

David Young, Grant Ingram, and Lise Swartz, *Cry of the Eagle: Encounters With a Cree Healer*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989.

The authors of this impressive volume state very clearly at the outset that "this book is an account of what a Cree medicine man was able to express to outsiders about the way he perceives the world and how he attempts to transform his vision into action" (p. vii). Such a disclaimer is absolutely essential in a work of this sort, for two basic reasons. First, anthropology has had a long tradition of appropriating cultural knowledge and creating so-called "experts" out of the anthropologists. The new wave emphasis in the discipline toward a "post-modernist" approach disavows any pretence of ethnography as authoritative emic accounts of culture. Second, the authors clearly appreciate the immense diversity of the knowledge and practices of Aboriginal healers, both within and across cultural boundaries. This volume is about the world view of one particular Cree healer, and no suggestion is made that this world view is representative of the Cree as a whole.

The authors have worked for many years with the healer, Russell Willier, including an attempt to demonstrate the efficacy of his treatment for psoriasis according to biomedical standards. This volume adds a new dimension to their work with Willier, by providing a much broader understanding of his traditional medical knowledge. Furthermore, the volume offers the reader a more personal insight into the relationship between the anthropologist and the respondent. The occasionally stormy, yet respectful, relationship is detailed in a number of instances, especially in a chapter detailing the experiences of one of the authors (Ingram) who lived with the Williers for some time. When the Williers request the opportunity to read the anthropologist's notes, they are disturbed to find that he has recorded things that "were none of his business," whereupon he comes to be viewed as a "spy" by at least one member of the family. Yet this incident is tempered by an even more intimate discussion by Young of how Willier treated his seriously ill wife, presented as one of two case studies in the volume. That an anthropologist such as Young would put such trust in the healer is extraordinary, and this fact alone does much to validate the knowledge and skills that Willier possesses.

According to the authors, Russell Willier believes he has been "called" to lead a revitalization of Indian medicine and culture by demonstrating its relevance to the non-Indian world. It was for this reason that Willier allowed the anthropologists to document both his healing practices and the spiritual side of Indian medicine. Willier has been criticized by some Indian people for doing this; these critics believe that Indian medicine is only for Indians to know. The inevitable accusations of charlatanism have been levelled. Is Willier an authentic Indian healer? The question is moot, since Willier clearly practices his medicine and has many patients, both Indian and non-Indian. However, the fact that many Indian people believe that



their medical systems should remain beyond the prying eyes of the scientists and other non-Indians remains pervasive today. That the authors were able to document one healer's activities is really quite remarkable given this fact. There are, to my knowledge, no other comparable contemporary discussions of Indian medicine in print. This is unfortunate, since if one goes back to the ethnographic literature of the early part of the century, it becomes clear that Indians were once very willing to share their knowledge with non-Indians. The legacy of a century of oppressive government policies is clearly the culprit in the reticence of Indian people to speak for the record of their medicine today.

This is a book that will spark controversy because of its content. Nevertheless, it is an extremely valuable source of useful information on Cree healing practices. As such, it would be valuable to all those in the medical field seeking a better understanding of an important, contemporary alternative to biomedicine. Those interested in medical anthropology, medical sociology and Native studies will also find it very useful. Indeed, perhaps all anthropologists should read this volume for the important methodological issues it raises. How the residents of Willier's reserve, and other Indians, feel about the volume is important, even essential, to understanding the future of research into Indian medicine. This question remains unanswered.

James B. Waldram

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J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989.

*Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens* is a valuable contribution to the growing literature on the experience of Native people in Canada. Tracing the relationship between Indians and Euro-Canadians over five centuries, Miller achieves a timely and lucid synthesis of a large body of existing scholarship. This relationship, he concludes, was largely determined by the reasons the respective groups had for interacting with each other. And, far from being passive victims, he insists that Indians were active agents of commercial, military and political alliances with the White community, and were "assertive contributors to the unfolding of Canadian history."

Miller argues that relations between Indians and Europeans evolved through three distinct phases, characterized by co-operation, coercion and conflict. Until the early 19th century Indians served as commercial partners and military allies of the European population. The relationship that developed was mutually beneficial, since it involved non-directed culture