

## **An Account of the Dakota-US War of 1862 as Sacred Text: Why My Dakota Elders Value Spiritual Closure over Scholarly “Balance” [Abstract]**

*John Peacock*

Fluent Dakota-speaking elders Clifford Canku and Michael Simon have translated from Dakota into English fifty letters written by three-dozen Dakota prisoners of the 1862 US-Dakota War. Both translators are Dakota Presbyterian ministers as well as traditional Sun Dancers, and are descended from two of the letter writers. Many letter writers, like the translators, were Christian Dakota who still followed some of the traditional ways. Dr. Canku and Rev. Simon requested that I appear on several panels with them to put the project in historical context and speak about their translation process before audiences who were primarily non-Native. This essay presents the various historical perspectives I attempted to balance in these panel discussions, as well as my analysis of why the two elders ultimately decided to leave out this historical context and retain only my discussion of the translation process for their forthcoming book on the Dakota letters. They intend the book principally for Dakota young people and traditionalist elders.

To purchase the full article:

<http://uclajournals.org/doi/abs/10.17953/aicr.37.2.124713414180575r>