

Finally, while repeatedly asserting that the structure of the American political system minimizes the influence of interest groups, ethnic or otherwise, on foreign policy, the book still has much to say on how ethnic groups do shape policy. I would like to see this inconsistency resolved with more clarity.

Given the many useful contributions of this book, these criticisms can be regarded as mandates for future research. As it stands, this is a valuable text, one that helps us connect the experience and behavior of American ethnic groups to international issues.

—Steven J. Gold
Whittier College

Gary Clayton Anderson. *Little Crow: Spokesman for the Sioux.* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1986) 259 pp., \$19.95; \$10.95 paper.

As Gary Anderson notes in the introduction to his recent history of the life of the Dakota Sioux leader Little Crow, writing Native American biography is a difficult undertaking. Because of the scarcity of direct source material about major portions of the life and thought of their subjects, historians have generally attempted full-scale biographies of only a few such widely-known men as Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull. Yet, the value of individual biography in humanizing history, dispelling mass cultural stereotypes, and elucidating interethnic relations is so great that Anderson's solid, well-researched, and readable life of Little Crow is indeed welcome.

Little Crow is a fascinating and controversial figure. Generally remembered as the "chief" who led the bloody Dakota War of 1862, he was active during a period when rapid advancement of white settlement in their Minnesota homeland left the members of his Mdewakanton tribe with few good options for survival. Realizing the inevitability of the loss of the majority of the tribe's land, he used his influence and political talents to negotiate government treaties exchanging it for a small reservation and funds sufficient to feed the people. His willingness to work with whites to accomplish these goals cost him the support of many fellow tribesmen, while his refusal to convert to Christianity and take up farming earned him the disfavor of missionaries and government agents assigned to the new reservation.

Tragically, Little Crow's efforts at accommodation came to nothing when the government failed to provide the promised funds and the reservation's white traders refused to extend credit to the starving Mdewakantons. This provoked a situation of tension with surrounding

white settlers that erupted into a hopeless war which Little Crow reluctantly agreed to lead. When it was over, less than a year later, over four hundred white settlers, Little Crow, and a number of other Dakotas had been killed; thirty-nine Dakota warriors had been hung; and all remaining Dakotas and many other Native Americans had been driven from Minnesota.

Anderson illustrates and documents the dramatic events of Little Crow's life and death with maps and photographs, hundreds of notes, and an extensive bibliography and index. His well-balanced description of the complex interactions between whites and Indians leading up to the Dakota War of 1862 gives a reader some understanding of the Mdewakantons' human role in that tragic situation rather than portraying them as either as noble savages or bloodthirsty murderers.

Anderson's biography of Little Crow is also valuable on two other counts. It shows the sort of intricate kin relationships that formed the basis of traditional Dakota society, and it constitutes a good picture of the nature of the political power wielded by tribal headmen such as Little Crow. Not the authoritarian "chiefs" that many whites assumed them to be, these men were chosen to be spokesmen for their people because of their ability to elicit consensus agreements due to the influence of their extensive kinship networks and personal distinction.

—Kathleen Danker
University of Nebraska, Lincoln

William L. Andrews. *To Tell a Free Story: The First Century of Afro-American Autobiography, 1760-1865.* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986) xiii, 353 pp., \$25.95.

William L. Andrews' *To Tell a Free Story* is a fine study of the history and development of the Afro-American narrative in its first century. Andrews presents the narrative in the hands of its creators as a dynamic form which, when studied for its process of telling, expresses the movement of its writers from an absence of self to a celebration of both self and community. It follows in the footsteps of Andrews' other important contributions to the field of black studies, and promises to serve as a resource to which other studies of the genre can look.

To Tell a Free Story makes use of virtually all of the information in the field both within the chapters themselves and in its helpful and extensive notes. In addition, Andrews provides an "Annotated Bibliography of Afro-American Autobiography, 1760-1865," and an "Annotated Bibliography of Afro-American Biography, 1760-1865," as well as an index and limited illustrations. Breaking his material into six chapters which