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Review of *The Cherokees: A Population History*, by Russell Thornton

Henry F. Dobyns
Edmond, OK

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The Cherokees: A Population History. Russell Thornton. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1990. xvi + 237 pp. Maps, tables, index, footnotes, and illustrations. \$35.00 cloth (ISBN 0-80324416-9)

This volume discusses major dynamics of Cherokee population trends during historic times. That is, it describes the formation and fortunes of one ethnic minority in the United States. Such historic demography is necessarily limited by available information. Consequently, this discussion presents more (and more reliable) details about recent demographic trends than about earlier ones.

One chapter deals with Cherokee origins and another deals with eighteenth century trends. Thornton then devotes three chapters to nineteenth century trends. In the first of these, he describes demographic events from 1800 to post-Removal adjustments to Indian Territory conditions. He then sketches depopulation and demoralization the Civil War wrought on a Cherokee people divided like the nation. Thornton concludes the triad of chapters by tracing population recovery in the latter years of the century.

Two chapters summarize twentieth century Cherokee demography. The first traces continued population growth from 1900 through 1970, mainly as measured by decennial enumerations. Utilizing published and unpublished 1980 census data, Nancy Breen and C. Matthew Snipp then join Thornton in describing "Cherokees Today." This final chapter presents by far the most methodologically sophisticated and therefore reliable demographic analysis in the volume. It emphasizes that self-proclaimed Cherokees constitute the nation's largest self-identified "Indian" minority group, comprising 17% of enumerated Indians. It notes that a "Red-black" group constitutes a "truly unique Cherokee population (157)" of well-educated, prosperous urbanites.

Thornton warns on page 1 that the Cherokees were and are demographically amorphous, that their origin is a mystery, and that even defining a Cherokee is a perplexing task. Early on, he identifies the main forces of demographic change as geographic dispersion and miscegenation. The text later makes clear that amalgamation of native ethnic groups and a historically shifting psychology of ethnic self-identification have also been major factors influencing the size of the officially reported Cherokee population. Post-bellum Cherokee Nation citizens in Indian Territory included persons of at least Delaware, Shawnee, Creek, Natchez, European, and African ancestry.

Thornton's work is a useful compendium of previous research on Cherokee historic demography. While Thornton identifies factors in demographic change, he does not present a unifying theory. Only once

does he really venture beyond summarizing data. He employs a quantitative population projection technique to estimate that Cherokee mortality during forced removal could have exceeded 10,000, compared to the oft-cited contemporary guess of 4000.

Thornton deals with most demographic issues with caution or by compromise. For example, he fixes aboriginal territory at 120,000 km², just slightly more than the average of 103,600 and 134,400 km² given by A. L. Kroeber. While Thornton mentions Cherokee food production and abundant natural food resources, he only raises to 25 Douglas Ubelaker's estimate of population density of 24-people per 100 km². Thornton ignores my thesis that native density south of the sub-Arctic was nowhere less than 100 people per 100 km². Thus, he estimates 30,000 ancestral Cherokees instead of 120,000 or more. Henry F. Dobyns, *Edmond, OK*.

Northern Prairie Wetlands. Arnold van der Valk, Editor. Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1989. Maps, tables, photographs, graphs, index, bibliography. xiv + 400 pp. \$38.95 cloth (ISBN 8138-0037-4).

We know that wetlands provide important habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife species. However, we are only now beginning to understand how and why wetlands function the way they do, what drives a wetland system, and how human activities affect them.

This book provides an exceptionally thorough technical review of the ecology of both shallow and deepwater wetland systems within the prairie pothole region of the United States and Canada and the Sandhills region of Nebraska. The book developed from a regional wetland symposium sponsored by the National Wetlands Technical Council in 1985. It has been written to serve both wetland ecologists and managers, as well as people with a professional interest in northern prairie wetlands who may have but a limited background in wetland ecology.

The book consists of 11 chapters that address key wetland components such as hydrology, water chemistry, vegetation, waterfowl, mammals, fish, and food chain support with primary focus on the prairie pothole region. One chapter addresses the overall water and wetland resources of the Nebraska Sandhills. This impressive list of subjects could only have been improved with a chapter on the values northern prairie wetlands provide to shorebirds and wading birds.

Van der Valk and symposium organizers have done an exceptional job of bringing together many of the region's leading scientists to author various chapters. Each chapter starts with an abstract and a key word