

**Gretchen M. Bataille, ed. *Native American Women: A Biographical Dictionary*. (New York: Garland, 1993) xix, 333 pp., \$55.00.**

This book is a treasure trove. Normally, dictionaries are not meant to be read from front to back like a novel, but this one is fascinating throughout. The few works that had been available so far on American Indian women were limited in perspective, format, or accuracy. Here for the first time we see the whole breadth and depth of Native women's achievements in an astounding variety of professions, from warriors, healers, fur traders, and jewelers, to educators, attorneys, poets, and professors.

One source of their creativity seems to be the necessity to combine cultures and languages. "Indian writers are in a constant state of translation" (35). Josette Juneau (1803-1855), a Wisconsin humanitarian, was fluent and literate in French and fluent in Menominee, Chippewa, Potawatomi, and Winnebago (132). Sara Winnemucca Hopkins (1844?-1891), warrior, lecturer, lobbyist, and autobiographer, spoke English and Spanish and knew three Indian dialects (115).

The helpful appendix on "Entries by Primary Areas of Specialization" shows the highest number (eighty-four) under the heading "Literature/Criticism." Seventy-three women are listed under "Education" and sixty-two under "Arts." Reading a series of the articles, however, immediately shows that most of these women excel in a surprising number of occupations.

There is a strong desire to communicate Native traditions, whether in pottery and basketry, healing and tribal leadership, storytelling and poetry, or in sophisticated ways of transmitting native languages in translations, grammars, and dictionaries. While much of this effort is focused on interpreting Native cultures to a white audience, there are also attempts to write for Native readers. Nora Dauenhauer, e.g., together with her husband Richard Dauenhauer, has carefully transcribed and produced Tlingit oral narratives in English as well as in Tlingit, encouraging her people to collect and preserve their cultural heritage.

The book shows a surprising unity in spite of the fact that sixty-one persons contributed articles. They range from well-known scholars to graduate students. There remains, of course, some unevenness. Louise Erdrich would deserve a longer entry focusing on the special ambiance and flavor of her work, not just the "facts." Kenneth Lincoln writes beautifully on Luci Tapahonso and Roberta Hill Whiteman, but his long and sensitive essays are very different from the sober, more factual standard entries. Such discrepancies, however, also have a positive side: often the authors' voices are adding interest and complexity to the subjects described.

The appendices "Entries by Decades of Birth," "Entries by State/Province of Birth," and "Entries by Tribal Affiliation" are excellent. The regular index is extensive, but could contain even more information. For example, the "Catholic church" (sic) as well as the Native American Church are listed, but Franciscans, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Baptists are not.

The valuable photos could be more numerous and better reproduced. These are very minor flaws, however, in an outstanding work that should be acquired by every library, by teachers of every level, and by everyone concerned about the first American women.

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**Monroe Lee Billington. *New Mexico's Buffalo Soldiers, 1866-1900.* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1991) 258 pp., \$29.95.**

Buffalo Soldiers guarded the western frontier, winning eighteen Medals of Honor. Formed in 1866, they also served in the Spanish-American War (1898), the War in the Philippines (1899-1901), World War II (1941-1946), and the Korean War (1950-1953). It might appear that some of those events transpired a long time ago. However, Jones Morgan, the last Buffalo Soldier who served in both the West and the Spanish American War, died at age 110 in August, 1993.

Approximately 186,000 Black soldiers fought in the Civil War and when it concluded, the Union army still had 123,156 soldiers "in 130 infantry regiments, thirteen regiments of heavy artillery, ten batteries of light artillery, and six regiments of cavalry." Because the United States government needed to safeguard its interests in the West following that war, it turned to Black soldiers who eventually made up half of the military force there. Many Buffalo Soldiers served in New Mexico beside companies of white troops. They were subjected to racism from their white counterparts, white civilians, and even the white press. White businessmen doing commerce with the army often cheated the military and Blacks were significantly affected. They were supplied with "inferior animals, food, and supplies," and at Fort Cummings "fresh" vegetables quickly spoiled and "thirty-seven thousand pounds of bacon and eighteen hundred pounds of ham were of such poor quality" that they perished almost immediately. Still, the Buffalo Soldiers proudly executed their dangerous responsibilities.

was killed by the Mexicans and then hunted Nana, one of his