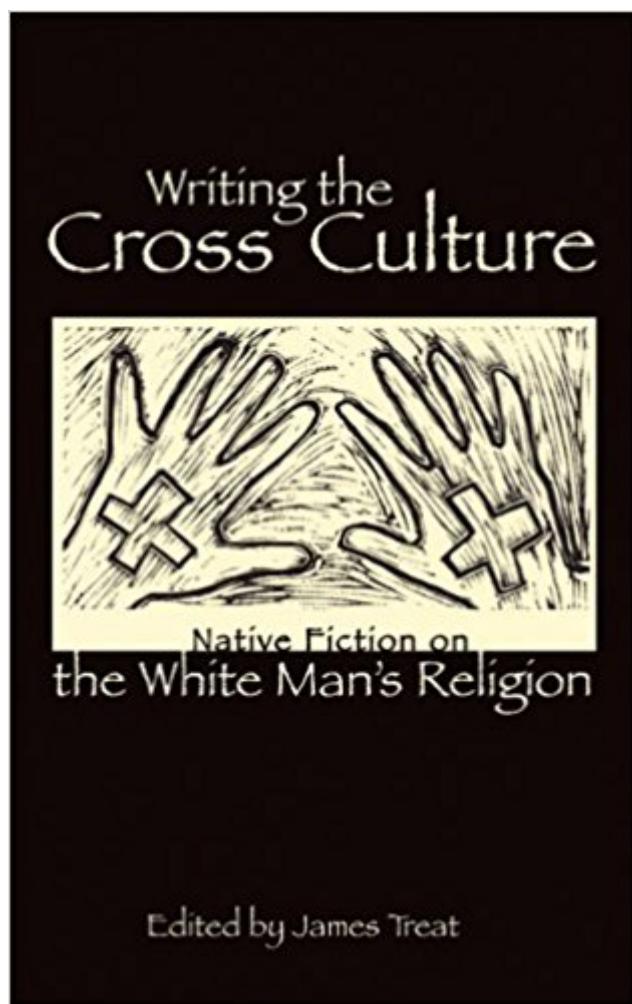


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Writing The Cross Culture: Native Fiction On The White Man's Religion



Synopsis

A collection of fiction pieces by some of the most notable contemporary Native American authors, as well as up-and-coming authors, which explores the interface between Native American culture and American Christianity.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"very strongly recommended ... as a quite unique perspective on an often neglected aspect of contemporary Native American culture." -- The Midwest Book Review, May 1, 2006

James Treat teaches courses in Native studies, religious studies, and creative expression at the University of Illinois. He is the author of Around the Sacred Fire: Native Religious Activism in the Red Power Era and the editor of Native and Christian: Indigenous Voices on Religious Identity in the United States and Canada.

James Treat has brought together an eclectic group of writings by Native Americans that deal, in one way or another, with Christianity. The quality of the writing is surprisingly high, and consistently so; I had expected greater variation in any anthology. Some of the selections are excerpts from larger works. As such they are not self-contained as fiction, though they work in the context of this volume. A couple did not seem to deal with religion but I am dense sometimes. Treat enters the book

with a semi-fictionalized afterword that imagines itself as a proposal for an anthology of human fiction after aliens have colonized the Earth. The parallels to the book itself are obvious and a bit forced. Coming at the end of the book, this editorial intervention also seemed unnecessary. Rather than setting the stage for the readings the afterword tended to say things that a reader would already have figured out at that point. By fictionalizing the afterword, Treat wants to stake a claim for fiction as an alternative to nonfiction accounts of Natives' spiritual clash with Christianity. That's fine in principle, though my own tastes run to the nonfiction. In this context, however, this claim comes across as defensive. I may be reading too much into this but parts of the afterword suggest that Treat doubts whether fiction, as opposed to social action, can truly liberate.

Deftly compiled and professionally edited by James Treat (Associate Professor of American Indian Studies, University of Illinois), *Writing The Cross Culture: Native Fiction On The White Man's Religion* is a provocative and somewhat iconoclastic anthology of writings based upon the Native American cultural transformation and adaptations of the beliefs and practices of the Christian faith. Featuring works ranging from satire to philosophy, *Writing The Cross Culture* presents a creative collective interpretation of the significant occurrences in the Native American culture as impacted by Christianity. *Writing The Cross Culture* is very strongly recommended to students of Native American history and literature as a quite unique perspective on an often neglected aspect of contemporary Native American culture.

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