



Book: Speaking of Indians

Author: Ella Deloria

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Ella Deloria could speak intimately about Indian ways because she belonged to a Yankton Sioux family. A distinguished scholar who studied with Franz Boas at Columbia University, she had the gift of language and the understanding necessary to bridge races. Originally published in 1944, this book is an important source of information about Dakota culture and a classic in its elegant clarity of insight. Beginning with a general discussion of American Indian origins, language families, and culture areas, Deloria then focuses on her own people, the Dakotas, and the intricate kinship system that governed all aspects of their life. She writes, "Exacting and unrelenting obedience to kinship demands made the Dakotas a most kind, unselfish people, always acutely aware of those about them and innately.