

Others flesh out the image of nineteenth- and twentieth-century constructions of Americanness and American ethnicity. There is a character sketch of Jewish American authoress Anzia Yezierska by Mary Dearborn, an insightful discussion of sociologist W. I. Thomas's analysis of deviance in women by Carla Cappetti, a reflection by Albert Murray on his co-writing the as-told-to (auto)biography of Count Basie, and four brief texts by Ishmael Reed, et al.

— Hartwig Isernhagen
University of Basel, Switzerland

Craig Storti. *Incident at Bitter Creek: The Story of the Rock Springs Chinese Massacre.* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1991) xii, 193 pp., \$21.95.

In September 1885 a petty dispute among Euro-American and Chinese Union Pacific miners in Wyoming exploded into a homicidal spree which left twenty-five confirmed dead Chinese miners, and another twenty-six missing and presumed dead. In the weeks and months which followed, other Chinese miners and laborers were robbed, killed, or hounded out of the United States. Some of the parties responsible for these atrocities were arrested and brought to trial, but juries found no one guilty of these genocidal crimes. Many local, state, territorial, military, and federal government officials made good-faith efforts to protect the Chinese, but their efforts primarily hastened the exodus of the Chinese contract workers from American shores; for protection usually meant little more than safe passage away from the danger areas, and most of the western US was a dangerous area for Chinese nationals after Rock Springs. Craig Storti's brief account of these events revives long dormant, shameful memories of an era in American history when racial and ethnic prejudices ran unchecked and labor unrest all too easily led to homicide.

As Storti develops the tale, the Union Pacific Railroad bears a heavy burden of guilt for the murderous events at Rock Springs and thereafter. It is ironic that the Union Pacific mines had been highly supportive of the Chinese laborers both before and immediately after the brutal events. Chinese workmen were hired as cheap labor and were effective strikebreakers. But the Union Pacific mines gave them acceptable wages, good housing and, importantly, better working conditions than the European Americans were provided. This led to hostility between the two labor pools. Resentful European American miners, angry with anti-union company policies, lashed out at the beneficiaries of those policies, the Rock Springs Chinese laborers.

As a tale of the lives of common Chinese laborers in the western coal fields, the book is a disappointment. The book covers the Knights of Labor and unionism quite well and introduces many of the key corporate and political figures in the drama adequately. It digresses into a disconnected story about the Shoshoni Chief Washakie and US government dealing with the Indians twenty years before the Chinese massacre, a Rock Springs myth about Butch Cassidy evading arrest there once, and a few other interesting irrelevancies. A few of the

villains in the tragedy are named, but very little is said about most of them. We learn even less about the Chinese workers or their lot. Two major Chinese figures in the drama are named, the labor contractors and community leaders Ah Say and Ah Koon, but they are little more than shadows in the history Storti reveals. Both survived the massacre, but neither reappears in the events recounted thereafter.

Thus the book is not a resource for anyone seeking to discover what it was like to be a Chinese contract laborer in the United States in the early years of the exclusion acts. Nor does the book go far enough in explaining the motivations of the killers in lashing out so violently against the Chinese, not just at Rock Springs, but in numerous other camps, towns, and cities across the nation thereafter. Its primary value exists in documenting the tragedy which befell the Chinese victims of misdirected frustration and anger.

This book is an important addition to any library collection which seeks to serve an ethnic studies curriculum or document the history of the Chinese in America. It is well suited to a novice undergraduate college student. The impressive list of sources provides an excellent starting point for someone seeking to do more with the topic than Storti has done. But it cannot be taken for the last word on the massacre, the issues giving rise to it, or following from it. Too much is left unsaid.

— Richard R. E. Kania
Guilford College

Herman J. Viola. *After Columbus: The Smithsonian Chronicle of the North American Indians*. (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 1990) 288 pp., \$45.00

In a factual but impassioned introduction, George P. Horse Capture writes a fitting foreword to this work on the history of Native Americans through the last five hundred years. Through the growing number of non-Indians honestly writing about the indigenous peoples, a mass audience is finally learning about the tragic history and the depressed conditions of the tribes. He praises the work of Dee Brown and of Alvin Josephy, Jr., as well as the author of the present work, Herman Viola.

Viola structures the book into three main sections: "Encounters," "Inheritance Lost," and "Fighting for Rights." The first chapter gives an overview. It, as well as the entire book, has excellent color illustrations which supplement a clear text. Maps also help the reader to understand the locations of the diverse tribes and nations.

"Landfall" and "Horse Culture" carry forward the racial encounters and the history of the Plains Indians in North America. "Cultures in Collision" indicates the Native Americans' relationships with the English, Spanish, French, and Russians on the continent. "The End of the Beginning" details the Indian nations which sided with the American "patriots," with the British, or with the French.