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Review of *Native Americans and the Environment:  
Perspectives on the Ecological Indian*. by Michael E.  
Harkin and David Rich Lewis

Paula Wagoner  
Juniata College

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**Native Americans and the Environment: Perspectives on the Ecological Indian.** Edited and with an introduction by Michael E. Harkin and David Rich Lewis. Foreword by Judith Antell. Preface by Brian Hosmer. Afterword by Shepard Krech III. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 2007. xxxiv + 367 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes, references, index. \$24.95 paper.

Sixteen authors, all involved in Native American scholarship, contributed to this important collection of essays on Native Americans and their environments ranging from the prehistoric to the contemporary. The volume addresses the issue of the stereotypical “ecological Indian,” explicitly responding to the perspectives of Shepard Krech III advanced in *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (New York, 1999), which drew a wide array of popular interest as well as many academic critiques. The essays originally presented at the 10th annual symposium of the University of Wyoming’s American Heritage Center in 2002, are representative of the discussions inspired by Krech’s book.

*Native Americans and the Environment* is arranged in five parts: “Shepard Krech and His Critics,” with essays by Krech and others; “(Over)hunting Large Game”; “Representations of Indians and Animals”; “Traditional Ecological Knowledge”; and “Contemporary Resource Management Issues.” Each essay provides useful information on American Indians and the environment, demonstrating the complexity that Krech alludes to in the first chapter in which he discusses the debate his book triggered and welcomes the wealth of discussion it has generated. He argues that the mask of the ecological Indian mystifies complexity, as does generalizing about “the” Indian anything. The rich essays that follow are indications of the variety of Native American economic strategies, ways of understanding their environments, and the politics of revitalization. Krech’s afterword is a response to the authors that will keep the debate alive, inspiring continuing scholarship on the issues.

This book will be valuable for anthropologists, historians, educators, resource managers, and the general

public interested in learning about how Native Americans have been, and are still, front and center in using and managing their environments. Ranging from the oft-told to the newly explicated narratives of Plains Indians riding to the hunt, to the contemporary Goshutes dealing with complex issues of nuclear waste management as an economic strategy to reinvigorate their sovereign authority, to competing discourses on the “ecological Indian,” each stand-alone essay is a fascinating look at the state of the debate on Native Americans and their environments.

**Paula Wagoner**, *Program in Anthropology, Juniata College, Huntingdon, Pennsylvania.*