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Review of *Mari Sandoz's Native Nebraska: The Plains Indian Country* By LaVerne Harrell Clark

Kim Lee

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Mari Sandoz's Native Nebraska: The Plains Indian Country. By LaVerne Harrell Clark. Chicago: Arcadia Publishers, 2000. Illustrations, maps. 128 pp. \$18.99 paper.

Mari Sandoz's Native Nebraska is essentially a collection of photographs with extended captions relating to Sandoz and her writings. Author LaVerne Harrell Clark has drawn on several sources for the book's images: archival photographs, Sandoz family photographs, and Clark's own photography. At first glance, the reader may well believe this book, Clark's seventh, to be uniquely focused on the Native people of the Great Plains about whom Sandoz wrote; in fact it is centered squarely on Sandoz. After a one-page introduction, Clark takes the reader-viewer on a photographic tour of significant Sandoz sites, found mostly in north-western Nebraska (where Sandoz grew up) and in Lincoln (where Sandoz lived for many years), as well as other areas of the Great Plains.

The book seems more a travel portfolio than a scholarly work on Sandoz or Nebraska. The more than 230 photographs themselves are of varying quality, and several lack dates, though it appears that most of the personal photographs were taken during the mid-1970s. Clark gives us several images of the Sandhills and ranch lands, pointing out how particular images relate to Sandoz and her work. Also included are several intriguing images of Sandoz at different stages of her career.

In addition to the sites of significance, the book includes photographs of important people in Sandoz's life. Here we find Sandoz family members, as well as folklorist Louise Pound, historian Addison E. Sheldon, friend and mentor Melvin Van den Bark, friend and confidant Mamie Meredith. Clark also provides a photograph of Sandoz's wedding day, when she began her ever-so-brief marriage to Wray Macumber, one of the book's more interesting exhibits considering the lengths to which Sandoz went to erase that chapter of her life.

The Native American images in the book come mainly from historical or archival materials and make up less than a fourth of the

total photographs. These are troublesome because several individuals are not identified in Clark's personal photos, while some are posed in what can only be termed stereotypical dress and stance—unrealistic depictions of Native people that Sandoz spoke out against as “Hollywood inventions.”

Mari Sandoz's Native Nebraska seems geared to readers already familiar with Sandoz and her works who want to put faces and places with the texts they know. Despite the book's cover and title, however, there is little regarding Native people within its pages.

KIM LEE

Department of English
University of Nebraska-Lincoln