

Fall 2009
Book Review
New on the DEOMI shelf

Viola, Herman (2008). Warriors in Uniform: The Legacy of American Indian Heroism. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society.

The author served as Director of the National Anthropological Archives of the Smithsonian. He is currently Curator Emeritus at the Smithsonian Institution and consultant to the National Museum of the American Indian.

The National Geographic Society is known for its lavishly illustrated books and this book is no exception with photo essays, pictures of artifacts, and photographs of people and events in Native American military history.

The first chapter begins with the American Revolutionary War and the history of how the Iroquois Confederacy supported the war effort. Of the six tribes in the Confederacy, only two, the Oneida and the Tuscarora fought on the American patriot side paying a heavy price for their loyalty. Again in the Civil War, American Indians were divided in their support of the warring North and South, but fought valiantly for their chosen side.

Each additional chapter looks at a different era or different war including present day Native American soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan whose section relates individual stories of multigenerational service to country and shared cultural heritage including pictures from a 2004 Pow Wow held in Iraq featuring an all Cherokee drum group.

The final chapter looks at ceremonies held by tribes to honor the military service of Native Americans. Featuring many personal stories and cultural viewpoints touching on spiritual beliefs, warrior traditions, and family/tribal relationships, this book is highly recommended.