

Studies in American Indian Literatures

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Studies in American Indian Literatures

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Volume 10, Number 4

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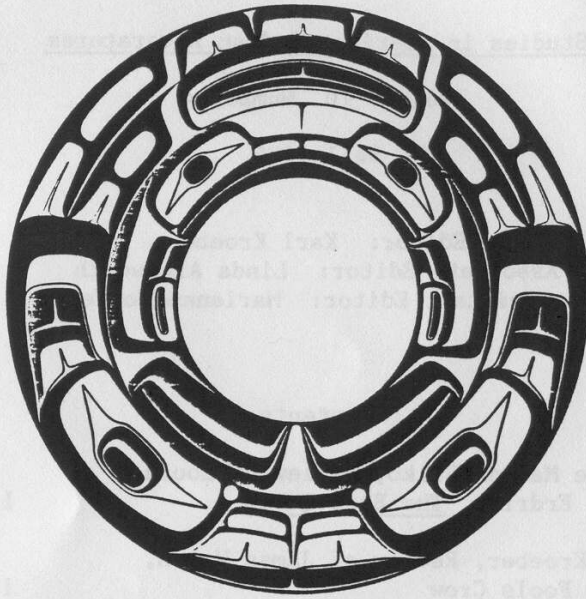
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Illustrations in this issue are from Edwin S. Hall, Jr., Margaret B. Blackman, and Vincent Richard, Northwest Coast Indian Graphics: An Introduction to Silk Screen Prints (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981) and include "Robert Davidson's "Eagle," p. iv; Ken Mowatt's "Weget and Hala-laa," p. 210, and "Wind," p. 214; Vernon Stephens' "Raiders," p. 184, and "The Gitksan Dance of the Hummingbird Flight," p. 224; and Art Thompson's "Sea Urchin," p. 202. Northwest Coast Indian Graphics and other University of Washington Press books will be featured in a forthcoming issue of SAIL, 11:2, 1987.

Louise Erdrich. The Beet Queen. New York: Holt, 1986. \$16.95.

SAIL marked the publication of Louise Erdrich's Love Medicine with a special issue, Volume 9, Number 1, that included several commentaries on the novel, by Kay Sands, Scott Sanders, Ursula Le Guin, and Dee Brown, among others. SAIL is grateful to Leslie Marmon Silko for allowing us to reprint here her review of Erdrich's second novel, which first appeared in Impact/Albuquerque Journal Magazine, October 7, 1986, pp. 10-11.

For a somewhat different perspective on The Beet Queen, SAIL readers would be well advised to look at the review by Josh Rubins in The New York Review of Books, January 15, 1987, pp. 14-15, which asserts that "traditional novelistic devices--narrative shape, momentum, suspense" in Love Medicine "play almost no part in the book's modest cumulative effect." The review regards Love Medicine as consisting of "fourteen short stories," with a "parade of oddly neutral first-person narrators," an "often confusing crowd of interrelated characters," and a "seemingly haphazard shifting of close-ups" suggesting "documentary, cinema verite, rather than full-length fiction." The Beet Queen, however, is seen as achieving unified, total effect, transforming "a doleful scenario into an airy, even jaunty novel," and Erdrich is praised for maintaining "so much respect and compassion for a cast of frail souls while making the farcical most of their eccentricities." Her success derives from both her "plain yet poetic prose" and "the playful balance between sincerity and artifice" in the "orchestration of an elaborate, often far-fetched plot." Erdrich's

"metafictional" devices are contrasted favorably to those of Joyce Carol Oates and Mark Helprin.

This review is worth attention by SAIL readers for more than its thoughtfully high praise of The Beet Queen. It marks the beginning of a critical definition of Erdrich as something other than a fine "ethnic" or "Native American" novelist endeavoring to incorporate her into the fictional "mainstream." This process seems an inevitable one for Native American writers who begin to attain increasing recognition for their artistic skills. While they will rightly profit, this recognition will pose problems for them, and for those of us who criticize their work. They, and we, will be required to re-imagine the nature and function of Indian literary art in contemporary society, not least through confronting the issue of whether "Indian" is just another "ethnic" group, or something distinctively and specially "American."

Here's an Odd Artifact for the Fairy-Tale Shelf

The Beet Queen is Louise Erdrich's second novel. (Her first novel, Love Medicine, won the National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction in 1984.) Erdrich's prose is dazzling and sleek. Each sentence has been carefully wrought, pared lean and then polished. I call this "poet's prose," and many of Erdrich's descriptions in The Beet Queen are right on target. Mary, as the newly arrived waif, describes her aunt Fritzie's butcher shop and residence:

I smelled the air, pepper and warm from the sausagemakers. I heard the rhythmical whine of meat saws, slicers, the rippling beat of fans. Aunt Fritzie was smoking her sharp Viceroys in the bathroom. Uncle Pete was outside feeding the big white German Shepherd that was kept in the shop at night to guard the canvas bags of money.

Erdrich's prose is an outgrowth of academic, post-modern, so-called experimental influences. The idea is to "set language free," to allow words to interact like magic chemicals in a word sorcerer's pristine laboratory, where a word and its possible relationships with other words may be seen "as they really are, in and of themselves" without the tiresome interference of any historical, political or cultural connections the words may have had in the past. Any characters or plot are imagined within a world that answers only to "itself," the inner created world of the novel or poem itself. Self-referential writing has an ethereal clarity and shimmering beauty because no history or politics intrudes to muddy the well of pure necessity contained within language itself.

Post-modern, self-referential writing reflects the isolation and alienation of the individual who shares nothing in common with other human beings but language and its hygienic grammatical mechanisms. Self-referential writing is light-years away from shared or communal experience that underlies oral narrative and modern fiction. Thus it is interesting to see how effectively the post-modern style of fiction functions in a family saga, rife with complexities of the heart, a

saga that races back and forth from 1932 to 1972, from city to small white town to Indian reservation. Can this stylish post-modern prose refer itself to any world beyond?

The Beet Queen works best when Erdrich is exploring the depths of the subconscious, where her characters dream, hallucinate, fantasize and turn ever inward on themselves. Occasionally there is a confusing similarity in the imagery used to evoke the subconscious of characters who are supposed to be drastically different from one another. But for the most part, this is the level on which Erdrich's prose works best. So long as Erdrich writes about her characters' tenacious involvement with one another, their huge strange passions that coalesce into bisexuality, incest and love triangles, The Beet Queen is quite effective.

But then Erdrich leaves her element and tries to place her characters and action in places and points in history that are loaded with "referential" significance. Good fiction need not be factual, but it doesn't obscure basic truth. In Erdrich's hands, the rural North Dakota of Indian-hating, queer-baiting white farmers, of the Depression, becomes magically transformed. Or maybe "transported." Rural New Hampshire seems a far more probable location for The Beet Queen and its characters, white and Indian, straight and gay.

What Erdrich, who is half-Indian and grew up in North Dakota, attempts to pass off as North Dakota may be the only North Dakota she knows. But hers is an oddly rarified place in which the individual's own psyche, not racism or poverty, accounts for all conflict and tension.

In this pristine world all misery, suffering, and loss are self-generated, just as conservative Republicans have been telling us for years.

Although I read the novel three times, I am still not sure which characters are of Indian ancestry except for Celestine, who is half-Indian, and her half-brother, Russell, who is full-blood. Apparently Mary is part Indian, but I never figured out whether her glamorous irresponsible mother, Adelaide, was part Indian or whether it was Mary's father (who Adelaide claims is responsible for Mary's "stringy black hair"). Mary's brother Karl might be part Indian, too, but Adelaide claims the dead banker who kept them is Karl's father. In which case, does Karl get his possibly Indian looks from Adelaide?

You'd think that as the novel unfolded, who's who would become clear. After all, in 1932 in a small North Dakota town near an Indian reservation, whether one was white, Indian or part Indian mattered a hell of a lot. The fact is, it still matters.

In Erdrich's North Dakota, the deepest levels of the human consciousness appear untouched by racism or bigotry. Though Mary, Karl and their infant brother are abandoned in a devastating way, never once do they wonder if being part Indian might have contributed to their abandonment. The rivalry and jealousy between Mary and her slender blond cousin, Sita, are portrayed as fierce, and Sita appears envious and shallow. But even when Mary "steals" Celestine from Sita, Sita's expressions of bitterness and hurt are curiously free of

racial slurs we might expect from a high school-age girl obsessed with appearance, acceptance and status. The Sita that Erdrich shows seems unlikely to have had anything to do with someone as different as Celestine, let alone be best friends with her. Certainly not in 1932 in a small North Dakota town. After all, the Wounded Knee Massacre is only 42 years and 400 miles south of Sita and the others in Erdrich's novel.

Erdrich delves into the psyche of Celestine and Mary, and while they are not ordinary young women, still they have no consciousness (neither does Erdrich) of how their Indian ancestry in a white town may be related to their feeling of separateness and difference from the others.

The issue of Indian ancestry might recede except Erdrich makes much of juxtaposing Mary's stolid dark looks and Celestine's towering half-breed stature with the blond, willowy "beauty" of Sita. Erdrich swallows white sexist standards of beauty rather than challenging them. Slender and blond, Sita is the beauty, but Erdrich trots out the old cliché in which the dark, ugly girls are nicer, smarter and work harder. Mary buys and wears hideously ugly clothing in loud colors, and Erdrich implies this propensity to violate fashion codes belies Mary's Indian ancestry.

The Beet Queen [sic] is Wallacette or Dot, as she is called, the result of one night of passion between Celestine and Karl, Mary's bisexual, wandering brother. Erdrich emphasizes the incongruity of Dot's stocky dark figure in a floor-length formal and high heels as Dot competes with the other contestants, "all

and tanned orange from laying on their garage roofs smeared with iodined baby oil." The implications and the humor are clear: Dot doesn't fit in. Dot is as incongruous as the Beet Queen as Mary, Celestine and Wallace, a white homosexual, are as citizens in this small North Dakota town.

Erdrich never ventures near the reservation. The reservation is where, for most of the novel, Erdrich keeps Russell, Celestine's half-brother, a full-blooded Chippewa. What Russell does, who Russell visits and how Russell feels about moving back and forth between the white town and the Indian reservation are a mystery. The one time Erdrich shows us Russell's interior, his thoughts and feelings are flat and literal, focused only on the moment at hand.

Compared to the lush, sensuous chaotic inner worlds of characters like Karl and Mary and Celestine, Russell might be the stereotype of "primitive" man mercifully focused on what is concrete, here and how [sic], not like the other characters whose white blood pulses with abstract mental activity--fantasy, desire and willfulness. Because Erdrich can't find much to put inside Russell, she forces him to spend much of the novel on the reservation. Strangely, Celestine never visits the reservation or ever even thinks about her elder Chippewa half-sisters who raised her. But most strange of all, after Mary and Celestine take over Aunt Fritzie's business, not one person from the reservation, not even one Indian cousin, ever steps through the door of the butcher shop.

Erdrich makes much of Russell's war wounds, which give him hero status. But we don't have a clue to what Russell feels about all the blood and bone he's lost defending a government and people who will always exclude him. We never know what reasons or feelings made Russell volunteer for two foreign wars. In the entire 338 pages, only once is any bitterness over racism ever expressed: On page 70, Mary relates that war hero Russell was offered a bank-clerk job in Argus "even though he was an Indian."

The Beet Queen is a strange artifact, an eloquent example of the political climate in America in 1986. It belongs on the shelf next to the latest report from the United States Civil Rights Commission, which says black men have made tremendous gains in employment and salary. This is the same shelf that holds the Collected Thoughts of Edwin Meese on First Amendment Rights and Grimm's Fairy Tales.

Leslie Marmon Silko



James. Welch. Fools Crow. New York: Viking, 1986. \$18.95.

James Welch's third novel, Fools Crow, was published by Viking in 1986. For students of Native American literature it is the most important publication since House Made of Dawn. Until now Indian fiction has concentrated on essentially contemporary problems. Fools Crow is the first historical novel by an American Indian about his people's past. Such an exercise of ethnographic imaginativeness raises profound issues of technique, form, and novelistic purpose. SAIL hopes in the near future to publish a variety of commentaries on these issues, and welcomes essays on Fools Crow and its relation to Welch's earlier fiction.

Those who have not yet read Fools Crow have before them a powerful experience, the most poignant representation in American fiction of a native culture. Written with quiet gravity and unostentatious dignity, Fools Crow sets a standard that unmistakably exposes the moral and aesthetic shoddiness of fiction such as Hanta Yo and other works that in various ways exploit the Indian heritage of this continent.

Perhaps Welch's most remarkable accomplishment is his success in presenting us with a protagonist who holds our interest less because of his particular personality, for his unique psychological experience, than because his individuality exists entirely through his participation in his society. Welch portrays this society, moreover, not as idealized or static, but as in process of dissolution under the impact of whitemen, the Napikwans. It is difficult to think of any scene in modern fiction

like the following, in which the agony of society is the agony of the individual.

As Fools Crow lay in the shadowy lodge, listening to his wife's sleeping breath, he felt the impotence that had fallen over his people like snow in the night. Before the coming of the Napikwans, decisions had been made. There was always the arguing, but in the end, the men had made a decision and all had abided by it. Fools Crow's grandfather had told of a much simpler life when the decisions were easier--when to move camp, when to go to the trading house across the Medicine Line, where the hunting would be best, if it was time to raid the Crow or Snake horses. Now, each decision meant a change in their way of life . . .

...his eyes fell on the scalp he had taken from Bull Shield. It hung glistening in the firelight from a lodgepole. I was powerful then, he thought, my luck was good. But what good is your own power when the people are suffering, when their minds are scattering like horses in the four directions? Was Sun Chief laughing at them, not content just to abandon them? Why must he pull them apart? Why must he make them abandon each other? (314)

Karl Kroeber
Editor

Earth's Mind

The idea of earth's mind comes from a statement made by Chief Joseph, Hin-mah-too'-yah-lat-kekht, Thunder Traveling to Loftier Mountain Heights, in early May, 1877, at the last council between the Nez Perce Indians and representatives of the U.S. government before the outbreak of what has come to be called the Nez Perce War. What was at issue was conflicting claims to the land. The government was there to "encourage" the Nez Perce to give up life on their ancestral homelands, including the Joseph band's beautiful Wallowa Valley, for survival on the Fort Lapwai reservation. Joseph, not a major spokesman at this council, made this statement:

The earth and I are of one mind. The measure of the land and the measure of our bodies is the same. . . . If I thought you were sent by the Creator I might be induced to think you had a right to dispose of me. Do not misunderstand me, but understand me fully with reference to my affection for the land. I never said the land was mine to do with as I chose. The one who has the right to dispose of it is the one who created it. I claim the right to live on my land and accord you the privilege to live on yours.

"The earth and I are of one mind"--this powerful statement comes toward us across the barriers of translation and time. It raises questions for us: how is it that the earth has mind? how is it that a man might share in that mind, or have "one mind" with the earth? what

is that one mind which both Joseph and the earth are of? what is "mind" anyway?

After nearly twenty years of working with American Indian materials, one rule has become clear to me. In order to understand American Indian cultures, as well as American Indian experiences of the world, it is necessary to take their statements seriously. Men like Joseph all over this continent, both in the past and at the present time, mean what they say and say what they mean. Translation difficulties aside, and these are no small matter, they speak from a highly developed oral tradition of which they are masters. Masters! And they speak from circumstances in which absolutely everything that they know and love and are is at stake. It is not "romantic primitivism" or political rhetoric or poetical metaphor that we get from these speakers. It is the power and spirit and mystery of voice, primal voice, raised to its highest, finest level, in defense of ways of life that include not only oneself and one's people, but one's ancestors, the unborn, the land itself, and all the various forms of life through which the land expresses itself. It is a voice in defense of all this and much more that we do not begin to understand at a historical moment when it all is about to come under the domination of a numerically and technologically superior people who, according to their own testimony, have lost their souls.

We think Joseph didn't really mean to say that the earth has mind. We think he talked in that way for effect--that it was just his way of indicating his deep connection to the earth. "Metaphorical" is our modern term that explains

how it is that Joseph thought or spoke this way. We miss him.

The earth and I are of one mind.

It is axiomatic for me that our explanations of how other people think are laden with our own values. Such thinking does violence to other people's experiences. Our explanations are exhibitions of how we think other people think--not examples of other people's thinking. The German philosopher, Martin Heidegger, near the end of his brilliant essay, "The Thing," tells us that the first step towards the sort of "vigilance" that allows the things of this world to be themselves again "is the step back from the thinking that merely . . . explains--to the thinking that responds and recalls."

It is interesting to note that in most historical reconstructions of the last council of the Nez Perce and the U.S. government, Joseph's speech is omitted. Recently, I ran across a newer text in which it was included, but the opening statement, "the earth and I are of one mind," had been excised. Always, the tendency is to leave out and ignore that which we do not want to understand because it does not meet with our assumptions about what is real. The failure of white society to understand what it is that Indian peoples all over this continent have been and are still saying to them lies in our inability to step back from our explanations of their statements and cultures and take them at face value. We don't want to understand "the earth and I are of one mind," because for us the earth does not have mind. We have put great stock both in the special

province of the human mind's superiority over any and all other so-called manifestations of it and in the anticipation of our future in outer space (being in the process of totally defoliating the earth in order to construct larger, more sophisticated machines, eat higher on the food chain, and engage more continuously in petty, but massive power struggles).

All this leads us to consider just what we mean by mind. What is mind? And who has it? What does it mean to have mind? John Swanton, an Alabama Creek Indian and anthropologist writing early in this century, sheds some light on this experience of mind to which Joseph speaks:

The world and all it contained were the products of mind and bore everywhere the marks of mind. Matter was not something which had given birth to mind, but something which had formerly been mind. Something from which mind had been withdrawn, was quiescent, and out of which it might again be roused. This mind was visibly manifested in the so-called "living things" as plants, and . . . animals. . . . This might come to the surface at any time and it did so particularly to the fasting warrior, the knower, and the doctor. Indeed, the importance of these last two types of people lay in their ability to penetrate to the human life [or mind, I would say] within the mineral, plant, and animal life of nature and to bring back from that experience knowledge of value in ordering

the lives of their fellow human beings. . . . Mind was . . . recognized as everywhere of the same nature.

Swanton is clear in his assertion that matter and mind are not separate--"matter was something which had formerly been mind"--and in his statement of the ability of certain types of people to go within the matter of the world, to link there with the mind in things, and to bring back from that experience or journey "knowledge of value in ordering the lives of their fellow human beings." Mind is not, in this worldview, the special province of human beings, and human beings must not isolate themselves from the mind residing in "the mineral, plant, and animal life of nature," lest the human mind so isolated become impoverished and imbalanced. Species extinction, then, can be seen as a permanent form of impoverishment of our own conscious possibilities, i.e., our very domination of other forms of life cuts us off from potential sources of renewal, redirection, and order. We are left at the mercy of our own self-created orders.

This journey out into the mind that resides within the mineral, plant, and animal lives of nature is actually a union of two journeys taken simultaneously. It is also a journey inward, for in our vast evolutionary journey to ourselves we have travelled through other life forms. Our oldest ancestors, back through other mammals and reptiles and fish, are not absent. We carry within ourselves all the forms of life through which we've journeyed in becoming human, and when Swanton speaks of the ability to go out into the [mind] in other forms of life, and when Joseph refers to sharing

the mind of the earth, I think they also mean that they have journeyed to the spider, rock, and reptilian consciousness residing within themselves and within all of us. Hail to the reptilian brain still residing underneath the lush growth of cerebral cortex encasing it! When we deny other life forms, we deny those parts of ourselves that were formed in our journey through them. Who has not emerged from the dark world through a hollow log?

But we have not worked with the question of what we mean by mind. What is it, this mind that we place so much stock in, and which Joseph shares with the earth? Turning to Webster, we find that mind derives from the old Indo-European base word "mem," to think. And what does that mean, to think? Again from Webster, we find the Indo-European base word "tong," to thank. In the origins of our own culture, then, we discover the ancient connection between "think" and "thank." How are we to understand that linkage? Is true thinking thanking? Is thanking the primal form of thinking? Is the thinking which constitutes mind in our own origins the recognition of all that to which we are indebted for our bones, our skins, our tongues? To lose this primal linkage between thinking and thanking, between mind and thankfulness to all the powers of the world which engender and sustain us, is to usher in the culture of ingratitude.

American Indians have always been shocked by the sheer ingratitude that permeates the basic structure of our society. It is why so many Indian terms for whites translate literally as "fat grabber" or "grabbing creature." It has been clear to them that we have broken with the

great cycles of reciprocity that connect us with all things and all things with all things. Here is another Indian statement that gives powerful voice to that difference between the cultures:

The Indian believes that he is a cannibal--all of his life he must eat his brothers and his sisters and deer and corn which is the mother, and the fish which is the brother. All our lives we must eat off them and be a cannibal, but when we die then we can give back all that we have taken, and our body goes to feed the worms that feed the birds. And it feeds the roots of the trees and the grass so that the deer can eat it and the birds can nest in the tree. And we can give back. But today we can't even do this, you know. They poison our bodies and we can't bury our people. We have to be put in boxes to wait for some life, you know, that's going to be. . . . We are all going to rise up, which is so . . . different from the way we feel about our bodies and giving back.

Here we see expressed the understanding that the deep sense of kinship Indian people feel with other forms of life, together with the need for feeding off their bodies in order to live, necessitates a reciprocity, a giving back, a gratitude of which it is unthinkable to be ignorant. The thinking here is thanking, and to have constructed a culture of ungratefulness is literally to have lost our minds.

Here I want to quote in full Gary Snyder's version of an old Mohawk prayer:

Gratitude to Mother Earth, sailing through
 night and day--
 and to her soil: rich, rare, and sweet
 in our minds so be it.

Gratitude to Plants, the sun-facing light-
 changing leaf
 and fine root-hairs; standing still
 through wind
 and rain; their dance is in the flowing
 spiral grain
 in our minds so be it.

Gratitude to Air, bearing the soaring Swift and
 the silent
 Owl at dawn. Breath of our song
 clear spirit breeze
 in our minds so be it.

Gratitude to Wild Beings, our brothers,
 teaching secrets,
 freedoms, and ways; who share with us
 their milk;
 self-complete, brave, and aware
 in our minds so be it.

Gratitude to Water: clouds, lakes, rivers,
 glaciers;
 holding or releasing; streaming through
 all
 our bodies salty seas
 in our minds so be it.

Gratitude to the Sun: blinding pulsing light
 through
 trunks of trees, through mists, warming
 caves where
 bears and snakes sleep--he who wakes
 us--
 in our minds so be it.

Gratitude to the Great Sky
 who holds billions of stars--and goes yet
 beyond that--
 beyond all powers, and thoughts
 and yet is within us--
 Grandfather Space.
 The Mind is his Wife.

so be it.

Surely the old etymological connection between
 thinking and thanking in the origins of our own
 tradition places us within hearing distance of
 at least some of the resonances of this grati-
 tude and of Joseph's "one mind" with the earth.

The person chosen by the Nez Perce to be
 their spokesman at the May, 1877, council with
 General Howard and the other U.S. government
 representatives was Toohoolhoolzote, the old
 Dreamer, prophet, and medicine man, whose name
 means "sound, such as is made by striking any
 vibrant timber or metal with a hard substance."
 Lest we become too abstract in our consideration
 of earth's mind, Toohoolhoolzote's words give us
 a sense of what it means to share earth's body
 too.

Toohoolhoolzote came to the council as
 spokesman for a nation that knew these were
their lands, to work out arrangements whereby

the Nez Perce could live peacefully with the white settlers in their territory. General Howard chose to refer to him as a "cross-grained growler" and a "large, thick-necked, ugly, obstinate savage of the worst type" (Joseph 502-504), and placed him in the guardhouse at Fort Lapwai for one week during the council because he refused to give up his ancestral lands and go onto the reservation. One can imagine the reaction of the U.S. military if Toohoolhoolzote's counterpart at this council, General Howard, the spokesman for his nation, had been taken by the Nez Perce and held for a week at the height of the negotiations between them.

Toohoolhoolzote emphasized his connection to the land on which he lived with statements such as:

But I belong to the earth out of which I came. The earth is my mother. (Joseph 500)

You white people get together, measure the earth, and then divide it . . . Part of the Indians gave up their land. I never did. The earth is part of my body, and I never gave up the earth. (Joseph 503)

Toohoolhoolzote extends the sense of the body referred to in the quote from Armstrong--the sense that the body is not separate from other bodies, those of worms, fish, corn, deer, trees, etc., but that the body is mingled with other bodies as these other bodies are taken inside our own as food, and that if there is to be a balance in the world, then in the end our bodies

must be eaten too, taken inside the worms, birds, grasses, etc., and mingled with them. We are them, they are us, and it is the soil itself with its processes of decay and growth that is the medium through which this endless transformation between one form of life and another goes on. He extends this beyond the linkage to other forms of life to the earth, land, soil itself: when we ask Joseph or Toohoolhoolzote or any people of the land to come onto the reservation, to give up their homeland, we ask them to give up a part of their own bodies. Their bodies have been formed out of that particular land--all the life through which it has expressed itself--and the soil of that land is itself rich with the bodies (and spirits) of all their ancestors who have gone down into it before them.

Dwamish Chief Seathl makes this clear in his 1855 council statement to Governor Stevens:

Our dead never forget the beautiful world that gave them being.

Every part of this soil is sacred in the estimation of my people. Every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove, has been hallowed by some sad or happy event in days long vanished. The very dust upon which you now stand responds more lovingly to their footsteps than to yours, because it is rich with the blood of our ancestors and our bare feet are conscious of the sympathetic touch.

We need to understand that Chief Seathl does mean what he says and says what he means--that the touch between his bare feet and the literal

soil on which they actually are standing is a mutually responsive touch in which the Dwmish feet are conscious of the lives (the spirits) of their ancestors present in that soil, and in which the soil itself is responsive to them, lovingly, and they can feel that. The failure to take seriously on a literal level this experiential reality of the American Indian represents our failure to understand both the Indian and this land, this continent of which the Indian is a part. When we asked them, forced them, to give up their lands, we actually took a part of their own bodies, as well as their spirits, their ancestors. The reality of that! They actually do feel, if we believe them, in the soles of their bare feet, the sympathetic touch of their ancestors residing in the soil, the dust. To reduce that to the level of metaphor is to fail to "understand them fully with reference to their affection for the land."

Frederick Turner, in his "Introduction" to Geronimo, His Own Story, puts it this way:

The Chiricahua, indeed all the Apache, had the priceless inheritance of those who live so close to the natural world that they cannot ever forget that they are a part of it and it is a part of them.

Here is the approved Chiricahua method for the disposal of afterbirth: the mother wraps it up in the piece of cloth or blanket upon which she has knelt during labor and places it in the branches of a nearby fruit-bearing bush or tree. This is done because "the tree comes to life every year, and they want the life of this child to be renewed like the life in

the tree." Before the bundle is placed in the tree the mid-wife blesses it, saying "May the child live and grow up to see you bear fruit many times." Thereafter that place is sacred to the child and to his parents. The child is told where he was born, and if possible the parents take him back to that spot a few years later and roll him on the ground to the four directions. Even adults, when they chance to be once again in the area where they were born, will roll themselves to the cardinal points in symbolic communication with the great wheel that turns everything with it, "whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere." This is why Geronimo begins the story of his life with a careful description of the place of his birth and why, at the end of that story, he says that the Apache are dying because they have not been allowed to return to their homelands. To the Indian mind, a man's attachment to his homeland was not a romantic nostrum but a vital necessity. A man sickened and eventually died--a whole people might die away--if cut off from the life-source of the land itself. And so Geronimo, that "blood-thirsty savage," ends his autobiography with a plea that has the unmistakable dignity of profound conviction: he asks the Great Father, Theodore Roosevelt, to return him and his people to their Arizona homeland. (32-33)

I would argue with Turner in his characterizing the Apache communication with the natural cycles as "symbolic," but that plea, to be returned to their ancestral homelands, is

deep and pervasive among Indian peoples. It is an appeal to be returned to their ancestors, their lives, their bodies, their unborn, to the spirit that is them and is their land. But that homeland to which they appeal to be allowed to return so that they may live is so altered by mining, logging, damming, or nuclear testing that it is unlivable or unrecognizable. One thinks of the reports of children on Rongelap in the Marshall Islands playing in the white fallout as if it were snow after the 15-megaton Bravo hydrogen bomb test of 1954. That bomb was 1,000 times more powerful than the Hiroshima bomb, and the Marshallese had no warning as to the dangers of radiation.

Lastly, I'd like to note one way in which this deep identity between land and human beings that we see expressed so powerfully by American Indians is suggested in a submerged way in the Euro-American culture. And that is in the root meaning of an essential word in our language--the word human.

The word human is derived from the Latin word humus, soil. And the word humble comes also from this old word, humus. To know who we are, as humans, is to know that we are humus, soil itself, with a mind and the ability to walk about. Humility is integral to that self-knowledge, thus linking the roots of our own understanding of being human to the land in a way that is similar to the fuller, explicit expression of that primal connection in American Indian cultures. When I put the human, humus, humble connection on the blackboard in my class, one of the students, a Crow Indian man, said something in his own language and explained to us that among his people they have a saying for

someone who is having too high an opinion of himself. He translated the saying as "you're just dirt," and added, "it doesn't mean the same as if a white person said it--dirty; it's like that humus-human-humble on the board."

This recovery of the understanding that to be human is to recognize that we are humus, that the name of the first man, Adam, in our tradition means red clay, that true thinking is thanking and thanking is truly thinking--all these are a beginning from which to understand Joseph's and the other voices of American Indians as they express Earth's mind.

Charles Simic expresses similar thoughts in a poem entitled "Stone."

Go inside a stone.
That would be my way.
Let somebody else become a dove
Or gnash with a tiger's tooth.
I am happy to be a stone.

From the outside the stone is a riddle:
No one knows how to answer it.
Yet within, it must be cool and quiet
Even though a cow steps on it full
weight,
Even though a child throws it in a river;
The stone sinks, slow, unperturbed
To the river bottom
Where the fishes come to knock on it
And listen.

I have seen sparks fly out
When two stones are rubbed,
So perhaps it is not dark inside after
all;

Perhaps there is a moon shining
 From somewhere, as though behind a
 hill--
 Just enough light to make out
 The strange writings, the star-charts
 On the inner walls.

The remark, "to knock on it and listen," seems to me a precise statement of the task the industrialized nations have before them regarding their survival in the natural world. Our ethical tradition still is in the mode of listening to the stones, of "knocking." It would behoove that tradition to stay in that mode for some time before attempting to make decisions on, say, the rights of trees or fish--knocking.

Roger Dunsmore
 University of Montana



Cev'armiut Qanemciit Qulirait-llu. Eskimo Narratives and Tales from Chevak, Alaska. Told by Tom Imgalrea, Jacob Nash, Thomas Moses, Leo Moses, Mary Kokrak; translated by Leo Moses and Anthony C. Woodbury. Compiled and edited by Anthony C. Woodbury. Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701, 1984. 80 pp.

This is a fine collection of five qanemciit, narratives based on a nameable person's experience, whether or not that person is the storyteller, and three qulirat, tales, which never involve particular individuals known to have existed. Qulirat are said to have originated among remote ancestors, whereas even a narrative such as that cited below dealing with people known only through the story who inhabited the now abandoned village of Kayalivik belongs to a "modern" world. In traditional Yup'ik society, according to Anthony Woodbury, storytelling was open to everyone, and stories were recounted by shamans conducting rituals, men relaxing in their communal house, women to children, young girls to their companions, the girls illustrating their stories with drawings scratched in earth or snow by special story knives. This narrational openness, paralleled in many Indian tribes, is important because in Alaska there are now about 14,000 Yup'iks regularly using their language. This volume is intended to contribute to sustaining this impressive bilingualism in Chevak, as well as extending available Yup'ik literature. To this end the stories are presented both in the native dialect of the Chevakers of Central Alaskan Yup'ik Eskimo, with English translation in a form endeavoring to capture some of the qualities of the performances in which they

originated. Woodbury, following the lead of Tedlock, has presented his material in lines defined by pauses, lines in groups defined by longer separative pauses, and the groups in sections, distinguished in terms of content as logical episodes, usually involving changes in time, place, or character, but apparently also adhering to special linguistic patterns. The distinct unity of these sections (represented in the English translation that follows by the use of asterisks, the English lines adhering to the Yup'ik lineation) is suggested by the practice of having young men learning to narrate stories lay down a stick at the conclusion of a section, any error in sectioning being corrected by a veteran teller.

Woodbury says groups are distinguished by downdrift, each line spoken at a lower pitch and sometimes in a softer voice (when a new group of lines is begun the teller returns to a high pitch), as well as by longer pauses at the conclusion of a group of lines. And groups often begin with particles and connective words. These, for valid reasons, Woodbury has excised, but I wish he had not. He feels their presence makes the English translation unnatural and that literary analysis must deal with the native-language original. I find, however, such verbal markings help remind me of the oral character of the written text and useful when I am trying to get something from a native-language text in which my expertise is minimal. Often one can gain useful insights by reading back from a literal translation into an unfamiliar language -- a point worth making because it suggests that markers probably have quite potent effects for a native listener. But anyone interested in the actual performances can order for a mere five

dollars a 90-minute cassette of the stories from the publisher.

The story reproduced below fairly indicates the interesting quality of these tellings, and one or two features of it seem worth comment. Offhand I can't think of a story in which the "heroic" nature of the protagonist is established so economically, in part through the undercurrent of humor that characterizes Cagniimqurraq, beginning with his manifestly ironic name. That irony seems to me splendidly developed in the sardonic humor of the abrupt ending--one realizes after a moment that there was no point in naming a troublemaker who is about to be caught up with by Fairly Strong. Being innocent of any knowledge of Yup'ik culture, I cannot judge the significance of the presentation of the shamans, but the story appears to affirm the spiritual potency of individual goodness against the "institutionally" recognized dealers in supernatural power. Cagniimqurraq's strength is rooted in his lack of fear, and there are powerful implications in his breaking up the grave markers and growling "who here wants me to be afraid of him?" His preternatural gifts, lifting shamans and identifying his anonymous enemy, seem to derive from his pragmatic, practical, down-to-earth approach to what is not merely physical. He challenges the shamans by direct questions about their place, position, travel route, just as he heads straight to the ghost's home, the graveyard, to assert his physical presence. Whatever other meanings an Eskimo would recognize in this narrative, I find it a singularly illuminating dramatization of the important distinction between supernaturalism and superstition.

Narrative
Told by Jacob Nash
November 13, 1978

I will tell a story
that I used to hear long ago.

Back in days now long past,
there was
a man
who lived,
whose name was Cagniimqurraq, or
Fairly Strong.

Now this man
would step aside for no one,
for he feared nothing,
not even the shamans.

Well, the man did
what he thought was right,
and nothing could hold him back.

Whenever shamans did anything to him,
he went
right over to them,
and confronted them, sitting down
beside them.

He even did this
to those whom other people feared,
for he was not scared of them.

* * *

And so this man acted
whenever they were visited
by shamans,
even by very mighty ones.

If the shamans practiced their powers,
he went right over to them and
questioned

them directly,
asking what village they were from
and what their names were.
He asked each shaman
where it was
he had just traveled from
and what his standing was
in his home village.

And whenever he confronted strangers
in this way,
he clenched his fists right near them,
and lifted them up and down very
slightly.

Indeed,
even though he never touched him,
he could make a shaman
rise suddenly in the air,
and when he did he used to stand and
say:

"Well, it seems that something must be
rising beneath you!"

* * *

One day he did it
to two shamans
who had come in.
They were strangers.

He sat down between them,
for he wanted to see if he could lift
them.

One of them
was from around here, from the north
toward Qissunaq,
and the other was from down there, from
the coast below Nelson Island.

Just which village it was
that he came from,
I do not know.

So, the man clenched his fists,
to see if he could lift those two.

First he turned
toward the one from the north,
from around here,
and he said:
"This one seems a bit heavy!"

Then he turned toward the one on his
other side:
"But this fellow here is lighter."
* * *

After Cagniimqurraq did that,
the villagers came and summoned him,
saying a ghost had visited his children.

He groaned in anger:
"Ungh!
I wonder who it is in the graves up there
that is trying to scare my children?
As soon as dawn comes tomorrow, I'll
take care of them."

And when dawn came Cagniimqurraq
was clubbing the graves, breaking the
markers in half one after the other.

And he growled:
"I wonder who it is here that is trying to
scare my children?
And who here wants me to be afraid
of him?"

* * *

Well,
when he came back down from the graveyard
and got back home, it seems he was sick.
He came back with some kind of illness.

One of the shamans told him
that it was the dead,
the ones in the graves he had clubbed,
who made him sick.

But Cagniimqurraq got right up and
replied:
"The dead didn't make me sick!
That man over by the entrance,
sitting there
in the corner,
it was he who did!"

And because it was true,
he did not deny it, and he stood up to
leave.

When he went out, the other got up
and followed him.
* * *

Well,
that man called Cagniimqurraq
seems to have lived
down that way,
in the area of Kayalivigmiut.

That's the end.

Karl Kroeber
Editor



The Sun Is Not Mercival

Maurice Kenny has allowed us to present some highlights from a piece of his describing and deploring the plight of contemporary Native American writers, of whom there are, as he says, "many more, and probably most women," than usually even "the specialist reader is aware." Kenny comments on the fact that more Native American poetry than fiction is published, even though "story-telling has an equal importance in the traditional village and at the contemporary knee." Although Kenny's focus is The Sun is Not Mercival by Anna Lee Walters, Firebrand Books, Ithaca, NY 14850, \$6.95 pb., his comments range widely over the contemporary scene, including, for example, a defense of Janet Campbell-Hale's second novel, The Jailing of Cecelia Capture.

The novel was not published to the acclaim given Silko and Erdrich, and in fact received slight attention, a paragraph review in The Times, while SAIL in its Fall 1985 issue complained that "Hale has no particular ear for dialogue nor much gift for characterization." Surely there is weakness in Hale's novel, but it is first and foremost a novel, not some stories scotch-taped together and labeled a novel. If Hale fails, then she fails honorably, but who is to say she failed? If a writer does not compose from the experience of her own life, whose experience does she write from? Perhaps Hale's book is short on imagination, but certainly not on characterization. Cecelia is flesh and blood. As you read, you wince for her, nearly hold up a hand to stop her from destruction. There is a little bit of Cecelia Capture in all of us, particularly Native Americans who have suffered deprivation, drunkenness, drugs, and

eat at Burger King, and suffer not merely loss of ancestral lands and customs but the horror of the loss of spirit. Janet Campbell-Hale writes out of her life and of her life for a public eye. That takes guts. She should be encouraged, not reprimanded, for the completion of her novel.

Of The Sun is Not Mercival, Kenny observes:

Mrs. Walters herself has written: "These stories are by no means of a vanishing or defeated people. On the contrary, this is a collection of triumphant, bitter-sweet and poignant stories that reflect the coming to terms with time, life and place." These two statements ring true over and over again as story and character unfold.

Composed of eight brief stories, seven told through conventional means and one, "Mythomania," told in transmigratory style . . . people having not only animal/insect names but presences as well. It contains strong themes . . . one theme she uses in "Come, My Sons" being the aging process and the usefulness of the age, death itself, though of the eight stories this is perhaps the least satisfying.

Throughout the various stories Anna Lee Walters constantly reminds herself, her characters and eventually her readers of what true living is really all about . . . not only a remembrance of the past, beauty, thankfulness, the undeniable interaction and dependancy upon each other as creatures of the world, but that we are all a part of something, something large

and magical. We either belong to the waters of the lake, the stars, or to the earth itself.

The last, longest, and title story, "The Sun is Not Mercival," tells of a traditional peoples' loss of their lands through exploitation of "industrial tourism or industrial recreation" which Edward Abbey described so horrifyingly in Desert Solitaire and Aldo Leopold in A Sand County Almanac. Like others in the collection, this story is short on narrative. Its strength, and it is brutally strong, is in the strength of its two central characters: two aged sisters, Lydia and Bertha, who fish in restricted waters on "No Trespassing" lands, once their homelands, which they were forced to sell only to create a recreational lake mainly for non-Indian use. Old Man, their blood father, surrounds their youth and maturing years with story and chronicle, teaching them how to fish, and how to love the water from which their people originally came. When the white state ranger writes them warning tickets for trespassing on their own traditional lands, they not only ignore him but, confounding him with their obstinacy, encourage him to tear up the warnings and the summons. In her last years Lydia's leg is amputated, but even after the forced sale of her home and lands, she insists upon returning to the high rock at the lake edge to fish with her sister, Bertha. Lydia is not to be pitied for this loss of limb, so long as she can still manage the high rock and fish in her waters; her strengths and Bertha's is contagious.

It is pleasing to learn that The Sun Is Not Mercival was honored this year by the Before Columbus Foundation with the American Book Award for excellence in literature.

Maurice Kenny
Editor, Contact II



Short Reviews

Contact II Publications, Box 451, New York, NY 10004, has reissued (1985) for \$4.00 the celebrated Nuke Chronicles, which includes, along with Ginsberg's "Plutonian Ode," poems by Bruchac, Revard, Rose, and artwork by Peter Jemison.

*

James J. Rawl. Indians of California: The Changing Image. Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1984. \$19.95.

The last word of this book's title is the operative one, for the work is about Whites and their views, overwhelmingly negative, of Indians.

*

Joseph Bruchac. Iroquois Stories. The Crossing Press. P. O. Box 640, Main Street, Trumansburg, NY 14886, 1985. 208 pp. \$15.95.

This largest contemporary collection of retellings of Iroquois stories, vigorously illustrated by Daniel Burgevin, includes tales of creation, of monsters, and of magic. These versions are skillfully designed by Bruchac to be read aloud. They do, indeed, sound well, especially if one has listeners who respond properly with an emphatic "Henh!" Bruchac also provides a useful introduction and a brief glossary. The book is beautifully printed.

*

Dena'ina Sukdu'a: Traditional Stories of the Tanaina Athabaskans. Recorded and transcribed by Joan M. Tenenbaum; edited and translated by Joan M. Tenenbaum and Mary Jane McGary; color illustrations by Dale DeArmond; Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska, 1984.

Contains 24 tales, a substantial majority by Antone Evan, a gifted teller, in both Athabaskan and English, with lineations and typographical devices to indicate characteristics of the tellings. McGary's introduction is lucidly informative, and her editing excellent. The color illustrations have nothing to do with the Northern Athabaskans but, as McGary observes, their extraordinary power and liveliness makes them excellent complements to the stories.

*

The Chauncey Press, Turtle Pond Road, Saranac Lake, NY 12983, offers Maurice Kenny's Is Summer This Bear at \$6.95, with a cover drawing by Rokwaho. A French Translation of Kenny's Blackrobe comes at \$12.95, and The White Roots of Peace by Paul Wallace, which includes essays by Dennis Banks and John Mohawk, with illustrations by Kahiones, is available for \$9.95.

*

The Strawberry Press, P.O. Box 451, Bowling Green Station, New York, NY 10004, has three volumes that shouldn't be overlooked.

Peter Blue Cloud (Aroniawenrate), Sketches in Winter, With Crows, 1985. \$4.00 pp. More concerned than Ted Hughes with real birds, Blue

Cloud also focuses here on winter, in its bright as well as its bleak aspects. The drawings by Peter Jemison that accompany the text are smashing.

Linda Noel, Where You First Saw the Eyes of Coyote. \$2.00 pp. Published in 1983 on fine paper with a cover drawing by Tehontake, this is a real collector's item.

Charolotte Declue, Without Warning. \$3.50 pp. A varied collection by a poet of gifted simplicity, with lovely drawings of deer and deer tracks by Jaune Quick-to-See Smith.

*

Linda Hogan, Seeing Through the Sun. Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1985

Fifty fine poems exhibiting Hogan's characteristically quiet, even understated, intensity. As Hogan matures as an artist her little touches become surer, more exact, and she renders with increasingly delicate precision the truth "that boundaries are all lies."

*

New And Old Voices of Wah'kon-tah, edited by Robert K. Dodge and Joseph B. McCullough. New York: International Publishers (381 Park Avenue South, NY 10016) \$9.50 hb; \$4.95 pb. 144 pp.

The editors in their introduction call this the third edition of a collection they originated more than ten years ago, and the volume testifies to the expanding and deepening of the Native American poetry Renaissance during

the past decade. This is a solid new collection, admirably inexpensive, and including among its 46 poets several younger and less-well known talents, along with a good selection of works by Young Bear, Whiteman, Welch, Rose, Ortiz, Niatum, Momaday, Kenny, Harjo, Henson, Erdrich, Bruchac, and Allen.

*

Anastasia M. Shkilnyk. A Poison Stronger than Love: The Destruction of an Ojibwa Community. Yale University Press, 1985.

A horrifying picture of the destruction of the Grassy Narrow reserve through relocation by Canadian officials who sincerely wished to improve the lot of the native people by introducing medical care and education and alleviating their poverty. To the disaster produced by these good intentions badly applied was added the grossly careless pollution by mercury of the streams where these Ojibwa live, thus destroying commercial fishing in their area, reducing tourism, and--to an extent not yet determined--inflicting mercury poisoning upon them. A ghastly classic.

*

Edward Sapir: Appraisals of his Life and Work. Ed. Konrad Koerner. John Benjamins, Amsteldijk 44, P. O. 52519, 1007 HA Amsterdam, Holland, 1985.

A useful collection of biographical sketches and analyses of the work of the premier linguist to have studied Native American languages. Contains a reprint of the valuable

"Scientific Papers and Prose Writings of Edward Sapir" with addenda through 1984.

*

The Pueblo Storyteller: Development of a Figurative Ceramic Tradition. Barbara A. Babcock, and Guy and Doris Monahan. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1986. 201 pp. \$40.00.

An attractive volume with over sixty photographs, many in color, detailing the sensational spread to over 150 potters of the pottery storyteller figure invented by Helen Cordero of the Cochiti Pueblo in 1964. These figures are made for sale to Anglo tourists, and it is pleasant to have this particular Indian commercial success described so handsomely. For those interested in Pueblo artistic traditions there is an excellent bibliography.

*

The Passing of the Great West, described on the title page as "Selected Papers of George Bird Grinnell," edited with an introduction and commentary by John F. Rieger, originally published in 1972, has been reissued by the University of Oklahoma Press, \$7.95 pb., 1985. This in fact is a biography of Grinnell up through his thirty-fourth year, largely composed of extracts from his writings and given narrative coherence by Rieger, who follows Grinnell's own memoir of his early years. Since there have been few more sensitive and interesting journalists, ethnographers, or conservationists than Grinnell (who was also a remarkable editor, storyteller, and many other things), this record has much to recommend it--

though one should not forget that he lived long past 1883 when this book stops, indeed, until 1938.

*

Keith A. Murray, The Modocs and Their War, originally published in 1959, has gone into its second paperback reprinting (1984) at the University of Oklahoma Press. The book provides a clear and fundamentally fair account of the vicious and complicated conflict in northern California in 1872-73 to which curiously little attention has been paid by scholars.

*

Wendy Rose. The Halfbreed Chronicles and Other Poems. The West End Press, Box 291477, Los Angeles, CA 90029, 1985. \$4.95.

Joe Bruchac has said that this volume moves Rose into the company of Neruda and Achebe, and the comparisons are fair to Rose's combination of moral indignation with clear-headed hope that the evils of past and present can be--not forgotten--superseded by a finer humanity, of which her sensibility provides a model. There is no contemporary poet to whom poetry seems to come more naturally, like leaves to a tree as John Keats said, though often with Rose it is poetry of anger and anguish in the guise of beauty. Representative is the opening of "The Day They Cleaned Up the Border":

"Government soldiers killed my children;
I saw it. Then
I saw the head of a baby floating on the
water."

--surviving village woman quoted in
the news.

How comforting
the clarity
of water, . . .

Rose's drawings, too, are getting better all the time; several in this volume remind one of what Beardsley might have drawn had he possessed any moral or intellectual seriousness.

*

The Blue Cloud Press, Marvin, SD 57521, lists the follows volumes at \$2.00 each, including postage and handling:

Star Child by Paula Gunn Allen.

There is No Word for Goodbye by Mary
Tall Mountain.

The Smell of Slaughter by Maurice Kenny.

Remembering the Dawn by Joseph
Bruchac.

Man Inside the Bear Skin by Doug
Flaherty.

North People by Anita Endrezze-
Danielson.

Man From a Rainbow by Silvester J.
Brito.

Seek the House of Relatives by Elizabeth
Cook-Lynn.

North: Poems of Home by Maurice
Kenny.

Who Is San Andreas by Wilma Elizabeth
McDaniel.

The Magic of Names, interviews with Norman H. Russell, Lance Henson, and Jim Weaver Barnes, compiled by Patrick D. Hundley.

Re-Visiting the Plains Indian Country of Mari Sandoz, a photographic essay by LaVerne Harell Clark, will cost you \$2.50, and Maurice Kenny's anthology of 15 Native American Poets, Wounds Beneath the Flesh, will set you back \$4.00.

The Blue Cloud Quarterly, 31:3, is These Few Words of Mine, by Ed Edmo, who sometimes makes very few words and no punctuation tell vividly.

Maurice Kenny's first volume of fiction that we know of, Rain and Other Fictions, a "small bundle" of short stories, is available for \$3.00.

*

Titles from The White Pine Press, 73 Putnam Street, Buffalo, NY 14213:

Maurice Kenny. Between Two Rivers: Selected Poems, 1986. \$10.00 pb.

Smell of Earth and Clay: East Greenland and Eskimo Songs. Translated by Lawrence Millman. \$5.00.

On Turtle's Back: A Biogenographic Anthology of New York State Poetry, Ed. Dennis Maloney. \$3.00 pb.

*

The Greenfield Review Press, R.D. 1, Box 80, Greenfield Center, NY 12833:

Volume 9: 3 & 4, Winter/Spring 1982, American Indian Writings Issue of The Greenfield Review is still available.

Songs From This Earth on Turtle's Back: Contemporary American Indian Poetry, ed. Joseph Bruchac. \$9.95.

Lance Henson. Selected Poems: 1970-1983. \$5.00

New Voices from the Longhouse, An Anthology of Modern Iroquois Literature, ed. Joseph Bruchac. \$9.95.

* * *

A N N O U N C E M E N T

Joseph Bruchac, Writer-in-Residence at the Center for American Culture Studies, Columbia University, will read from his work on March 23 at 4:00 p.m. He will also serve as moderator for three panels: "New Native American Writing," March 30 (with guest speakers Maurice Kenny and Diane Burns); "Writing from America's Prisons," April 6 (speakers Bruce Franklin and Paul Gordon); and "Publishing in America's Small Presses," April 20 (with speakers Kay Ann

Cassell, James Gwynne, and Judith Johnson). Each of the panel discussions will begin at 4:00 p.m. at the Center, 603 Lewisohn Hall, Columbia University. For further information contact the center directly.

