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Review of The Way to Independence: Memories of a Hidatsa Indian Family, 1840-1920 and A Coloring Book of Hidatsa Indian Stories: Based on the Life and Drawings of Edward Goodbird

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Porter, Joseph C., "Review of The Way to Independence: Memories of a Hidatsa Indian Family, 1840-1920 and A Coloring Book of Hidatsa Indian Stories: Based on the Life and Drawings of Edward Goodbird" (1989). *Great Plains Quarterly*. 457.

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The Way to Independence: Memories of a Hidatsa Indian Family, 1840-1920. By Carolyn Gilman and Mary Jane Schneider. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1987. Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. xii + 371 pp. \$40 cloth, \$24.95 paper.

A Coloring Book of Hidatsa Indian Stories: Based on the Life and Drawings of Edward Goodbird. Compiled by Roberta Krim and Thomas Thompson. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988. 31 pp. \$2.50.

The Way to Independence exhibition and catalog appeared in 1987 to mark the centennial of the passage of the Dawes Indian Severalty Act of 1887, legislation intended to "civilize" American Indians by abolishing tribes as legal entities and allotting reservation lands to individuals. With the disappearance of the tribal land base, proponents of the Dawes Act assumed that Indians would be compelled to "assimilate" into the mainstream of American life.

Proponents of the Dawes Act had a profound belief in cultural evolution, and their "crusade to 'civilize' the Indians was above all a campaign

to redeem them with white materialism" (x). The exhibition and this accompanying catalog demonstrate the impact that the Dawes Act had upon the Hidatsa people of North Dakota. The biographies of three individuals, Buffalo Bird Woman (born in 1839), her brother Wolf Chief, and her son Goodbird (1869-1938) are the thematic core of *The Way to Independence*, which traces the effects of government policy upon two generations of Hidatsas.

Buffalo Bird Woman, Wolf Chief, and Goodbird each reacted differently to the intense pressure on the Hidatsas. The assault on traditional values and the erosion of the Hidatsa resource base modified, but did not eradicate, Hidatsa ways of doing things. *The Way to Independence* demonstrates that, despite governmental designs for the extinction of Indian lifeways, the Hidatsas (and other tribes) adapted their cultures to meet these new challenges.

To augment the three biographies, Gilman and Schneider use material objects from the pre-preservation era to the early twentieth century to document both the tenacity of and the adaptations within Hidatsa culture. The combination most effectively illustrates this period in American Indian history.

The Way to Independence also touches upon the history of anthropology because it depends upon the work of Gilbert Wilson (1869-1930). Wilson and his brother Frederick, an artist, conducted field research among the Hidatsa during this difficult time of transition from 1906 until 1918. Buffalo Bird Woman, Wolf Chief, and Goodbird were their informants and close friends.

The Way to Independence is well written and lavishly illustrated. Supplemental essays by W. Raymond Wood and Jeffery Hanson comment on the larger context of Hidatsa history and on the natural environment of the Hidatsa. Alan R. Woolworth devotes an essay to Gilbert Wilson. Gerard Yellow Wolf Baker, a Hidatsa-Mandan, writes about the Hidatsa religious world. Baker's essay gives a symmetry to this volume because his mother, Mrs. Cora Baker, lived in the Hidatsa community of Independence, which gave the volume its title, prior to its inundation

by the waters behind the Garrison Dam.

Goodbird drew sketches depicting Hidatsa life for Gilbert Wilson. Roberta Krim and Thomas Thompson use some of these as the basis for *A Coloring Book of Hidatsa Indian Stories*. The result is a refreshing way to introduce young children to the diversity and richness of Hidatsa cultural history.

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