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Review of *Wives and Husbands: Gender and Age in
Southern Arapaho History*. By Loretta Fowler.

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Wives and Husbands: Gender and Age in Southern Arapaho History. By Loretta Fowler. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010. xii + 382 pp. Maps, photographs, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Wives and Husbands will likely become a classic of ethnographically informed historical anthropology. From the moment distinguished anthropologist Loretta Fowler's work opens with its account of Little Raven and Walking Backward—a brother and sister born in the early nineteenth century who lived to see great changes—to its final pages, which offer at least ten “new lines of research” that scholars might do well to follow to correct errors regarding everything from women's status under change to the “reidentification process” undergone by educated Arapahos returning to their communities, a wide variety of readers will find themselves engaged in a book impossible to put down because of the quality of its writing and its deft instruction at many levels.

Fowler's very last line sums up in modest fashion her central message: “These Southern Arapaho stories offer a window onto the way history makes gender and gender makes history.” It is not, however, the rich stories themselves of five different, time-staggered cohorts that add new dimensions to Plains history, but rather the way that Fowler has masterfully woven these stories into three

major historical eras shaped by influential individuals working within a complex gender system undergoing constant transformation.

The central survival strategy for these Southern Arapaho persons, whose portraits Fowler draws with beautiful detail and historical accuracy, is that of “partnering.” Rather than elaborate strict rules of genealogical succession, Fowler describes the flexible, yet tradition-informed ways that brother-sister and husband-wife (often plural) partnerships formed the economic, social, political, and moral backbone to Southern Arapaho adjustments from prereservation (1805–1869) to reservation (1870–1901) and modernized neoreservation eras (1902–1936). By focusing on the age-based differences in access to wealth, ceremonial power, and resources outside of Arapaho communities, Fowler contributes significantly to a mature feminist theory and historiography that cannot exclude age, rank, origin stories, familial differences, and personalities in its considerations of women's and men's relative power. Men's and women's cooperation and creativity in bison hunting, quillwork production, agriculture, freighting, stock raising, trading, reacting in conciliatory and skeptical ways to American civilizing practices, adjusting to death from warfare and disease, and in Ghost Dance and peyote religious practices have influenced Southern Arapaho modern existence and a continued ethos of gender complementarity.

Finally, Fowler's discussion of the connections between the Southern Arapahos and other Great Plains peoples such as Southern Cheyennes, Northern Arapahos and Cheyennes, Utes, and Kiowas make this work a necessary read for all students of American history, American Indian history, and the wages of cultural encounters. **Kathleen Fine-Dare**, *Department of Anthropology, Fort Lewis College, Durango, Colorado*.