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Review of *Their Own Frontier: Women Intellectuals Re-Visioning the American West* Edited and with an introduction by Shirley A. Leckie and Nancy J. Parezo

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Their Own Frontier: Women Intellectuals Re-Visioning the American West. Edited and with an introduction by Shirley A. Leckie and Nancy J. Parezo. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008. xiv + 395 pp. Photographs, notes. \$27.95 paper.

Pioneering women ethnohistorians and anthropologists who studied American Indians and the trans-Mississippi West deserve greater recognition, not only for the important information they gathered but also for their theoretical

insights and methodological advances. As we learn about these women's lives and scholarly contributions, we also come to understand the barriers and prejudices they dealt with in order to pursue the work they valued. This is the argument of Shirley Leckie and Nancy Parezo's collection of intellectual biographies of ten women, born between 1873 and 1910, whose active research careers spanned most of the twentieth century. *Their Own Frontier* extends the scope of cultural anthropologist Parezo's earlier *Hidden Scholars: Women Anthropologists and the Native American Southwest* (1993) into the Great Plains and the discipline of history (coeditor Leckie is a historian), although anthropologists remain in the majority.

The ten women intellectuals "re-visioned" the West and their disciplines: they questioned the Turner thesis and critiqued the assumptions of Manifest Destiny; they attended to diverse voices and viewpoints (highlighting women's and Indians' lives); most made their writings accessible to nonspecialists; and many became activists for Indian rights. Parezo and Leckie argue that scholars like Angie Debo anticipated New Western and New Indian history, but, because they were women and usually did not hold traditional academic appointments, their contributions were marginalized.

Great Plains historians and anthropologists are well represented in five thought-provoking articles. John Wunder characterizes Mari Sandoz as a pathbreaking ethnohistorian who paid attention to environmental history and to narratives of women and people of color. As a result, "To read Sandoz is to collide face-to-face with a place, the Great Plains." Articles on Oklahomans Angie Debo (by Leckie) and Alice Marriott (by Patricia Loughlin) describe the resourcefulness and "maverick" qualities that helped them persevere as scholars. Debo pioneered in chronicling Indian-white encounters from the Indian point of view; Marriott was one of the earliest anthropologists to study American Indian women's stories and activities. Chapters on Ella Cara Deloria (by Maria Eugenia Cotera) and Zitkala-Ša (by Franci Washburn) show how both struggled, with no

helpful models, to solve the problem of point of view: both wished to represent their dual vision as insider-outsider when writing as anthropologists about Dakota people for audiences of primarily Anglo-Americans.

Deloria's mentor, Franz Boas, recognized her talent and ability to elicit and interpret comments from Dakota research participants; but he never encouraged her to pursue an advanced degree or an independent research career. In fact, mentorship recurs as a disturbing motif throughout the book: nearly every one of these women had a male mentor who recognized her exceptional abilities as a student but who could not—and would not—visualize her as an academic colleague.

Such recurring themes are thoroughly discussed in the substantial introduction and conclusion; indeed there may be too much repetition of key points. Nevertheless, a reader who wants to dip into the book just to learn about one or two individuals—about Ruth Underhill, perhaps, or Dorothea Leighton—should read the conclusion to understand the larger cultural context affecting their work; a reader unfamiliar with recent trends in anthropology and history will find helpful background in the introduction. For each chapter, two photographs show (when possible) the scholar early and late in her career. Each woman's birth and death dates appear in the text of each article; listing those dates for reference in the table of contents would have been helpful.

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