



Daughters of Mother Earth: The Wisdom of Native American Women (Native America: Yesterday and Today (Hardcover))

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Daughters of Mother Earth is nothing less than a new way of looking at history?or more correctly, the reestablishment of a very old way. It holds that for too long, elements unnatural to Native American ways of knowing have been imposed on the study of Native America. Euro-American discourse styles, emphasizing elite male privilege and conceptual linearity, have drowned out the democratic and woman-centered Native approaches. Even when the damage of western linearity is understood to occur, analysis of Native American history, society, and culture has still been relentlessly placed in male custody, following the western assumption that Euro-American men speak ably for all. This book seeks to redress that balance, allowing, as editor Barbara Alice Mann writes, the Daughters of Mother Earth to reclaim their ancient responsibility to speak in council, to tell the truth, to guide the rising generations through spirit-spoken wisdom.

The recovery of women's traditions is an important theme in this collection of essays that helps reframe Native issues as properly gendered. Thus, Paula Gunn Allen looks at Indian lifeways through the many stitches of Indian clothes and the many steps of their powwow fancy-dances. Lee Maracle calls for reconstitution of traditional social structures, based on Native American ways of knowing. Kay McGowan identifies the exact sites where woman-power was weakened historically through the heavy impositions of European culture, the better to repair them. Finally, Barbara Mann examines how communication between Natives east and west of the Mississippi came to be so deranged as to be dysfunctional, and outlines how to reestablish good east-west relations for the benefit of all.

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