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Because of its interest to many Newsletter readers, Hanta Yo: An American Saga by Ruth Beebe Hill (New York: Doubleday, 1979; 834 pp. Preface by Chunksa Yuha; \$14.95) dominates this issue. Raymond J. DeMallie's review, "Ayn Rand Meets Hiawatha," is reprinted by special permission of The Nation, in which it originally appeared on April 28, 1979, pp. 469-70. We are grateful to The Nation for enabling us to reprint this work by the author of "Sioux Ethnohistory" and many articles on Plains Indians. Review 2, by Bea Medicine (Standing Rock Sioux) of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin, Madison was written for the Newsletter. Review 3, by Vine Deloria, Jr, Dept. of Political Science, Univ. of Arizona, was offered to us by its distinguished author after another publication seemed more interested in delaying than in printing it.

1.

Melodramatic, pseudophilosophical and ponderous, Hanta Yo is a best seller soon to become a movie and an ABC-TV mini-series. Fashioned and marketed as the Indian version of Roots, it has been brought to the public by the same publisher and network that made such successes of Alex Haley's book. The story of a small band of Lakota Indians (the Teton Sioux), who lived and hunted on the high plains, Hanta Yo purports to give the illusion of authentic immersion in an Indian world circa 1794 to 1835. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Although the dust jacket promises that, "More than fact, more than fiction, Hanta Yo has the authority of a detailed ethnographic study," Ruth Beebe Hill, over the course of twenty-five years' work, has invented this Lakota world with the aid of a mysterious Sioux collaborator named Chunksa Yuha. Although Hill has actually read a great deal of Lakota history and ethnography, she chooses to fabricate an Indian existence as she would like it to have been--a primitive emotional paradise in which every character's individuality shines undiminished by the restraints of society.

Historians, anthropologists and linguists can find hundreds of specific points with which to quarrel. Although Hill translates her title as "Clear the Way!" in fact Hanta Yo means "Move it! Scram!," a command addressed to one person, usually a child; the phrase does not appear in any recorded sacred songs of the Lakota nor was it, as far as we know, ever a battle cry. There is also the misleading implication that the Dakota suddenly moved westward from the Mississippi valley in 1750; the incorrect assumption that in a generation or two the western Sioux consciously changed their dialect from Dakota to Lakota; the false suggestion that eagle feathers as war honors were used only after crossing the Missouri River; the unproven assumption that the political system of chiefs and shirt-wearers was invented only after moving to the plains; an incorrect assertion that the sun dance was an old woodlands ceremony revived by the Lakota on the plains during the late 18th century; invented ceremonies involving oral sex and sodomy between men, both of which are contrary to Lakota ethnography; the unfounded assertion that war captives were sodomized by their captors; the incorrect characterization of the Navajos as making silver and turquoise jewelry in the 1830s; the inconceivable suggestion that the only questions possible in the Dakota language are rhetorical ones; the indefensible statement that words such as "admit," "assume," "because," "believe," "end," "forget," "forgive" and many others have no comparable concepts in the Dakota language. To correct the errors of Hanta Yo would amount to writing a full-scale historical ethnography of the Sioux.

But the truly fraudulent aspect of the novel is the false and pernicious sense of historical and psychological accuracy it imparts to the unknowing reader. Hill writes, "It is a story Dakotah in description and discernment, Dakotah in precept and example, Dakotah in structure and style." The claim is unfounded and the book is surely no compliment to Native Americans. Hill realizes that the Dakota/Lakota language has a different grammatical structure from English and pretends to reflect this in her prose, but she has no understanding of linguistic principles. Lakota does not have a tense system directly comparable to English; instead, verbal aspect expresses temporal relationships. Hill translates this directly, as though the past tense did not exist in Lakota, producing some of the worst Hollywood-Indian English imaginable: "The traveling band already stops twice since

dawn"; "He offers these claws a symbol of the power he once owns"; "When young I am wife to a healer"; "Never before will Ahbleza see women preparing to fight." Nor does Lakota express plurality in the noun but rather in the verb. Hill occasionally translates this directly with constructions like "two enemy." Some of her conventions are aggravatingly repetitive. One example must be presumed to reflect Indian uncertainty with numbers: "ten, eleven winters," "two, three hairs." Another construction evidently reflects Indian sagacity: "The grandfathers had said so, said so"; "the wapiya says so"; "Will not the stars say so?"; "The clubmen say so."

The use of English compounds to give presumed etymological interpretations of Lakota designations for natural phenomena--e.g., "curved horn" (three-year-old buffalo), "flat-faced one" (badger), "traveling-dog" (coyote)--is so bewildering that a long glossary had to be tacked on. A lengthy vocabulary of Lakota terms and phrases is also included, many with dubious or spurious English translations. Far from bringing the reader close to the Lakota sense of the world, the convoluted linguistic tricks and the overuse of Lakota terms are reminiscent of the singsong verse in "The Song of Hiawatha."

Beyond the nearly impenetrable style, the message of Hanta Yo is a damaging one for Native Americans. Greed, envy, lust, love, sex, hate, murder, torture--every imaginable passion of the unfettered, childlike and noble savage runs wild in the rambling narrative. Its celebration of individual passions serves to document Hill's main contention that "The American Indian, even before Columbus, was the remnant of a very old race in its final stage, a race that had attained perhaps the highest working concept of individualism ever practiced." The term race betrays her 19th-century leanings, as the emphasis on individualism indicates her political bias. When Hill asks that we enter her Dakota world "uncritically, without vanity," she becomes the spiritual descendant of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Indeed, her introduction brings strikingly to mind the introduction to "The Song of Hiawatha":

Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple,
Who have faith in God and Nature,
Who believe that in all ages
Every human heart is human,
That in even savage bosoms
There are longings, yearnings, strivings...
Listen to this simple story,
To this Song of Hiawatha!

Like Longfellow, Hill uses Indian materials to comment on America. She characterizes the fierce individualism that her book glorifies as "the spiritual source not only of the American Indian but of America itself." She ignores the strongly cooperative, integrative aspects of traditional tribal life and glorifies instead the individuality of the warrior and hunter. Her characters are all societal misfits, forsaking sex, love, marriage, happiness, religion or life itself in an incessant mystical quest after individual self-expression.

Perhaps the novel is, after all, to be taken allegorically. A self-proclaimed devotee of Ayn Rand, Hill feels the United States has gone sour, sacrificed individual freedoms for misguided social responsibility. However, to attribute this perspective to a Native American nation whose history and culture are likely to be remembered by thousands of readers (and potentially millions of viewers) from this book alone is irresponsible. In the name of accuracy, the book distorts beyond recognition the past of a people who--despite the implications of the book--are not dead and vanished but are very much a part of the contemporary American scene.

The essential theme of Hanta Yo is identical to that of the Longfellow epic--the inevitable passing of the Indian before the coming of the white man who, despite his many gifts, brought whiskey, disease and extinction. Today we recognize Hiawatha's hackneyed words as a justification of that extinction:

I beheld our nation scattered.
All forgetful of my counsels.
Weakened, warring with each other;
Saw the remnants of our people
Surging westward, wild and woeful!

In Hanta Yo, published 124 years later, the hero Ahbleza foresees the destructive fighting among his people in a vision. Hill laments: "And the next generation of Lakotah shall grow up on this plain never hearing the true parent-tongue, never glimpsing the real Dakotah heart."

As Hiawatha sailed off into the west, he left his people with advice to heed the white missionaries:

But my guests I leave behind me;
Listen to their words of wisdom,
Listen to the truth they tell you...

Ahbleza's final message to his people heralds not the coming of the missionaries but evidently that of Ruth Hill:

"To the Mahto people, my brother, give this message: that not all white men act alike...the Lakotah will recognize these good persons for the reason that these good persons will recognize the Lakotah."

It is shocking after a full decade of activism on the part of American Indians, the rise of Red Power and the popularity of works like Vine Deloria's Custer Died for Your Sins, that books as distorted and misguided as Hanta Yo still seize the imagination of publishers and the media. Protest may be entirely academic in the face of its mammoth advertising campaign. Perhaps in its screen versions it will be called "How the West Was Lost," another last stand for noble Hiawatha, whose imminent demise always captures the romantic core of the American imagination.

2.

Usually, I do not review historical novels, but feel that a Lakota person should comment on this book.¹ Hanta Yo is a command in Lakota which is translated into English most cogently and correctly as "Get out!" or "Move!" It is usually verbalized in an impatient context, and used only by men in that form. Lakota females say, "Hanta!" or "Hanta Ye!" It was never a rallying cry in battle. "Hoka Hey!" was a battle shout and was never used by women.

Destined to become a TV series, this book will be a blight upon many Lakota--especially those persons in higher education. Depending upon our individual socialization and beingness as Lakota persons, we must condone or condemn; defend or destroy the images it portrays. It is an embarrassment to many of us and another treatise touted as truth written by a non-Indian. More importantly, it is imperative that new stereotypes--especially sexual ones--be eradicated.

This book is turgid and tiresome. Descendants of the Mahto (Bear) band trudge tediously yet intrepidly through 812 pages of text--with a glossary of Lakota words added, plus several pages of "Idiomatic Phrases" to give supposed Lakota designations, i.e., "little old grandmother who scolds but not unkindly" = crow. It is surprising that Mrs. Hill did not symbolize the Siouan sacred number of four in the numbered pages of text or use it in her successful publicity campaign.

The author, in my opinion, is a woman in search of culture heroes and she produces them frequently. If it were not for this intergenerational, innovative Mahto band, Lakota culture as we lived it (and live it) would not exist. It is obvious that she has poured over ethnographic accounts of the Lakota. This book, however, is not to be viewed as "the authority of a detailed ethnographic study" as the dust jacket proclaims.

If the text is a direct translation of Mrs. Hill's "words into archaic Dakotah and back into the English of the 1806 Webster's dictionary" (Smithsonian, December, 1978, 111), then the alleged prototypic Siouan language is too archaic to present the rich, potent, and poetic nuances of Lakota plus the wisdom, humor, and clarity characteristic of Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota dialects of the Siouan language. Perhaps, Webster's 1806 dictionary proved inadequate to convey what Mrs. Hill calls "the Indian 'altitude of mind'" (ibid., 111). She claims that such words as believe, promise, them, us, we, etc., and their conceptions did not exist in Lakota, but were whiteman's imports to the New World. Phrases as--"The enemy kills the Mahto leader? Who, this enemy? Whose arrow pierces the neck of Peta, leader of the Mahto band?" (p. 75), plus the repetitive use of "say so, say so"--will save TV and/or Hollywood script writers much "White time" and confirm the deficiency model of Native American linguistic oratory and expressiveness. The stoic and inarticulate Indians live on!

Ruth Beebe Hill has, however, found a "real, live-in" linguistic informant. Chunksa Yuha, a Dakota Sioux, provides adequate linguistic data. Who is James E. Ricketson, another "White expert?" The postulate that language change can be effectively enacted in a short time is dubious. I have received a letter from Chunksa Yuha--after requesting information about him from Doubleday. True to Lakota ideals and respect for elders, I shall say no more--except that I hope he shares in the author's spoils--especially the monetary ones.

We, as anthropologists, are constantly being faulted for exploiting native peoples. Novelists (viz., THE MEMOIRS OF CHIEF RED FOX) have been, in my opinion, more exploitative, as have the publishers. Peggy Thomson has given Hanta Yo a sense of authenticity by her article in SMITHSONIAN magazine.

A recent statement on the "mocassin telegraph" has Mrs. Hill saying that Dr. Scott Momaday is not an Indian. True, we have our share of "wood-work Indians" or "Indians of convenience," but we certainly are capable of making our

own statements." For the Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota bands, see the works of Vine Deloria, Jr., Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Tim Giago, Jr., James LaPointe, John Snow and Dan Kennedy in the present generation. Our past literary forebears include Ella Deloria, Charles Eastman, Standing Bear, and Long.

I read every page of the tiresome text. I did not wish to be accused of superficiality or "Why didn't you write one?" The Lakota people have had our share of ethnographers and historians writing about us. Mainly because of what I have labelled as "a generosity of inclusiveness" one cannot decry Chunksa Yuha's relationship to Mrs. Hill. One encounters numerous adopted "brothers" (White American males) of such personages as Leonard Crow Dog, David Spotted Horse, and others. Thus, hunka-ship continues.

Although I do not accept this book as ethnographic fact, there are statements in it that could have dire effects upon the perceptions of the Lakota people. It is not known precisely when the Lakota migrated onto the Plains. Other distortions appear in Mrs. Hill's presentation of Lakota life-ways. One is the emphasis on eagle feathers as symbolic items in a war complex after the arrival of the Lakota on the Plains. This negates the use of eagle feathers in other ceremonial contexts--not only for the Lakota but for countless other tribes. This can affect the attitudes of government officials (Customs officers, Federal judges, Game and Wildlife officers) regarding possession of eagle feathers by contemporary Indians. The inclusion of eagle feathers in sacred medicine bundles in border crossings and in ceremonial regalia are issues which are part of the religious freedom for native peoples in the Americas. A certain harassment exists, however. One can hear the reply, "But this is only a novel!" Being victimized by myth-makers (novelists, newspapers, movies, TV--all the media) necessitates a constant counterattack and survival strategy for us at all times and in all circumstances. It is certainly easier to read a novel or watch a TV special and make decisions regarding the future life-styles of powerless peoples.

To compare Hill and Haley is spurious. ROOTS presented a much-appreciated cultural history for Blacks written by a Black. Lakota people have fought tenaciously to maintain our indigenous culture and transmit it to our children. We do not need a book to remind us of our traditions.

Certain social structural characterizations of Ruth Beebe Hill's "people" are confusing but given authenticity by kinship charts. Tunksila and Unci are kinship terms which both male and female Lakota-speakers use as terms of address--not only for one's biological grandparents, but many other individuals in a tiospaye (extended family) who fit into the first ascending generation. Cuwe is a term which female Lakota speakers use to address an older sister or female cousin who fits into that age category. These are terms of address--as the English Grandfather or Grandmother--and are not proper names. Hill performs a version of "creating chiefs" by attributing Itancan (head men) to the advent on the Plains. Her descriptions of the genesis of the Sun Dance as a Woodlands feature can have drastic effects on the claims of other tribes to the East. Certainly, she has not overlooked Leslie Spier's classic analysis of the Sun Dance and subsequent interpretations.

The sexual data presented and attributed to the Lakota is downright disgusting. Both the ethnographic literature and oral history accounts do not give credence to the graphic descriptions Mrs. Hill presents. Giving ritual sanction to oral sex between males and having Lakota warriors sodomizing vanquished enemy males is revolting. Lakota males were in a state of continence as war was considered a ritual event. Her descriptions of husband bathing his bride and explicit detailing of sex is a part of achieving a best-seller for a sex-centered White American society. Ethnographic accounts stress that Lakota (and Cheyenne) Indian societies were sexually repressed. Proscriptions and prescriptions abounded, and still do. This is not to say that Lakota people did not recognize the role of the male "deviant" to use an English term usually ascribed to such persons. We refer to them as winkte (woman-like or "wishes-to-be-a-woman"). Their roles have been described to me as ritualist, artist, specialist in women's craft production, herbalist, seer, namer of children, rejector of the rigorous warrior role, and homosexual. Moreover, her vivid descriptions of the brutality between males and females does not ring true in a society in which women, although hard-working, had recognition and respect. The very existence of the Lakota people depended upon a smoothly functioning dyadic relationship between males and females. Her presentation of relation-

ships between co-wives is completely convoluted. She perpetuates the images of the vicious, wife-beating Indian male and the compliant, beast-like Indian female drudge in the minds of her readers.

Ruth Beebe Hill plays upon every image which has stereotyped Indians of all tribes. Here it has multiple impact because the Lakota are a Plains group and the Plains Indian is the major image in the minds of most non-Indian people. Throughout this long book, there is a confirmation of every image of Indians in our long history of Indian-White relationships. Avariciousness, cruelty, deception, hatred, jealousy, rapaciousness, torment are all reinforced.

There are some pleasing passages. The hunka ceremony captures the essence of Lakota-ness. The role of grandparents is well presented and shows the enduring quality of cultural transmission. She attributes, however, too much value on individual decision-making, especially in decisions involving the Sun Dance. Traditionally, supernatural sanctions were paramount in guaranteeing a cohesive social unit, and they are still operative today.

In general, I can only say that I feel our sacred sphere--our valued and viable lifeway has been violated.

Turning to Mrs. Hill's glossary, I'll end this review:

Le ahwablezaki, wasicu winyanki, Ruth Beebe Hill,
Lakotaki nimkte lela bo-ton-ton na iktomi heca.
I observe that the white woman, Ruth Beebe Hill,
confuses the Lakota lifeway and seems to embody
the "legendary practical jokester."

Notes

1. Since I wrote this assessment, Dr. Ray DeMallie's review appeared. I feel that Dr. DeMallie has expressed an honest appraisal. I agree with it.

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HANTA YO - SUPER HYPER

Only a decade of egomania culminating in the forced resignations of cabinet members who couldn't get along with White House appointments secretaries could have produced an atrocity such as HANTA YO, an alleged "true" novel of the Mahto band of Sioux Indians from the late 1790s to the 1830s. With the "publication" of the Memoirs of Chief Red Fox, a hastily copied and annotated version of James MacGregor's book on Wounded Knee, one would have thought that little could have been done to further humiliate the American Indian by the publishing industry. But Lisa Drew, an editor at Doubleday and David Wolper, a television producer, have combined forces to support one of the most blatant hoaxes of modern times.

A little background may be in order. Nearly a year ago Lisa Hill began sending out galleys of a book so preposterous in its presuppositions that no competent scholar or Indian would dream it possible that the monstrosity would see the light of day. In a terribly boring, stilted language, culturally inaccurate and perverted 800 pages of nonsense prefaced by the claim that the author, with the assistance of a Sioux Indian, Chunksa Yuha, had translated this pile of typing into the "archaic" Sioux language (which does not exist) and then re-translated it into the English vernacular of 1806, finally to produce a masterpiece of literature. I got a copy of the galleys along with a plaintive request for a jacket quote from Lisa Drew saying that this book would be the next "Roots." "Roots," if you remember, was a Lisa Drew-David Wolper publishing-television venture, highly commercially successful, but lacking in

many respects. After the book was finally detached from its massive public relations campaign, it appeared that some parts of it bore a very close similarity to Harold Courtlander's novel on the african experience, so close in fact that Alex Haley had to lamely explain that wherever he went in crowds people would press re-typed pages of Courtlander's work into his hands and some of this novel somehow got reprocessed in "Roots." Ruth Beebe Hill, typist of HANTA YO faces no similar embarrassment as there are few writers who would care to be associated with the work under any conditions.

At any rate, no one I know took the book seriously or thought that it would be printed by a serious publisher and the thing was passed off as another hopeless but naive effort to commercialize on the interest in Indians. Suddenly as 1979 began, we were deluged with favorable reviews of the book beginning with an overly romanticized article in the Smithsonian magazine, a journal otherwise not normally a forum for fictional enterprises. According to this article, Ruth Beebe Hill "became" an Indian in order to write this book, wrote one draft even before she had met Chunksa Yuha who came to her doorway one night, and told her the Sioux words describing hail. The two of them then translated the book into "archaic" Dakotah, retranslated it into the English of Webster's first dictionary, and then did a polished modern version for publication. Scattered throughout the article were choice little tidbits about Hill, Indians, Chunksa, and Ayn Rand whose novel, The Fountainhead, Hill had read seventeen times and once reduced to an hour's dramatic performance. Her previous literary effort was a delightful little tract entitled "Conquering Your Allergy," which no doubt prepared

her for the more rigorous task of writing Hanta Yo.

Three significant things are mentioned in the article which should have been an indication that worse was to come as the book gained in notoreity. Hill claimed that the book was true because "everything really happened" which is a strange claim apparently unrelated to the characters, incidents and setting of the book but, in the crazy-quilt world she had constructed, seemed to make as much sense as anything else. She apparently got the idea for the novel from reading an old Bureau of Ethnology report which said that the Mahto band of Teton Sioux had continued to occupy a camp on the Missouri river and were identified as living there in 1865. If, as Hill insists, she read over 1,200 different books, articles, and pamphlets dealing with Indians in order to write this book, she certainly should not have been surprised to discover that a band of Sioux were west of the river in 1865. Red Cloud, Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull and a whole lot of Indians were living west of the river in those days and for a considerable period of time thereafter. So this particular entry should have made no waves at all that would inspire a person to write a book. The incongruity of this fact ~~example~~ ^{Hill's} ~~mis~~ understanding of Sioux Indians which permeates the book, her appearances and interviews, and the mass of publicity that has been generated by Doubleday-Wolper in an effort to capitalize on the public's ignorance of Indians.

The second thing that seems peculiar is how Hill and Chunksa Yuha could translate the book, some 1,800-2,000 pages of manuscript, into an "archaic" Sioux that was used by a secret Sioux religious society before the coming of the white man when such a language

could only have been a spoken language. Gullible reviewers, and in this instance that includes every review except two, one by Bea Medicine and one by Raymond DeMallie, have failed to raise this fundamental question. How in the hell do you type up a manuscript in an ancient language which has never been written down and apparently has no symbols, alphabet, or vocabulary which can be reduced to the printed page? It is, of course, completely impossible and although Hill and Chunksa have toured the nation loudly proclaiming their mastery of this feat, when Hill was in Chicago a Sioux very fluent in his own language asked to see the manuscript as he was very eager to see how "archaic" Sioux differed from the Sioux that was finally reduced to a written language by the early missionaries. He was told that they didn't actually translate each word but instead only translated "critical phrases," an admission that runs directly contrary to many published statements that such a manuscript of "archaic" Sioux exists.

Finally, there is the declaration that the manuscript was translated into the English vernacular of 1806. In a Chicago Tribune article on the book Hill was quoted as saying "If I was going back to the roots of the Indian words, then I thought I should go back as far as I can in American English, and the 1806 was Webster's first." So what? This convoluted thinking stunned Scott Momaday when he wrote his "I'm a nice guy sitting on the fence on this one" review last winter. Apparently in Ruth Beebe Hill's mind exists the idea that if one translates one language into the words and phrases of another language using a vocabulary of an earlier stage of the second language, that guarantees the authenticity of the

thoughts being expressed as of the date of the second language. This absolutely wierd understanding of linguistics means that I, as one trained in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, can write a novel about Sioux Indians; translate it into the Koiné Greek, and then re-translate into English and I will have an authentic novel about what our people were doing in 32 A.D. or thereabouts. You see the possibilities here. The Smithsonian article notes that Chunksa Yuha vomited a lot and this characteristic is easy to understand if one has followed the reasoning process used to authenticate the book.

In the book itself both Ruth Beebe Hill and Chunksa Yuha write introductory pieces which claim to give authenticity to themselves and their product. Again the bizarre amateur nature of Hill's knowledge of both Indians and linguistics emerges. She begins as follows:

Admit, assume, because, could, doubt, end, expect, faith, forget, forgive, guilt, how, it mercy, pest, promise, should, sorry, storm, them, us, waste, we, weed - neither these words nor the conceptions for which they stand appear in this book - they are the whiteman's import to the New World. (Emphasis added).

This view of things is absolutely incredible and should generate at least a bit of doubt in any reviewer's mind. A people as close to each other as the Sioux not have any words for the first person plural NOR ANY CONCEPTIONS OF FIRST PERSON PLURAL? The specific words might not exist in the form that they can be directly translated from Sioux to English but to say that we had no conception of guilt, we never assumed anything, we had no doubt, no faith, could not forget or forgive, never promised - to argue a theory such as this is simply to leave one's sense behind and try to use the Sioux as a vehicle for something else.

Hill's other assumptions and/or beliefs about the Sioux are equally fallacious. She claims that the rhetorical was the only form of questioning the Indian used. "he never answered to anyone but himself, never answered for anyone but himself." Sioux legend and ethnography is filled with evidence to the contrary. In regard to "his familiar voice," Hill claims that "as a truth bearer that told him what to do, never what not to do." Equally wrong and misguided. Medicine men are continually informed when they cannot heal, when things cannot happen, and when they must not do things. Finally she maintains that the Indian's approach "was never that of a mystic; he never pursued psychic powers but only his own spiritual growth." Absolutely ridiculous. In a Los Angeles Times feature article, Hill is quoted reciting passages of the book: "I am Ahbleza. I own the earth. That is Indian. That is not Ayn Rand or Ruth Hill." If a Sioux Indian had the temerity to stand upright on the prairie and say something like that he would be laughed out of the camp and the people would fear for their lives for such a blasphemy. That is pure Ruth Beebe Hill recycling Ayn Rand, baby, and nothing more.

Hill's mystical tutor in the ways of the ancient Sioux religion is a study in and of himself. In the introduction to the book he claims he was "brought up speaking the archaic language," a fact his ~~Santee~~ relatives in Nebraska vehemently deny. He claims he was one of 8 Dakota boys to whom the old men taught suppressed songs and ceremonies - "material suppressed for 200 years." No one on the reservation has ever heard anything so outlandish. He claims he was "kept out of schools and away from white contact until age

twelve, thirteen when I was entered in a public school to learn English." Here it gets interesting. His relatives have recently sent a surly mailgram to Ruth Beebe Hill informing her that Chunksa Yuha was sent to the Genoa, Nebraska Indian school at the age of seven. In an open letter to the Editorial staff of the journal, Ethnomusicology, written in 1968, Chunksa Yuha writes, "And not until I was thrown into a government school at age ten to endure a brainwashing intended to make a pseudo-Caucasian of me, did I learn English." Almost like old Chief Red Fox who, when you read the book you discover, was born at three different locations, this character first encountered schooling and English at ages 7, 10, and 12-13. His relatives are all fairly certain, only he is unsure.

Forty years ago, he writes in the introduction, he began to search for "someone willing and eager to learn my language - as spoken in the old Indian tongue and without need for interpretation." (Apparently Hill needed no means of interpretation to learn the language.) In 1963 he found Ruth Beebe Hill and thereafter they worked, first studying the ancient Sioux language - which does not exist - and then translating the book - which translation does not exist. Frances Densmore, he complains, had produced an analytical study of the Sioux language but the grandfathers had withheld from even the best of her Indian informants that which could be misinterpreted and corrupted. That statement is patently impossible as the grandfathers of which he speaks had no idea they would be visited by Frances Densmore, and so there was nothing that could have been withheld in anticipation of her visit. Such a statement also suggests that the Santee were the sole possessors of the ancient

Sioux tradition which should infuriate the Pipekeepers on the Cheyenne River Sioux reservation where the original pipe is kept.

The lessons which Chunksa Yuha taught Ruth Beebe Hill were that the Indian begins with the spirit of man and works down through the laws of the universe - a sequence directly opposed to all the other Sioux interpretations beginning with Eastman and concluding with Black Elk and John Fire. The motivation for performing this task of elder teacher for Hill was apparently to laud "a race that no longer exists - who recognized man as owner of the earth, who regarded nothing more sacred than the right of choice." There are a lot of past generations of Sioux who would spin in their graves to hear something like that. Chunksa Yuha claims to be the descendant of the line of Chiefs popularly known as the Wapashas. This claim infuriates the actual lineal descendants of that great Sioux family, as Ernest Wabasha, the present most prominent representative of the family told me in Minneapolis last April.

Then who is Chunksa Yuha? Well, it took a whole bunch of us a long time to discover, since today when one is so active in the non-Indian world it is much easier to use one's white name than one's Indian name. He is variously known as George B. Smith and Lorenzo Blacksmith (the name which appears on the tribal rolls at Santee). He claims, and the Chicago Tribune article recounts that Doubleday claims, that he is a graduate of Kansas University and has a Master's degree in Music at Northwestern. But the Chicago Tribune reporter checked both institutions and found nothing under either of those names. Lorenzo's complaint in his letter to Ethnomusicology is that no one really knows the ancient languages and

so he suggests criteria by which the editorial staff can be sure they have a proper informant. His first criterion is:

1. Make certain your Indian informant is three generations removed from the present; that he (she) is a fullblood brought up speaking the language used before white contact. And a college graduate.

He fails on all three counts.

Having thus discussed the credentials of author and her informant, what else is there to say? The work is simply a badly written novel with stilted Hollywood pidgin English which makes Indians seem like the dullest clods unable to form clear thoughts. Several highly derogatory incidents involving oral sex and sodomy of Indian captives are included in the book, but since Burt Hirshfield's epic descriptions of oral sex and Portnov's Complaint, and David Markson's more literary symbolism, going down seems to be an obligatory scene to ensure best-selling status and attract offers from film companies. If truth is what happened, these scenes are absurd. The Sioux, instead of being lusty macho sex machines as some of Ayn Rand's characters, such as Howard Roark, were a bunch of prudes, more so than almost every other tribe in the neighborhood, in fact puritanically so.

Well, it's not the content that is selling the book, as I know many people, Indian and non-Indian who have been lulled to sleep with its boring sing-song phraseology and repetitive cumbersome formulas that give it its "Indian spiritual flavor". The publicity campaign waged by Doubleday is keeping the book on the best seller list and the prospect of Wolper reaping a rich reward as he exploits

twisted versions of minority history seems to serve to keep the book sacrosanct in reviewer's minds. I pointed out the obvious similarities between this book and Chief Red Fox to the New York Times and received in response a limp-wristed reply comparable to an Interior Department memo.

So an unsuspecting public, hearing this trash lauded by people who know little or nothing about the subject, checks the best-seller list and promptly orders the book trying vainly to remain relevant. It serves them right to waste \$14.95 on nonsense. These are the people, you must remember, who gave us Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter and will probably saddle us with other nincompoops in the next presidential campaign. They are the people who consider the seagull named Jonathan a Christ figure and desperately want to be their own best friend. It is long past the time when literature was severed from publishing and we frankly admitted that the two have nothing in common and HANTA YO may have accomplished this task for us.

In a larger sense HANTA YO says a whole lot about the present psychic state of the American people. Writhing in despair, standing in lines without asking why, and disillusioned about being Jesus freaks, they must have some grasp of authenticity and as Carl Jung and D. H. Lawrence both commented, in North America that can only be obtained through the mystical figure of the Indian. It is entirely proper that the extreme selfishness of this decade should be finally captured in the form of an Indian who speaks pure Ayn Rand in defiance of everything of substance. This book has been coming a long, long time. We saw glimpses of it in Don Juan and

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Rolling Thunder almost accomplished the task of providing a father figure to which immigrant Americans could cling. HANTA YO will confirm your worst prejudices and if you believe it then you can justify almost any treatment of human beings according to the philosophy you find within its pages.

Ah, how today I long for the days of substance and simplicity when Stewart Brand projected his "sensorium" of America Needs Indians. But like the destruction of the flower children, when the national media grasps an image, the movement has really ended, and so there is a sense in which we can rejoice in the success of HANTA YO because it marks the nadir of spiritual vacuum. From here on in, friends, we are on the road up into the light and life will begin to mean something again. As to the crass commercialism of the thing? Well, personally I laughed like hell when American Express offered to buy McGraw-Hill and was turned down because of their ethical stance. McGraw-Hill who published Chief Red Fox and signed Clifford Irving talking about ethics? We have truly worn our institutions ragged and the truth is finally beginning to shine through. I hope Wolper takes a bath on the thing, as it would be only justice and I think we will see more justice from now on.

There is not a whole hell of a lot left to say except that the reading public has become a function of the publicity departments of large conglomerate publishers. If people are determined to consume intellectual junk food, that's fine. As to Ruth Beebe Hill and Chunksa Yuha, alias Lorenzo Blacksmith? Well, what the hell. They are in their declining years and probably still don't have the foggiest idea that they have done anything stupid. They

created a strange world which never existed, lived in it for some 14 years, and somehow found a way to make some bread off it. With the current rate of inflation, what difference does it make if they come away with a little bread out of the deal? Whatever they make is probably still not sufficient compensation for the confusion they have about the world, the Sioux, and literature and song.

In this whole review I have deliberately used the word "Sioux" rather than "Dakotah" or "Lakotah" as Hill and Lorenzo are inclined to refer to our people. Today we are still alive, not remnants of any degenerate race. We have formally called our tribes "Sioux" and we speak of ourselves popularly as that when we confront the non-Indian world. And I believe it is the only accurate and modern way to speak of us. I think our job is to redouble our efforts to counteract nonsense such as HANTA YO and to try and enlist the remaining intelligent people in the United States to help make sure that such derogatory trivia does not again appear in print.



Inside the Cigar Store: Images of the American Indian, an instructional package treating contradictory stereotypes of the American Indian, includes 140 slides and tray, audio cassette, annotated bibliography, has been prepared by Gretchen M. Bataille, and is available for \$99.00 from Media Resources Center, Iowa State Univ., Ames IA 50011. . . . The Ethnic American Woman by Edith Blicksilver (400pp., \$12.95, from Kendall-Hunt Publishers, 2460 Kerper Blvd, Dubuque, IA 52001) includes a section by Native American women. . . . From the Indian Studies Program, Bemidji State Univ, Bemidji, MN 56601 for \$8.00 one can get Ojibwewi-Ikidowinan, An Ojibwe Word Resource Book, ed. John Nichols and Early Nyholm, useful for any students of the Ojibwe language. . . . Dennis Tedlock's Finding the Center is back in print thanks to the Nebraska Univ. Press. . . . El Nahuatzen (P. O. Box 2134, Iowa City, IA 52244) seeks submissions of poetry for its third issue. . . . Don't overlook Shantih's Native American issue, available at \$3.00 from P. O. Box 125, Bay Ridge Sta., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11220. . . .

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