FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Stars Above Earth Below: American Indians and Nature

Marsha C. Bol
Roberts Rinehart Publishers
978-1-57098-198-2
(June 25, 1998)

Dr. Marsha Bol has taken what she started in her previous book, *North, South, East, West: American Indians and the Natural World*, a step further. In this gathering of essays, songs, photographs and poems she documents Native Americans' historical and contemporary interpretation of their place in the natural world.

[Most] Indians have a decidedly different "World View" from the mainstream Euro/Western cultures. In this "view" the separation of humans from the rest of Creation is very minor, whereas, in Western societies man is distant, set apart from the natural world, evicted from the Garden, seeing themselves as dominant over animals, plants and earthly resources. A view which tends to maximize the economical and diminish the magical. This understanding is crucial to the interpretation and study of both pre- and post-conquest Aboriginal cultures anywhere in the world.

We also see how the natural world was the crucible for the manifestation of Indian cultures in North America through six themes: origin stories, astronomy, culture and landscape, animals, botany and nature as models for society. These broad areas express the inter-action of humans with the animal and plant nations around them, and with the celestial and unseen world as well. In the section on plant use, we are shown practical and spiritual relationships with the world. Specifically their Tribe's relationship with the sacred Red Cedar. In the section on nature and society, a corn grinding song is a prayer asking that the singer may be pure and beautiful as nature, and do as much good as the sacred Corn plant.

Through collaboration with so many knowledgeable authors, the information in this book is valuable and impressive. The footnote and bibliography sections are extensive. The taxonomical lists of plants and animal names in both English and Latin—and sometimes Native languages as well—is an unusual element.

Bol is Associate Curator of Anthropology at Carnegie Museum of Natural History, was Project Director for the Alcoa Foundation Hall of American Indians, which opened in 1988. She is an expert in the field of Native American arts, with a specialty in Lakota art and culture. Dr.

Bol has a Ph.D. in Native American art history.

Gabrielle Shaw