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Review of The World of the Crow Indians: As Driftwood Lodges

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The World of the Crow Indians: As Driftwood Lodges. By Rodney Frey. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987. Illustrations, photographs, maps, notes, bibliography, appendix, glossary, index. xxiii + 193 pp. \$19.95.

In this relatively short book, Frey seeks to describe the world view of the Crow (Apsáalooke) Indians of Montana. He places his description within the sociocultural context of the contemporary reservation and uses two key metaphors drawn from the Crow people, first, shifting bundles of driftwood that lodge and cling together in a turbulent river, and second a "medicine" or wagon wheel where the hub and the circumference are connected by distinct spokes. The Crow world is interpreted as one in which everything—human, animal, plant, land, and spirit—is interconnected, and the metaphors provide "symbolism of diversity and unity, receptivity and creativity, and dependence and volition" (p. 174).

Frey begins with a short introduction to the ashammaléaxia ("as driftwood lodges") concept and a brief sketch of Crow history, then considers áassahke (the clan uncle and aunt relation) and the religious implications of social relations. Four chapters consider xapáaliia (sacred power or "medicine") as it is mediated by fasting and the Sun Dance. The last chapter presents the "wagon wheel" metaphor.

Frey emphasizes that "There is no unified, integrated and consistent world view encompassing Apsáalooke society. Rather, there is a matrix of varied views" (p. 179). Many Crows participate in several religious systems, such as Sun Dance, Peyote, and Catholic Church, and believe in the efficacy of both Indian "medicine" and western medical techniques. All these are complementary but distinct and separate from each other, like spokes of a wheel connected to the hub, all "dynamic and vital segments of Apsáalooke religious expressions" (p. 59).

Alternating with the main text are evocations of actual religious and social behavior. All are couched in the present, even when the events are in the past, and are both descriptive and concise. Most of these scenarios are printed

on gray paper, allowing them to stand apart from the narrative text, on white paper.

Frey uses Crow language terms, along with interpretations of them, throughout the text and provides a useful pronunciation key and glossary. Drawings of the Sun Dance and other holy objects or rituals and photographs of the reservation illustrate the book. A three-page appendix on "Concept of World View" is helpful.

Frey describes and illustrates the Crow world view with no jargon and a minimum of theoretical speculation. Unlike dryly descriptive and/or ideologically polemical works on contemporary Indian religion, this rich book humanizes the world of the Crow Indians. It is a sensitive, perceptive, and tightly written contribution to contemporary religious and social perspectives within the Crow tribe.

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