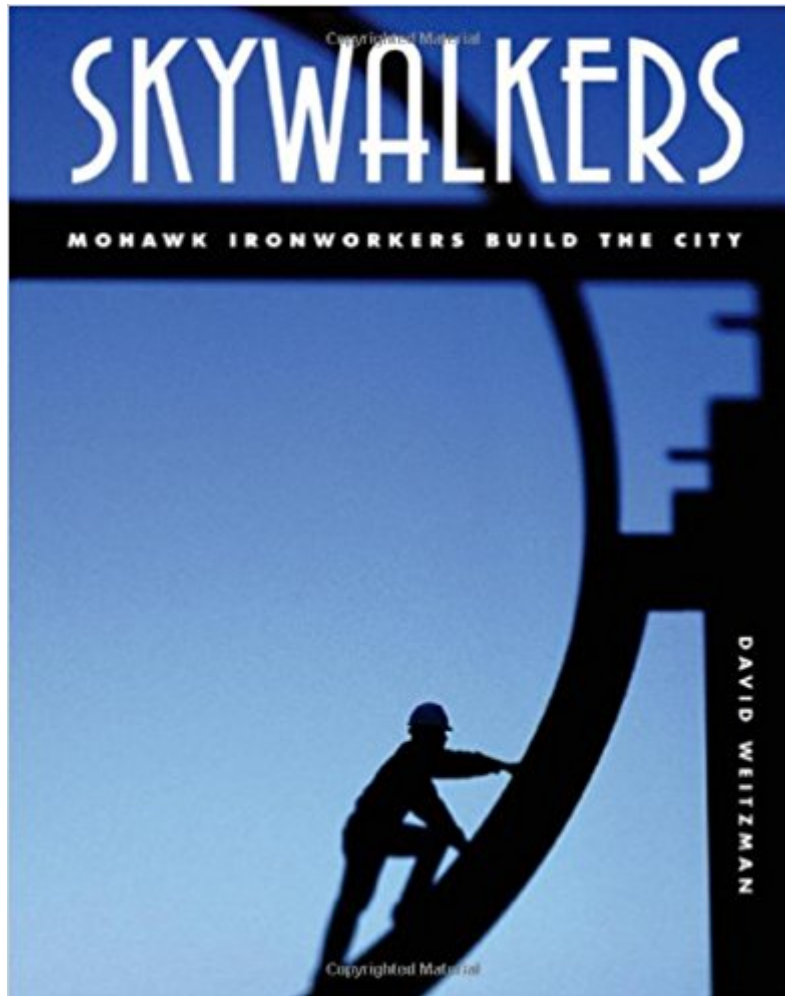




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# Skywalkers: Mohawk Ironworkers Build The City



## Synopsis

Skyscrapers define the American city. Through a narrative text and gorgeous historical photographs David Weitzman explores Native American history and the evolution of structural engineering and architecture, illuminating the Mohawk ironworkers who risked their lives to build our cities and their lasting impact on our urban landscape.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #293,530 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #100 in Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Architecture #217 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Native North & South Americans #301 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > City Life

Age Range: 10 - 14 years

Grade Level: 5 - 6

## Customer Reviews

Grade 6- 10 This is an account of the Mohawk ironworkers who "toiled at the edge of the possible" in the construction of bridges and skyscrapers. It opens with a chapter on the cultural history of Southern New England's "People of the Flint." After decimation by European diseases in the 1600s, the Mohawks regrouped along the border of New York and Canada, where the men worked as boatmen transporting furs to trading posts. In 1886, construction began on the Victoria Bridge, with Mohawks supplying the timber and stone. With the construction of additional bridges, they made the shift from unskilled laborers to skilled ironworkers. As the steel industry expanded in the early 1900s, Mohawks were poised to be an invaluable workforce in the construction of taller and bigger bridges and buildings. Inevitably, there were some disasters, namely the Quebec Bridge collapse in 1907 that killed scores of men. Weitzman's depiction of this event is both moving and evenhanded.

Mohawk ironworkers began branching out to construction sites in Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, and especially New York City, where they participated in the construction of the Empire State Building and other skyscrapers. Weitzman displays an obvious respect for his subject, and he deftly handles the more technical details of ironworking. Abundant archival photos and primary-source quotes lend realism and drama to the text. This winning blend of architectural history, anthropology, and American Indian achievement compares favorably to series such as "Building History" (Lucent). It will be especially useful for report writers. Amy Pickett, Ridley High School, Folsom, PA (c) Copyright 2010. Â Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

**\*Starred Review\*** How did Mohawk men come to build America's skyscrapers? The discussion begins with traditional Mohawk society as reported by colonial sources and fast-forwards to the 1800s, when the railways made wooden bridges obsolete and ushered in iron and steel technology. Hardworking and courageous, Mohawks learned ironwork on bridges. After a poorly designed steel bridge in Quebec collapsed during construction in 1907, killing many men from a single Mohawk community, those remaining began to work further afield on separate building projects. Many became ironworkers on skyscrapers in New York and other cities, a tradition that continues today. Quotes from primary sources are used very effectively throughout this well-written book, with an author's note, glossary, source notes, and bibliography appended. Creating a sense of impending disaster, the chapter on the Quebec bridge collapse writes that the designer dismissed alarming reports by workers and engineers and includes a dramatic narrative of the final days. Later chapters trace the history and traditions of Mohawk ironworkers throughout the last century and consider myths and realities of their portrayal in the media. The choice of period photos is excellent. Few writers make engineering and construction as fascinating as Weitzman, the author-illustrator of *Pharaoh's Boat* (2009). Grades 7-10. --Carolyn Phelan

I worked construction, pouring concrete on new powerhouses in ND in the late 70's-early 80's. As a native american decendant, I found reading about the actual tribes that I am a decendant from very interesting. I'm glad I worked construction in my early 20's. The work is physically hard, dirty, and very dangerous. The workers are under paid. As a union member we had health insurance....no vacations, no retirement plan, and no sick days. You have to pay attention to everything going on around you, or you will get hurt, I don't mean bandaids hurt. I've witnessed iron workers walking 200+ feet up, hopping over steel braces like he was strolling down a sidewalk.

The book curiously is rated for ages 10-14, but this old Ph. D. enjoyed it immensely; the book is loaded with facts which are otherwise hard to find, and shows much respect for the Mohawk language and traditions.

Really interesting history of a specially talented Native American group of men who distinguished themselves in the dangerous work of high-rise iron working. My brother is an iron worker in Texas, and he loved this book. He'd heard stories about these guys for years...

This book is about my family and ancestors. My husband is presently reading it and gaining a great deal of knowledge and respect for my family, not by word of mouth, but from a very informative book. Thanks so much.

good service from this supplier, a bit disappointed with the book, I was hoping for more information than what there was

An beautifully told narrative of the history of the building on NYC by the Mohawks. Wonderful stories.

Arrived as promised and was perfect as aid for a talk which I gave on this subject.

A great book about a group of people who made modern cities possible.

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