Encyclopedia of the Great Plains Indians

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Reviewer Brad D. Lookingbill is professor of history at Columbia College of Missouri and the author of War Dance at Fort Marion: Plains Indian War Prisoners (2006).

The Encyclopedia of the Great Plains Indians evolved from the Encyclopedia of the Great Plains, which David J. Wishart edited and the University of Nebraska originally published in 2004. Professor Wishart calls his new volume “a paperback spin-off” of the original encyclopedia. Philip DeLoria and Christopher Rigs co-wrote the introduction, which traces the history of Plains Indian nations and contemplates “Native renaissances” in the region. About 170 scholars and writers helped to produce 123 entries that appeared in the original encyclopedia, and 23 new entries have been added to the mix. The entries for the encyclopedia range from “Adobe Walls” to “Zitkala-Ša.” They explore the people, places, processes, and events relevant to the first inhabitants of the midcontinental grasslands. They resonate with the editor’s desire to show how Indian nations have endured, what they have accomplished, and why they remain vital to the future of the Great Plains. They also feature Prairie Indian nations such as the Otoe-Missouria and the Osage, although no entry appears for the Ioway.

In sum, the Encyclopedia of the Great Plains Indians should be perused by anyone interested in Great Plains history in general and Plains Indians in particular. The pages feature illustrations, photographs, and maps. The extensive cross-referencing and detailed indexing make this volume accessible to high school students, university undergraduates, and general readers. This authoritative resource belongs on the shelves of libraries not already holding the original encyclopedia in their reference collections.


Reviewer Donald L. Fixico is Distinguished Foundation Professor of History at Arizona State University. He edited the three-volume Treaties with American Indians: An Encyclopedia of Rights, Conflicts and Sovereignty (2008).

This well-written book is one of the few national studies of state laws addressing American Indians and state governments. Deborah Rosen divides her discussion of sovereignty, race, and citizenship into three