

Hadley Irwin. *We Are Mesquakie, We Are One*. (Old Westbury: The Feminist Press, 1980) 118 pp., \$7.95.

*We Are Mesquakie, We Are One* by Hadley Irwin is the simply and sensitively told tale of a Mesquakie Indian girl who comes of age during a turbulent period in the history of her nation. In 1845, after fifteen years of treaties, the Mesquakie (sometimes also called the Fox) Indians were expelled from their lands along the Iowa River and forcibly marched to Kansas, where they were relocated on reservation lands far inferior to their own. The Mesquakies managed to avoid being acculturated into white ways, and over a period of years saved the money they got from the U.S. Government and bought back their original lands. From 1852 on, they gradually returned to Iowa, rejoining a few courageous members of their tribe who had stayed, in defiance of the Blue-coats who burned their villages and the white settlers who appropriated their land, in order to keep alive the dream of reclaiming their home.

Hidden Doe, the youthful heroine of the story, has just been initiated into womanhood when this disruption occurs. Behind her she leaves a secure and happy childhood and a much beloved grandmother, Gray Gull, who stays to supervise the necessary negotiations with the settlers. Before returning as a grown woman, Hidden Doe endures great hardship, including the deaths by pox of many whom she loves, and a period of exile with a well-intentioned family of white settlers who christen her "Dorothy." Yet although her life is filled with heartbreak and disaster, it also contains loving relationships, reunions, and rebirths. Hidden Doe faces her losses and challenges with courage, resourcefulness, and self-respect. She retains her Mesquakie ways, and she finds a loving and responsible young man with whom to share the ever-brightening future. Ultimately, *We are Mesquakie, We Are One* is a book not only about deprivation and endurance, but about triumph and good will.

The authors, Lee Hadley and Annabelle Irwin, both professors of English at Iowa State University, carefully researched this period of Mesquakie history. Many of the details of Mesquakie culture and of Hidden Doe's experience are based upon *The Autobiography of a Fox Indian Woman* (1918), edited by Truman Michelson. *We Are Mesquakie, We Are One* makes a fine addition to the Feminist Press series of non-sexist novels for adolescent readers. It is authentic in its presentation of Mesquakie history and culture and respectful towards its subject; and it is enjoyable, educational, and inspiring for readers of any age and ethnic background.

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