

Native American Literature  
Discussion Questions

***The Amazing Death of Calf Shirt and Other Blackfoot Stories***  
**by Hugh Dempsey**

Created by Dorothea M. Susag for OPI library project

1. Based on the information in the Introduction, why is this collection history rather than fiction? How might Dempsey's perspective influence his telling of the stories?
2. What comprises the Blackfoot Nation? What was its location in the late 17th century and then now? How has it changed and why?
3. Based on these stories, what was their relationship to tribes in Montana? How did the actions of individuals change those relationships?
4. How did various warriors respond to the encroachment of white traders, settlers, military?
5. What do the stories reveal about Blackfoot culture: religion, education, economy, marriage, defense, etc?
6. What might explain the tragedies in the lives of Deerfoot and Scraping High?
7. What qualities made communities hold warriors in high regard? How did they respond to those whose behavior contradicted tribal values?
8. What events or situations or behaviors might contradict/support popular stereotypes of American Indians? How and why?
9. What instances of betrayal, either by a system or an individual, are the most significant because of their devastating impact?
10. All of these stories are told from the male perspective. How might the women involved respond to each of these situations?