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Vision Quest: Men, Women and Sacred Sites of the Sioux Nation. Photographs by Don Doll, S.J. Introduction by Vine Deloria, Jr. New York: Crown Publishers, 1994. Photographs, map, timeline, glossary, Lakota translations. 160 pp. \$60.00.

Don Doll is not the first person of Euro-American ancestry to point the lens of a camera at American Indians. In fact, there is a long tradition of that dating from the middle of the nineteenth century. And neither is he the first person to produce a book of such photographs. That, too, is old hat.

But Doll's work is quite different from that of his fellows, and his recent volume, *Vision Quest*, an assemblage of photographs of Sioux people (inclusive of all three major bands) and the lands that are sacred to them, is proof of that. It is, in effect, the portrait of a nation.

I will yield to the temptation to compare Doll and his work to those who have gone before him, even though the book stands effectively alone, requiring no apology to genre. But it is in comparison that the work's significance becomes strikingly apparent. Space does not afford me the luxury of a photographer-by-photographer comparison (probably to the reader's benefit), and so with brevity as an excuse I will commit premeditated over-generalization.

In form, most photographs of the Sioux people (and American Indians in general, for that matter) have been either pseudo-anthropological or cloyingly paternalistic, due in no small measure to a general desire on the part

of photographers to meet the expectations of their largely Euro-American market. Doll's work, on the other hand, is first and foremost portraiture, not social science, and clearly has as its focus the person who is the subject of the photograph, and not the marketplace.

This is not to say that his work, in like fashion, isn't intended for that same Euro-American audience, because it clearly is. But reinforced with biographical essays drawn from interviews, his photographs reveal a wonderful, often surprising variety of individuals who happen to be Sioux, people who are complex and three dimensional: traditional yet modern, urban and rural, young and old, and from all walks of life. So rather than meeting the expectations of his audience, Doll, without being preachy or chastening, politely challenges them.

Borne on wide vistas, his landscapes are likewise portraiture. Sacred lands, he calls them, places in which people have spiritual investments.

It would have been easy for Doll, a Jesuit priest, to wallow in the mystical and create spiritual and religious metaphors where none were to be found. He did not do that. While there is absolutely no pretense of dispassionate observation, clearly Doll attempts, successfully, I think, to reveal essence without reducing it to gibberish in a forced theological context.

The book is graced by a fine introduction by Vine Deloria, Jr., and a brief, cogent historical overview by Chuck Trimble. My one regret is that the book's \$60.00 price—a fact of life in fine photographic reproduction—will limit his readership to those with room on their credit cards.

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