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Spring 2004

Review of *Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America* By Eva Marie Garroutte

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Wilson, Terry P., "Review of *Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America* By Eva Marie Garroutte" (2004). *Great Plains Quarterly*. 2449.

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Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America. By Eva Marie Garrouette. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. xv + 223 pp. Illustrations, table, notes, bibliography, index. \$50.00 cloth, 19.95 paper.

Cherokee sociologist Eva Garrouette has fashioned a genuine contribution to the study of the American Indian in the United States.

Herself a mixed-race person of Caucasian and Indian heritage, she focuses on the always troublesome and often controversial issue of Indian identity, one that pervades the consciousness of all Native Americans, and not a few non-Native folks. Her straightforward narrative is informed by published and unpublished sources in law, history, social science, and literature and enhanced by numerous in-depth interviews with Indian and non-Indian people. What results constitutes the single comprehensive book-length examination of "Indian-ness" in print.

Great Plains tribal and individual examples are included throughout the volume to help illustrate the historical and contemporary problem of deciding exactly who is and, as importantly, who is not identifiable as Indian. Garrouette offers a fascinating congeries of attempts to resolve this elusive issue. The federal government through administrative fiat, court decisions, and legislation has struggled valiantly to provide an immutable standard, but has only succeeded in dispensing confusing and contradictory dictums. Each tribe across the nation has weighed in with a particularistic definition of Indian identity, inextricably tied to tribal membership, but this has done little beyond reflecting Native peoples' dissatisfaction with endless measuring and assessments of blood quantum and cultural attributes.

Refreshingly, Garrouette steps outside and around most scholars and others who have participated in the continuing discourse on Indian-ness by adopting a new paradigm—radical indigenism. As she deftly explains, radical indigenism presumes the efficacy of uniquely Indian approaches and models in pursuing questions of identity. She argues that established academic disciplines will likely fall a bit short in the search for satisfactory explanations unless they recognize the worth of alternative modes of research and analysis. Her commonsensical assertion seems to me eminently reasonable, and "radical" only in not being previously accepted.

Praiseworthy as this multidisciplinary effort is, I would have enjoyed reading more. One fairly serious shortcoming is the absence of a hemi-

spheric comparison of Indian-ness. A chapter that placed the Canadian Native experience alongside those of Mexico and Latin America would have revealed much about the historical anomaly that was and remains the US norm in regard to Indian identity. Also, a more extensive deconstruction of American Indian authored novels and poetry reflecting identity issues would have added an eloquent perspective. These caveils aside, this book deserves a large readership.

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