Abe Streep. *Brothers on Three*. Celadon Books, 2021. 349 pp. ISBN: 9781250210685
https://celadonbooks.com/book/brothers-on-three/

Any baller worth their salt will tell you the best coaches don't teach you about basketball, they teach you about life and about trust because the basketball will always follow. Abe Streep may not be a coach, but *Brothers on Three* passionately teaches its readers about the Arlee Warriors basketball team and the trust that empowered their back-to-back championship titles. This true story of family, resistance, and hope is the very definition of a page-turner. In his book, Streep becomes equal parts reporter and poet, painting the illustrious beauty of Montanan landscapes overlooked by mainstream America and the complex people intimately connected to these landscapes' past, present, and future. Rendering *Brothers on Three* as purely a basketball story would be a gross injustice to the perseverance of the young men who gave everything to fulfill their dreams in the wake of a community scarred by trauma and suicide clusters, what Streep calls a "darkness" (4) haunting the Flathead Reservation.

I found Streep's structural approach to be, at times, a little chaotic and loose, but I came to accept his choices as a reflection of basketball—where the line between chaos and order is often blurred or, at times, even nonexistent. The book is split into chapters defined by temporal markers, but because these chapters are sometimes rooted within the same temporal windows, it can prove difficult for a reader to pinpoint a precise chronological flow. I found these moments occurring more often towards the end of the text, when Phil and Will had graduated, and Streep was following their college careers. At the end of the book, Streep includes an epilogue that functions more like a continuation of the book's end than a separate structural entity, and it fails to deliver the same emotional gravitas. Despite these small faults, Streep is masterful in capturing the humanity, history, and individuality of the people within the Flathead Reservation and beyond. *Brothers on Three*'s dialectic purpose can best be described by a meditation Streep came to after speaking with John Malatare, father of Arlee star Phil Malatare:

> Over the coming years, when I got lost, when any concrete sense of time eluded me, or when I wondered what I was doing here, I came back to that: it was about

> these boys from Arlee. As people throughout Montana and the country asked the impossible of the Arlee Warriors, seeking bold-font answers where few existed, looking for some clean, bright redemption, John's words returned. It was about these boys from Arlee. What they had done and what they would choose. (53)

As a work of nonfiction, *Brothers on Three* reads like a biographical constellation: in between vignettes of basketball, geography, and history, Streep provides comprehensive detail into the "galaxy of interpersonal relations" (95) connecting the Warriors to their community. Streep's voice is poignant and piercing as it documents how Arlee's communal struggles reflect larger colonial systems terrorizing Indigenous bodies. One particularly powerful instance of this is a conversation Streep has with Phil's grandfather, Bear, who somberly recounts his days at the Ursuline Academy, a "re-education school" where he would be savagely beaten for writing left-handed and speaking his native Cree. Bear was beaten by the school's nuns so many times that, in his old age, he only knew "a few words and that's about it" (153). Sadly, Bear's story is just another example of American history repeating itself, the kind of history woven into the fabric of Native communities and those that call the Flathead Reservation home. I could not write this review without listing the names of the "boys from Arlee" (53) who made Streep's book possible: Alex Moran, Billy Fisher, Chase Gardner, Cody Tanner, Darshan Bolen, David "Tapit" Haynes, Greg Whitesell, Isaac Fisher, Ivory Brien, Lane Johnson, Lane Schall, Nate Coulson, Phil Malatare, Tyler Tanner, and Will Mesteth, Jr. After reading the number of times these boys ran seventeens until they puked, played games fresh off IV drips, and shouldered an entire reservation's expectations on their backs, I feel an ethical responsibility to list these names in honor of the sacrifice they made in order to give their community hope. If I gleaned one thing from Streep's text, it's that these young men are a testament to Native athletes everywhere, suffering in a society that refuses to see them.

Despite some minimal structural considerations, *Brothers on Three* is a must read. In his reporting, Streep is vulnerable, ethical, attentive, and committed. He takes great professional and personal care to consider the diversity of perspectives in tribal communities and to tell the Arlee Warriors' story in its appropriate geopolitical and ontological contexts. He is deft in uncovering how decades-old, asbestos-ridden school buildings can coexist with multimillion-dollar gymnasiums in a state responsible for centuries of settler violence. His respect for basketball as a sport is contagious, and he is honest in his intentions and approach. In a state with a reported Native American

population "between 5 and 7 percent, [whose] reservation teams comprised 18 percent of those competing for boys' state championships" (65), the Arlee Warriors fought to be respected as athletes competing at the highest level. In many ways, *Brothers on Three* functions like a playbook: you learn tendencies, motions, assignments, defenses, and sets. In one moment, the reader is engulfed by the thrills of seeing Arlee beat Manhattan Christian and the next distraught by the news of another suicide. With each page, I found myself increasingly drawn to long drives and pregame warmups, eagerly wondering which open shooter Will and Phil would find or which unfortunate player would be the next victim of an Isaac Fisher dunk. Above all else, *Brothers on Three* humanizes a group of high school kids, each struggling to find their identities and callings in life. To the residents of Arlee, basketball occupies "emotional terrain somewhere between escape and religion" (3), and, thanks to Streep's text, I can safely surmise the court is where the masses congregate for church.

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