo demand to have their sovereignty and ability to make sound decisions recognized. As McGovern develops the storyline into a wider context, Indian Reservations are shown to be the prize, the last frontier for America's waste industry, in this case Mid-American. The sovereign nature of Reservations has been identified by waste companies