

Elizabeth Weatherford, ed. with Emelia Seubert. *Native Americans on Film and Video*. (New York: Museum of the American Indian/Heye Foundation, 1981) 152 pp., \$4.95.

This is an extraordinarily impressive and thorough compilation of primarily documentary films made by and about Native Americans. The Museum of the American Indian, the Heye Foundation and Elizabeth Weatherford and Emelia Seubert are to be commended for their effort and industry. *Native Americans on Film and Video* grew out of a major exhibition, "The Ancestors: Native Artisans of the Americas," where more than one hundred and twenty-five films and video tapes were shown by the museum. This special event was part of the Museum of the American Indian's ongoing Film and Video Project which since its beginning in 1979 had sponsored the Native American Film Festival. The organization of the festival pointed up the needs for a comprehensive and updated source of information about films on Inuit and Indians of North, Central, and South America.

The book is divided into three main sections: Film and Video Listings, Special Film Collections, and Resources, with an additional subject index list of distributors and a bibliography. The heart of the volume is in the listing of video tapes and films which have been annotated with a general description of the film or type of the data production, running time, production credits, language of the film if other than English, and format (video and film). Also included is a distributor, reference for further information, and a list of the series if the film appears in one. The list is exhaustive. Some four hundred films and tapes are included and supplied with descriptions, some rather extensive ones. The section on Special Film Collections is primarily of regional and archival interest with some records of specific daily and ritual activities. This section will be of particular interest for those with a focused interest. The Resources include the growing number of organizations, film festivals, tribal and regional media centers, North American Indian Production Companies, and media training centers. As the editors note, the listing should "serve as a starting place for an interchange of information and materials." Although the editors are at great pains to caution that before ordering any of these films the reader should preview the films or tapes themselves, this particular volume provides a comprehensive volume for beginning the study of material on film and video by and about Native Americans.

As Bruce Baird, of the Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium, has written in his introduction to this volume "Reflections: Native Americans in the Media": "the struggle to change attitudes and stereotypes about Native Americans has made it

essential for Indians to participate in media, determining how Indian concerns and realities are presented.” And as Baird points out, the key to changing attitudes and stereotypes is for Native Americans to begin to produce their own film and video tape. The value of a book such as this one, in the revolution which Native Americans began in the early 1970s, is that it points to and identifies those films and video tapes already made by Native Americans or which contain images of Native Americans which avoid stereotypic ones normally received from the Hollywood film. *Native Americans on Film and Video* makes accessible to those Native Americans who are working in the industry, producing, directing, starring in and writing films by and about themselves, a context within which their current efforts are being conducted. To know that there are some four hundred other films and video tapes can assure them that they are not working in a vacuum; in fact, that they are contributing to a tradition. *Native Americans on Film and Video* also makes an important contribution to that tradition.

—Charles L. P. Silet
Iowa State University