

***We Are Mesquakie We Are One***

By Hadley Irwin

1980 : Feminist Press

117 pages

Ages 10 and up

Isbn: 0-912670-85-1

**Rating: Recommended - 4**

By Marlette Grant-Jackson

**Overview:**

A fact based story as told through the eyes of Hidden Doe, a Mesquakie girl from Iowa. Hidden Doe transforms from young girl, training to be an herbalist (medicine person), to a woman during the 1840's. The settlers and the U.S. Government force her people from their lands along the Iowa River to a reservation in Kansas, where her people face malnutrition, small pox, alcoholism and depression at the hands of the U.S. Agents and policies. Great Bear, one of the leaders of the Mesquakie, organizes the people in order to buy back their Iowa homelands with money's paid to them by the government for the lands originally taken, for settlers and mining claims. Bright Eagle negotiates the 80 acre land deal and earns the love and respect of Hidden Doe.

**Passages to Consider:**

Other than using "stereotypical" white translations of names for the individuals in this book, and glossing over deaths of some of the tribe, the book is highly recommended.

Although Never mentioning U.S. Sanctioned militia's, government issued blankets that carried small pox or how many children were stolen to be indoctrinated into U.S. Democracy through Boarding schools, never to see their families again, the book does mention how many families were withheld food for not sending their children to church or boarding schools. I can see why the white wash happened in the books prior to the 1990's, to protect the U.S. Governments honor and to perpetuate the "American" manifest destiny, but to create new books as of 1990 with the same perpetuations is a farce.

The book seems to be written in a circular fashion, meaning that it is not linear in the storytelling. You start at the beginning and when you come to the end you then understand more of why the story starts where and when it does. The Red Earth People are proud, family oriented, and full of traditions that have served them well. The book gives a good strong female heroine and shows her transform from girl to woman and help lead her people back to their homelands, while not sacrificing her beliefs and virtue.

More information about the Mesquakie

[http://www.eda.gov/ImageCache/EDAPublic/documents/pdfdocs/18iowa\\_2epdf/v1/18iowa.pdf](http://www.eda.gov/ImageCache/EDAPublic/documents/pdfdocs/18iowa_2epdf/v1/18iowa.pdf)

**Credentials:**

As a Yurok & Karuk and mother of three children I have gotten an education to increase the success of our Native Students. I have a degree in Native American Studies with an emphasis on Education, and a minor in American Indian Education. I am also the Curriculum Resource Coordinator of the Indian Teacher & Educational Personnel Program at Humboldt State University.