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Review of The Arapaho

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The Arapaho. By Loretta Fowler. Indians of North America, edited by Frank W. Porter III. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989. Maps, illustrations, photographs, bibliography, glossary, index. 127 pp. \$15.95.

Among my treasured possessions is a photograph of three small children dressed in "Indian" regalia. The little boy and girl pictured wear fringed embroidered tunics and feathered headdresses; the baby—my father—sports a jaunty beaded headband with one feather. Taken in 1923, it captured their perception of Native American life: beads, bows and arrows, and buckskin. More than sixty years later, many children have a similar image of Indian culture. Native American historical revisionism may now be accepted in higher education but one look at primary school depictions of Thanksgiving suggests how little of the new scholarship has filtered down.

To give a more balanced portrait of the Native American experience, Chelsea House is publishing the Indians of North America series. *The Arapaho* is Loretta Fowler's contribution. Her well-crafted volume brings ethnohistory to young adults and general readers, presenting them with a new look at the Arapaho past and present. This work challenges all readers to look beyond the beads and buckskin stereotypes for a more authentic version of Indian life.

Conveying the richness of Native American history and culture is a difficult task for any author, especially one writing a book suitable for secondary school use. Fowler succeeds with *The Arapaho*, providing an informative narra-

tive that dispels myths about Indians. Discussions of religion and the patterns of daily life help draw readers into the world of the Arapaho. Moving from Anglo-American contact through separation into the northern and southern divisions to the present struggle for survival, she underscores the enduring strength of these Native Americans. Continuity and change are intertwined in Northern and Southern Arapaho life, and Fowler emphasizes the impact of both themes on tribal culture.

The text is complemented by black and white illustrations. Arapaho religious culture is featured in four pages of color photographs of artifacts that have both practical uses and spiritual significance. A glossary defines terms readers might not understand. More advanced readers will find suggestions for additional reading in the bibliography. Loretta Fowler's *The Arapaho* is an excellent resource for creating a new picture of Native American history.

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