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Indian Story and Song from North America. By Alice Fletcher. (1900; rpt. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995. Pp. xxvii + 126, new introduction by Helen Myers, 16 p., bibliography, musical transcriptions with piano arrangements, $6.95 US, ISBN 0-8032-6888-2 pbk.)

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See table of contents

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Newfoundland, or to "the wild men of Borneo". Featherstone is attempting to generalize, in the worst excesses of ethnocentrism, based on his own frame of reference, (which, let's face it, is not something we can condemn in its own right) but by calling such a generalization "postmodern" and not backing such a statement up with ethnographic evidence is ivory-tower elitism at its worst.

I think Featherstone's thesis is too minor and his referencing too scattershot to engage someone unfamiliar with postmodern theory. Unfortunately, for those with experienced postmodern interests, his insistence upon referencing every step along his path may be found to be as uncomfortably pedantic and plodding as I experienced it. For me the intellectual payoff in the second half of the book was not worth the effort it took to get through the first half. That being said, perhaps some exciting ethnographic work can now be initiated in response to Featherstone's theorizing. This book, then, is one place to start looking for potential questions. *Undoing Cultures* gives no answers, and is unclear on what the questions are outside of a global sociological framework.

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Indian Story and Song from North America. By Alice Fletcher. (1900; rpt. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995. Pp. xxvii + 126, new introduction by Helen Myers, 16 p., bibliography, musical transcriptions with piano arrangements, $6.95 US, ISBN 0-8032-6888-2 pbk.)

The recent work of George W. Stocking, Jr. and others on the history of anthropology has stimulated a surge of interest in the old ethnographic texts and their authors (Stocking 1985-1991; Sanjek 1990; Van Maanen 1988). It has also inspired a number of publishers to re-issue some of the classic anthropological monographs. Since 1992, for example, the University of Nebraska Press has reprinted four monographs by Alice Fletcher (1828-1923), with new introductions by various reputable scholars. The most recent of these, *Indian Song and Story from North American*, originally published in 1900, is the subject of this review.

Anyone with an interest in the history of early North American anthropology/ethnomusicology will find *Indian Song and Story* informative. Fletcher, as Helen Myers explains in her new introduction to this work, was a well-to-do American who attended exclusive schools, travelled widely, taught in private schools, and read and lectured on the "Ancient Americas." Through Suzette Tibbles, an Omaha woman married to a Nebraska journalist, Fletcher obtained an invitation to visit the Omaha reservation in 1881. In 1882 she was introduced to Tibbles's Omaha brother, Francis La Flesche, with whom she established "a caring and affectionate relationship [that lasted] for forty years" (p. xxiii) and resulted in numerous joint projects and publications. Indeed, Fletcher and La Flesche grew so close that Fletcher informally adopted La Flesche as her son so that he could legally inherit her estate. Myers describes the pair as "devoted to...and dependent on each other" (p. xxiii).

This is not an academic book. The volume, as Fletcher explains in her preface, was intended to expose the general public — in particular, musicians and composers — to the subtle nuances of aboriginal music. To this end, Fletcher presented a selection of thirty-one transcribed melodies from across the continent reproduced "exactly as sung by the Indians" (Preface). She undertook most of the transcription directly from the singers rather than from phonograph recordings. For this reason, the melodies featured in the book are, at best, rough representations of the originals. Further distortions are imposed by the addition of chordal piano arrangements by John C. Fillmore and Edwin S. Tracey.

Fletcher prefaces each music item with a short discussion of its cultural context so that, as she explains, composers and others might more easily work with the songs. In a few cases, she includes her own personal experience. For example, in "Story and Song of the HE-DHU'-SHKA," she writes that "it had been a warm September day; and I was resting in my hammock, swung from a wide-spreading tree that stood near the tent of my Indian host" (p. 3). Unfortunately, however, even here there is an anonymity throughout that distances the song from its source. Instead of specific individuals' names, Fletcher writes of "the mother," "the Indian," "my friend," or "my Indian host." She also includes no details about particular dates and communities. "The Story and Song of the Wren" is typical. Here, Fletcher acknowledges in a footnote the name of her interpreter rather than the name of the native singer/storyteller: "Both the story and song were recited to me by an old priest of the rite, and were interpreted by Mr. James R. Murie" (p. 53). For these and other reasons, the book rarely rises above the level of vague generality.

Fletcher makes her most scholarly contribution in her concluding remarks on "Music and Indian Life" and "The Relation of Story and Song" (p. 114-126). Her main point is that these songs represent an earlier developmental form of Western "high" culture. "The rise of our music and poetry, " she writes, "is lost in an irrevocable past: but, as the operation of physical laws is universal, it may be that some of the influences that have been operative in the growth of these arts can be discovered through the study of native American story and song, born of a race living in a state of culture antecedent to that in which our earliest literature and music flourished" (p. 120). In drawing such conclusions, Fletcher displays her allegiance to the social evolutionists of her day, for example, Edward B. Tylor in Britain and Lewis Henry Morgan in the United States.

This is a useful book for all of those interested in early anthropologists and their works. Although Helen Myers's new introduction is very informative, it lacks a critical contextualization of Fletcher's anthropology. Who exactly were the singers whose songs are represented in this book? What was Fletcher's connection with the singers she recorded? Did she keep fieldnotes? Are these available for the songs included in this collection? Who was Francis La Flesche? What was his relationship with his Omaha people? What was the nature of his working relationship with Fletcher? It would have been very unusual at the turn-of-the-century for a woman of Fletcher's background to adopt one of her so-called "informants." How did this affect their work together? How did La Flesche become literate? Was he fluent in his own language? These are the sorts of questions that need to be answered in order to appreciate more fully *Indian Story and Song From North America* by Alice Fletcher.

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