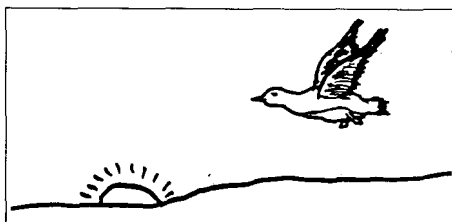


path of wisdom is that one finds wisdom, as I understand it, through one's heart and mind, not on a bookshelf.

In the final analysis and Appendix 3, *Voices of Our Ancestors* is an advertisement for Ywahoo's Sunray Meditation Society. It appears that one must attend the lectures and workshops in order to clarify the mysteries and mystique which are generated by the book.

*Ruby Miller was born into a large family of Mohawks on the Six Nations Reserve. Ruby grew up nurtured by many elder brothers and sisters, and encouraged and challenged by many younger ones. Her already strong Mohawk roots were strengthened with her recent marriage and move from the city back to the reserve. Ruby is a mother to one and an auntie to many. She is of the Turtle Clan. She has worked on the land, in a Friendship Centre and in the Courts. Ruby enjoys fishing, visiting and her work as Native Courtwork Trainer for the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres.*



## WATERLILY

Ella Cara Deloria. Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1988.

### *Ruby Miller*

*Waterlily* is a story about Native women from the time of their birth to the time when those women become grandmothers. In particular, it is a story about a Sioux woman named Waterlily who went from a newborn "girlchild" to mother and grandmother in a "camp circle" during the pre-contact period. As a reader and a Native woman, *Waterlily* allows me to understand the complexities of the traditional role of women and the complexities of the traditional role of members of a Native nation. While our lives today certainly do not follow those stringent ancient laws of behaviour, I found that a lot of the rules or ways our people have today are reflective of those very laws.

As I began to read this story, I became

a part of the "camp circle" and began to learn reasons and ways of our people, while enjoying the experiences of the heroine. This very appropriate Native way of learning (storytelling) allows readers of all ages to enjoy and learn from the life events — whether those events be ordinary or extraordinary. I have never before come across a book that contained so much information and yet never appears to be teaching. I can only compare this to the teaching of an Elder. Elders do not lecture and pump information into your brain but, like this book, their teaching is done very kindly and in a story-like fashion that allows you to absorb what you can understand and use.

The most impressive aspect of *Waterlily*, and the aspect that swells the pride of a Native reader, is the consistent reference to customary respect, kinship rules/obligations and honour (especially for the children). In adhering to the many responsibilities that every single member of the camp circle had, there was very little time for the distractions that we suffer from today. As a child you had to learn the kinship rules and how to treat other people. With each winter came new teachings and new responsibilities. When a girl child became a woman, there were many things to learn of the role that you would maintain and carry with honour. Honour itself was to be learned and sought throughout your life and your children's lives. The overriding desire in your life would be to attain and maintain honour for all your relatives.

Along with the many ordinary tasks of adulthood came the never-ending responsibilities of kinship. Children, from the time of birth, were to be honoured; feasts and giveaways in their honour were commonplace and expected. The entering from one phase of their lives to another required even more ceremonies and gifts to the camp circle in their honour. Children were reared to understand and expect "honour" and "respect."

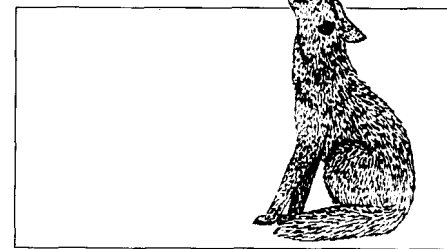
Within the camp circle, there was a connectedness that few Native communities experience today. Everyone was related and had responsibilities to one another. It was a very honourable way to behave if you gave needed articles or gifts to a poorer lodge in the camp circle. This was not viewed as charity, but as honouring, providing and sharing with ones' relatives. There was a gentle balance of

relation responsibilities and respecting a relatives' lodge. Kinship rules were respected at all times. Those rules allowed large groups of people to live together in harmony.

Kinship obligations impelled relatives to sacrifice for one another. It was only then that great honour could come to your family, when every member acted or behaved in a manner that would bring honour and respect to the family. These actions or behaviour were not singular events, but were reflected in every minute, and every aspect of ones' life.

There are many other aspects of life that are explored and experienced in this entertaining story of Ms. Deloria's that are equally as important and enjoyable. Many ceremonies are described and the reader will get a sense of actually being there. One particular ceremony, that is usually not talked about to any great length, is the Sun Dance. Ms. Deloria brings you to the Sun Dance not so much in the spiritual manner, but in a social and learning manner. You must keep in mind that the Sun Dance Ceremony is being seen through the eyes of a girl child, and not an older more knowledgeable person.

This novel is for the person seeking knowledge and understanding, for the parent seeking guidance, for the youth seeking direction, for the one seeking entertainment, for the woman seeking a sense of herself. Basically, it is for anyone who wants to learn, to understand and to connect with the past that is still our present.



## THE WOMAN WHO OWNED THE SHADOWS

Paula Gunn Allen. San Francisco: Spinsters Ink/Aunt Lute, 1989.

### *Gertie A. Beaucage*

Ephanie, the heroine and narrator, takes us on her journey, exposing her thoughts and feelings, sometimes lucid and often