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Review of *The Columbia Guide to American Indians of the Great Plains* By Loretta Fowler

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The Columbia Guide to American Indians of the Great Plains. By Loretta Fowler. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003. vi + 283 pp. Photographs, maps, notes, chronology, bibliography, index. \$45.00 cloth.

Loretta Fowler, professor of anthropology at the University of Oklahoma and author of several books on Great Plains tribes such as the Arapahos and the Gros Ventres, has now produced this excellent guide to all of the Indian tribes of the area. Dividing the Great Plains into five different regions—Southern, Central, Northwestern, Middle Missouri, and Northeastern Periphery—Fowler provides a concise and straightforward Indian history from prehistoric times to the present in four short chapters. Important terms—people, places, and events—used in each chapter are placed in boldface type and then defined in an appendix that stretches alphabetically from “age-graded societies” to “yuwipi.” In addition, there are informative maps and photographs as well as a useful chronology. Finally, the author supplies an excellent, up-to-the-minute annotated bibliography that includes books and articles on each tribe, along with videos and films and even tribal Web pages. Scholars, teachers, and students will find the work most useful as a quick guide to facts, sources, and definitions.

One of Fowler’s most important contributions in this book—which definitely meets the high standards set by the Columbia guides to American Indians of the Southeast and Northwest—is that she pays as much attention to the sedentary, agricultural tribes of the Great Plains as to the nomadic, buffalo-hunting ones, the focus of so many previous studies of the region. Traditionally, histories of the Sioux, Cheyennes, Arapahos, and Comanches in the mid-nineteenth century have dominated Great Plains historiography. Fowler, however, includes Southern Plains tribes such as the previously neglected Wichitas and Caddos in her story, as well as the village farming Arikaras, Poncas, Omahas, Otoes, and Kaws of the Middle Missouri. She also goes north of the border to look at the Blackfeet Groups and the Cree and the Assiniboiné. In addition, the author devotes as much space to the eighteenth and twentieth centuries as she does to the period of the Great Plains Indian wars.

Fowler’s important, informative work will help dispel the long-standing stereotype that all the Indians of the Great Plains—and even those located elsewhere in North America—wore eagle feather headdresses, hunted buffalo from horseback, and lived in conical teepees. The guide will also serve to inform readers that far from disappearing after the Massacre at Wounded Knee, the tribes of the Great Plains exist vibrantly today. **F. Todd Smith**, *Department of History, University of North Texas*.