

Studies in American Indian Literatures

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BIRD SONGS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

An Interview With Paul Apodaca

INTRODUCTION

Many people--probably most--have received their ideas about California Indians from Theodora Kroeber's biography of a northern Californian, *Ishi*, and Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona*, a romantic novel based on some events in the life of a Cahuilla woman. Very few scholars or writers, however, have studied oral and written literature composed by Native Californians themselves. One person who is engaged in this study is Paul Apodaca, who has been working with the language, texts, music and performances of Cahuilla songs as recorded on older wax cylinder recordings and in present-day performance.

I became interested in Bird Songs after seeing the exhibit Paul Apodaca arranged for the Bowers Museum in 1987, and watching the videotape he had produced of some of the singers. Later, I called and asked where I could learn more about the songs, and he graciously agreed to be interviewed on the subject. Our conversation took place at the museum on September 14, 1989.

Helen Jaskoski

Interviewer: You and Leanne Hinton have both published articles on bird songs of Southern California.¹ My first question is about this designation "bird song."

Paul Apodaca: It's interesting. The songs are not dealing primarily with birds. They are mythological songs that talk about the emergence of the first people onto the surface of the earth, their travels around southern California, and their transformations into animal forms.

A good portion of them do deal with transformation into bird form; they all deal with transformation into other forms, and birds are one. The popularity of the term bird song is fascinating all by itself, because these songs are sung from Arizona, all the way down into the Grand Canyon among the Havasupai and the Hualapai, up into northern Mexico with the Cocopas, all the way out to the west coast with the Kumeyaay in San Diego, and northward all the way up into Los Angeles among the Gabrielino. The fact that all these varied tribes would use the same designation--bird song--is unusual.

But more unusual than that is the fact that they come from completely different linguistic bases. We have Hokan-speaking peoples in the San Diego area and Shoshonean-speaking peoples in the middle part of Southern California, and then we return to Hokan when we get up into the Chumash areas in Santa Barbara.

I'm working with Cahuilla translators, and I'm learning some Cahuilla words. The Cahuilla language has a Shoshonean base. (I should note this about Shoshonean languages: the southern California Indians have grown to resent use of the term "Shoshonean" in describing their language, because many people cannot distinguish between linguistics and tribal or cultural organization; Shoshonean-speaking peoples and the Shoshone tribe, though maybe obviously different to us, seem to be the same to lay people. I generally now use the term Takic for the language group, or Shoshonean/Takic.)

What is referred to as the Shoshonean wedge is a body of linguistically similar people in the central part of southern California. It is thought that there was a migration of Shoshonean-speaking people from the east out to the coast of California, maybe as long ago as 6,000 years, maybe as short as 2,000 years ago. But the fact that Shoshonean speakers would have a body of songs that was similar and named the same and used the same way as the Hokan-speaking people that were previously there is quite remarkable.

Interviewer: I'm interested in what you say about Arizona. I'm familiar with the Pima emergence myth. Are the bird songs also sung by Piman-speaking peoples?

Paul Apodaca: There's an overlap, because some of the O'odham, the Papago people, sing bird songs. And I've heard that some of the Pima sing bird songs, as well. So, in the exhibition that we did,² I produced maps that designated a bird song area, which seemed to be the only way to approach it, rather than trying to say bird song tribes. It seems to be more a geographical area.

Interviewer: You mentioned a ceremonial cycle of songs, and you've talked about the songs as related to an emergence-creation story. What can you tell me about the myth and about the cycle as a whole?

Paul Apodaca: The idea of the songs being mythical, depictions of creation, is absolutely accurate. But they should not be confused with the tribal creation myths, because those are different. And yet, they are similar. So, the Cahuilla have their own creation myth, which was recorded in the 1960s, and that creation myth is very different from the Mojave creation myth. And yet the Cahuilla and the Mojave both sing bird songs, which contain elements of the creation myth in them.

What is fascinating, though, is that the creation story that is being told in the bird song cycles seems to be a different creation myth from the ones that the particular tribes who are singing the songs may use within their own religious complexes.

Their descriptions of the emergence of the first people are in terms that are very different from what people would expect. They talk about the people coming up through the earth, almost as if materializing up through the earth. They have come from somewhere else, but they didn't come down to the earth from the sky, and they don't come out of holes in the ground as they do in Navajo. Rather, they seem to ooze right up out of the ground, and when they come, they are on their stomachs. They talk about crawling on their stomachs and moving over hills and down valleys on their stomachs, almost, if you can imagine, like people on sleds, sliding down hills, snow-covered hills. Almost like that, undulating and sliding, all up and down hills and down through valleys. This movement of the people, and the way they describe their movement, is very different from anything you hear elsewhere.

Also, their description of the transformation into the modern forms of deer, birds, and so on, is alluded to in other myths, but it is openly stated in these bird songs. For instance, one of the songs says,

My hands are growing hard, and make a
rat-a-tat sound when I walk.

My hands are growing hard, and make a
rat-a-tat sound when I walk.

I have a tail, but it will not hide me.

I have a tail, but it will not hide me,

as it describes the transformation into a deer. And the people's exclamations as they're changing into these forms are remarkable: they are done in the first person, and they sound surprised as they describe what's happening to them. They very graphically describe this physical transformation.

To sing the entire body of songs takes all night. The first songs, the entrance songs, are sung as the sun goes down. The entire cycle is gone through during the night, until the morning; when the sun rises, the final song in the cycle is sung.

The length of individual songs seems to be completely up to the singers. The songs themselves are generally two, maybe three lines long, and they are repeated; how many repetitions of those lines within a song seems to be up to the singers. They can complete one song in two minutes, or they can take that same song and extend it for ten minutes.

The songs are mythical, but they are also social--entertainment, if you will--when they are not being sung in their entirety. If the songs are being sung during the daytime, for instance, in a home or something like that, dancing accompanies the songs, and the California Indian style of dancing, of course, is a whole other subject. When they're done in that way, the songs are performed more for social fun. When they are going to be sung in the entire body, though, that's when a group of singers gather together and will spend the whole night singing. Dancing may or may not occur during that singing.

When the entire cycle is sung today, it's done usually at a designated festival or fiesta. At Morongo [the Morongo (Cahuilla) reservation outside Banning, California], for instance, they have an annual fiesta, usually in May, to raise money to support the Malki museum on the reservation. That night of the fiesta is when the singers at Morongo sing the bird song cycle. There's no ceremonial date, though, that ties in; there's no ceremonial calendar that makes that date particularly important within Cahuilla culture. It has become a modern tradition. The tribes are gathered for the fiesta, so all the singers are there, the families are there to support the museum, so that seems to be an opportune time to sing the cycle. How a date was determined when to sing the cycle in previous times we don't know yet. That may be something that we'll find out.

Interviewer: When you're talking about the songs as being recognized by different people from different language groups and different cultural systems, how are the songs identified? That is, do you find identical melodies or identical use of instrumentation or identical texts, or all three of those?

Paul Apodaca: Yes, all three. Again, that's one of the fascinating aspects. Southern California Indian people do not utilize drums, for instance, as a musical instrument; they use only rattles. And the old ceremonial rattles are deer hoof rattles. The second level down, moving toward the secular in rattles, would be turtle shell. After that, then, either cocoon rattles or gourd rattles are the latest type. Gourd rattles are very commonly used nowadays by almost all bird singers. And now, because of the influence of Plains Indians, tin can rattles are being used as well: the saltshaker type rattles that are traditionally used by Cheyenne and other Plains Indians are being utilized today by bird singers, which in some cases may be regrettable.

The rattle, though, is not the predominant instrument of the Shoshonean-speaking peoples to the east of California. And herein lies one of the great enigmas of the bird songs: as the Shoshonean-speaking peoples came into California, they seem to have abandoned

their own instrumentation and adopted the California instrumentation of rattle only.

By the same token, basket-making techniques that are utilized with Shoshonean-speaking peoples east of California are not utilized at all by Shoshonean-speaking Indians in California. So, again, basketry technology seems to have been abandoned as they crossed the border, and the California model seems to have been adopted.

So all of a sudden we've got the Shoshoneans pushing their way out to the coast. Yet by the time they hit the coast, it seems there's nothing left of their culture except the remnants of the language itself. Their instrumentation, their basketry technology, their clan structures, everything else all of a sudden has transformed into the same model that is used by California Indians, Hokan speakers to the north and the south of the Shoshonean wedge.

The bird songs seem to be the key to this insight. But there seems to have been a southern California cultural pattern that was so strong and so dominant that all other tribes that encountered it, though they came from different languages and different geographical areas, abandoned their cultural model and adopted the California model.

Interviewer: I have a question that goes back to the story, the governing story, we would call it. It sounds as though you're saying that the songs are primarily lyrics, that you don't have an extended narrative in any single song, but these are lyrics that do refer to a governing story.

Paul Apodaca: Each song is almost like a verse or a passage from the overall narrative. So one cannot hear the story unless one hears all the songs in their proper order. Then the emphasis on different parts of the stories is not always as apparent as it would be in other forms.

Interviewer: Has the overall story been recorded?

Paul Apodaca: No, not completely. That's just where we are right now. Just this last weekend I was sitting down with some Cahuillas and we uncovered some tapes that had been recorded by some of their fathers. One of them had been recorded thirty-four years ago and no one has ever heard the tape; his father had recorded it in a room, put it in a box, and no one had ever heard it.

We've also found thirty brand-new bird songs, and we've found about forty ceremonial songs that are all Cahuilla that no one has heard in thirty-four years. Most people had either forgotten them or thought they were lost.

Interviewer: Incredible! You must have felt as if you had walked into a bank vault.

Paul Apodaca: Absolutely. A real treasure. And so, the entire body of the story is not complete. And that's what I'm working toward.

Interviewer: Are you working toward a book?

Paul Apodaca: I think that I'm going to have to. It started as an interest in the music. The music itself is remarkable, because the melodies are very pleasing to your American senses of musicality, and that is very unusual in Native American music. The bird songs, however, seem to utilize musical notation that is similar to European forms of melody. As a result, a Euro-American listening to a bird song can whistle the melody within a few seconds of hearing it. Many people feel compelled to try to sing along. It's interesting all of a sudden to find this body of very--what we in Euro-American culture would call melodic music--among these Native Americans here. That was how I was first drawn to the music: hearing melodies that I could hum and sing.

Then, a pursuit of that drew us into the rhythm structures. The rhythm structures are very different from any I've heard in Native American music before, and much more complex. In charting some of the rhythms, we find that passages are broken into different tempos, and the construction of the rhythms starts to resemble jazz and even Afro-jazz fusion rhythms. These end up becoming almost polyrhythmic, in the way that the rattle versus voice rhythms are being counterpointed. They are the most rhythmically complex music that I've heard in the Americas, and that seems confirmed by most ethnomusicologists that I've worked with on the subject.

Then we started recording and documenting the music, and then we started getting deeper into the words and the language. And as we start uncovering all of it, we are just plunging deeper and deeper. What started out as a fascination with the music and an effort to document and help popularize the form is now revealing so much information that I think a book is going to have to happen.

Interviewer: On the subject of words and texts, and the different language groups that have bird songs: are the songs sung by all in a single language, or are they translated? Would you find in a Shoshonean and in a Hoka language the same song with the same basic sense but translated into both those languages?

Paul Apodaca: It seems to be a body of songs, period. Different tribes seem to have learned the songs and then adapted some of the

songs into their language. All the tribes that sing them acknowledge that there are some songs whose words they do not understand, and almost all of them acknowledge that even within any one song there are words or parts of phrases that they don't understand.

It seems again to indicate that the songs themselves were there first, and different tribes slowly adapted some of their own words into the songs but only did so to a certain degree.

Interviewer: Are you hypothesizing an extinct language?

Paul Apodaca: Yes. Absolutely and definitely, yes. No need to be shy about it. I'm saying that I really think that what we're uncovering is an older language that was here maybe even before the Hokan speakers. That's a big reach, I realize. But there are ethnographic notes in Harrington's work and in others' that state very clearly that there were at least two types of languages that were spoken among almost all the tribes that were here in southern California. One was a secular language spoken by the common people, and the other was a shamans' language that was only used among medicine people.

So, the idea of multiple languages within the groups seems already well-established within southern California. The fact that these songs that we're listening to are unintelligible in parts, even to the shamanistically trained tribal members now, either indicates that this is a language that may be related to abandoned shamanistic languages or it may indicate, as I'm saying, an even deeper root. At that point, the door is open. We don't know. So I could say that this language goes back to the Ice Age just as easily as I could say this is a language that disappeared 300 years ago.

Interviewer: It's a wonderful hypothesis. As far as any of the texts that exist now: were any of the bird songs recorded earlier?

Paul Apodaca: Yes. John Peabody Harrington, T. T. Waterman, Constance Goddard, Helen Roberts, and a number of ethnomusicologists and ethnographers in the early part of this century--also Alfred Kroeber--recorded southern California Indian music. Those recordings are available through the Library of Congress right now, through the Federal Cylinder Project Program, which has been transferring those early recordings from Edisonphone wax cylinders and aluminum discs onto tape.

Catalogues of those recordings have also been assembled, mainly through the efforts of Richard Keeling, who now is at UCLA and was formerly with the Lowie Museum in Berkeley.³

Interviewer: So, you're saying that songs were recorded, but apparently they were not transcribed or analyzed, that not much of the work actually got into B.A.E. bulletins, for instance.

Paul Apodaca: That's right. Keeling has made access to the original recordings possible, and that gives us a way, now, to be able to compare a bird song the way it's sung today, and find a recording that was made in the early part of the century--in 1910, 1915--and be able to see any variation within it.

What is remarkable is that the songs seem to be very much the same except for a few rhythmic changes, and a change in pronunciation of some of the words, attributable to the fact that modern singers are not always fully conversant in their native language. So, many times they are working off of vocables rather than out of intelligible renditions of the lyrics. When the original singers who were recorded in the early part of the century spoke exclusively their own languages, the pronunciations, guttural tones, et cetera, are more pronounced than in modern recordings.

Interviewer: In your study of the music, are you involved in developing a system of notation?

Paul Apodaca: That's something that will have to happen as well. Each ethnomusicologist who has worked on Native American music, just like each linguist, seems to have developed a notation.

One of the things in southern California Indian music is the concept of the California lift in melody: the melody is repeated over and over within a certain notation range, and then it is lifted by sometimes as much as a full third up to another level of notation, and repeated, and then drops back down to the major that it started from.

This California lift is present in the bird songs and is one of the structural points that helps us to recognize a bird song versus a ceremonial song. Ceremonial songs don't use the lift, but bird songs always do. There are other southern California songs that use the lift, but the rhythms of those other songs are different from bird songs. So, when we combine the rhythm with the structure within the melody, along with some translation of words, we seem to be able to identify the bird song.

Interviewer: All that you've been saying about the songs suggests that this is a very old body of work, and that it's not a category in which any recent composition is being done. Is that right?

Paul Apodaca: That's correct. There are no modern compositions done in this at all.

Interviewer: That would be different, say, from Hopi katsina songs, which I know are being composed.

Paul Apodaca: That's right. Or Navajo songs, which are still being composed today.

Interviewer: That brings up the question of how the bird songs are being transmitted now. Are many young people learning bird songs now?

Paul Apodaca: Many young people are not, but there are some. The elders . . . Well, the California Indians have suffered terribly under the hands of Americans and everyone else. There is no group of people that has suffered more, culturally, than the southern California Indians, though they number more than anyone else. California is the state with the most Indians in it. California has always had the most tribes and California has the most reservations: there are thirty-two reservations in southern California alone.

In the 1950s, every man, woman, and child in the Cahuilla nation was declared mentally incompetent by the American court system. In this way, all of their land and all the rental and lease fees that were coming to them from their ownership of the city of Palm Springs were taken away from them. It was not reversed until the late 1960s. By then, the Republican interests in southern California were able to capitalize on all the money in that area and seize control of that part of San Diego County and San Bernardino County. You can track down who did it. The people's cultures have been so denigrated, so it is understandable that young people have not been able to gain all this cultural knowledge as they have been growing up.

What has happened in the last ten years--and I like to think that some of the efforts that we've made have helped to contribute toward it--is that there has been a resurgence of pride among the people themselves to maintain and carry on their culture. There is an attempt, more every year on the parts of older people as well as younger people, to relearn these songs and other aspects of the culture.

Yet, at the same time, the forces that were let loose in the 1950s by southern California America have been too effective. This year, at the Torres-Martinez Reservation, they had to burn one of the sacred houses. At Torres-Martinez, they had a sacred house, which was common among all the Cahuilla, where ceremonial materials were stored. The house was said to speak to the shamans: by sitting within the house, the shaman would be able to converse with the house and be able to stay balanced within the religion.

By the summer of 1989 there were no more shamans at Torres-Martinez who understood the secrets of the house. The house without control is seen as dangerous: without proper control, all medicine or all power is dangerous. So the Cahuilla, not having the proper control for the house, decided that the only thing left to do was burn it down. So this summer they burned down the house. Now, you cannot have religious freedom if there is no one left to practice the religion and if the churches are burnt. So, the culture is still very much threatened right now. There are people trying to relearn some of these things, including the bird songs, but there may be aspects of the songs that we'll never be able to uncover now.

Interviewer: We have only a hint of the very rich philosophy and religious and literary tradition that must have been in existence.

Paul Apodaca: Yes. The bird songs are an example of one of the most important statements in Native American mythology: that people did exist in a different form, other than the one that we see here, and that at some point there was a great transformation wherein people took on different forms in order to accomplish different works or fulfill different responsibilities. So deer and men and coyotes and birds are all related to each other because they are all people.

It is a basic approach toward all living things that is different from the European view, which resists the idea that all things have the same value as human beings. Outsiders often describe Indians on the edges of the forest saying they sang or prayed before they hunted, and then afterwards sang to thank the animals for their sacrifice. That has always sounded very dissatisfying to me. It sounds very European, very Hellenistic, like a sacrificial offering, which is really antithetical to Native American thought. The idea of a sacrificial offering before hunting never seemed to make sense, whether it was the offering of a prayer or of a song.

But what the bird songs confirm, and what Serrano tradition seems to indicate as well, is that the purpose of the singing was to remind the animal that he had once been a person, and that the reason why they had transformed into these different forms was to fulfill the responsibility of keeping life going on the earth.

It is therefore the responsibility of the deer to present himself now to be used for food, so that the human body will be able to function, and it is the responsibility of the human body to properly use the deer body in its furtherance of life. It was assumed when the song was sung that the deer would literally present themselves to be killed. It was therefore also assumed that if one did not follow these

proper prescriptions, one would never be able to hunt deer successfully. Now, that is very different from the concept of ritual offering.

Interviewer: As you formulate the idea, it also sounds very different from the notion of compulsive magic. That is, a mutual responsibility is not the same thing as one being compelling another.

Paul Apodaca: That's right. Mutual responsibility is important. The bird songs are important in that during the time of the singing the singer is propelled, if you will, back to that mythic time. Those who hear the song have a chance to return to the original form that they were in before we became human, animal, deer. The songs express important concepts that underlie all the cultures. The songs may be giving us an insight to maybe--and it's a stretch, but I'm willing to say it because no one is going to be able to challenge it--you know, this may even be an Ice Age hunter-gatherer view of life.

Interviewer: Who could argue?

Paul Apodaca: Exactly.

Interviewer: I want to thank you for giving us this introduction to the Bird Songs. Is there a final comment, or maybe a summing-up you'd like to make?

Paul Apodaca: The one thing that I really want people to understand is that no one has studied Native American culture. No one has studied the music. No one has studied the language. No one has studied the architecture. When it comes to literature, also, no one has studied it at all. Everything that has been done up to this point is nothing, compared to what is there. And that is the great shame, as well as the great challenge that we have. We know nothing right now, compared to what there is to be known.

NOTES

¹The two articles, Paul Apodaca, "First Voices of Southern California" and Leanne Hinton, "Song: Overcoming the Language Barrier," are in News from Native California, 2:5 (November-December 1988).

²The exhibit was titled "First Voices: Indigenous Music of Southern California" and was held at the Bowers Museum, Santa Ana, October 9, 1987 to January 10, 1988.

³Richard Keeling's compilation, A Guide to Ethnographic Field Recordings at the Robert H. Lowie Museum of Anthropology, is scheduled for publication in 1990 from University of California Press.

COMMENTARY

FROM THE EDITORS

As *SAIL* series 2 prepares to move into a second year of operation we have continuing good news and indications of support from many sides. Bob Nelson's energy and dedication have found a more permanent home for production at the University of Richmond, and I look forward to our collaboration. It is my pleasure to thank Dan Littlefield and Jim Parins for designing our new format, which many of you have noted as a major step forward for *SAIL*'s reputation and quality, and for seeing to the many details of production of these initial issues. Dan and Jim have been unfailingly patient and meticulous as they have dealt with last-minute emendations, new typesetting programs and--not least--the U.S. mail; I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with them.

Although we had originally projected only two issues for 1989, new material coming in and help from the University of Richmond are permitting us to begin quarterly publication with our first volume. This Winter 1989 issue is a double issue, Numbers 3 and 4, and we are happy to be able to bring out so many of our book reviews in a timely manner. With our next number we begin Volume 2, 1990. This will mean, of course, a new subscription year as well, and we encourage early renewal; for the time being we are able to continue offering *SAIL* for \$8 yearly within the U.S. or \$12 (American) overseas. Now that we have a permanent home, subscriptions will be maintained at Richmond; please send to Robert M. Nelson at the address on inside front cover.

The future looks very promising. I have had several long conversations with the editors of these special issues, who are eager to present a wide range of approaches and material within their special topics. We encourage your submissions for these special issues as well as for our regular numbers, and we welcome proposals for special thematic issues in 1991 and succeeding volumes.

Helen Jaskoski

The transfer of production operations from Little Rock to Richmond has gone quite smoothly. For the record, I want to acknowledge two people without whose help we'd all still be waiting for this issue to appear: Mike Barbie, head of UR's print shop, who figured out how to move us from photoready copy to printed journal at a minimum of cost; and David Leary, UR's Dean of Arts and Sciences, who has generously provided financial backing for this issue (and for the next volume) of *SAIL*. I'm delighted that the University

of Richmond is playing this part in the "re-emergence" of *SAIL*. Our hope is that, by the first number of Volume 3, the Association will be stable enough financially to keep *SAIL* afloat independently of UR's direct financial support.

Bob Nelson

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SPECIAL ISSUES REMINDER

CLASSICAL LITERATURE & TRANSLATION

Send contributions and queries to

T. C. S. Langen or Bonnie Barthold
Department of English
Western Washington University
Bellingham, WA 98225

Deadline for final papers: March 15, 1990

PEDAGOGY

Send contributions and queries to

Larry Abbott
P.O. Box 23
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Deadline: May 1, 1990

LESLIE MARMON SILKO'S *STORYTELLER*

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Lane Community College
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Eugene, OR 97405

Deadline: May 1, 1990

REVIEWS

Approaches to Teaching Momaday's "The Way to Rainy Mountain."
Ed. Kenneth M. Roemer. New York: MLA, 1988. Cloth, ISBN 0-87352-509-4; paper, ISBN 0-87352-510-8.

As a teacher educator part of my job is telling prospective teachers *how it should be done*. I have been asked at times to tell experienced teachers *how it should be done*. Over the years both prospective and experienced teachers have demanded that I be specific in my praise of and attacks on certain pedagogical practices and in my suggestions of appropriate means to reach desired teaching ends. I read Kenneth M. Roemer's *Approaches to Teaching Momaday's "The Way to Rainy Mountain"* skeptically--as a student or a teacher being told *how it should be done* would read it. Roemer must, according to Joseph Gibaldi's preface to the MLA Series on *Approaches to Teaching World Literature*, "collect within [a] volume different points of view on teaching a specific literary work" and create "a sourcebook of material, information, and ideas on teaching the subject of the volume" (viii). He does this with insight, specificity, and thoroughness--the kind that would satisfy skeptical students, the kind necessary for the work to be useful to teachers. Roemer's success is not that he tells us how it should be done, but rather that he suggests many viable approaches teachers can use to help students find meaning in *The Way to Rainy Mountain* (WRM). He points us in useful directions, each a way to WRM.

The thoroughness of this volume strikes one immediately. In Part I, Materials, Roemer provides accurate and detailed information on various editions of the work, on critical studies of Momaday's work, and on print and non-print resources for more thoroughly teaching the work. Roemer suggests correctly that teachers enhance their reading of WRM by providing students with relevant background information on American Indian biography, American Indian cultures, and American Indian literary genres. For each of these areas he is careful to cite numerous sources.

In Part II, Approaches, Roemer culls from the responses of numerous teachers of WRM seventeen descriptions of other useful directions in which to travel when searching for a way to teach the work. These include cultural, structural, thematic, and literary pedagogical approaches as well as approaches to the teaching of writing which utilize WRM. Roemer includes three or four essays written by outstanding teachers of WRM on each of these approaches.

These teachers point out that through WRM readers become acquainted with Momaday's personal history and the history of his

people, the Kiowas. In more general terms *WRM* makes readers introspective about their own culture, history and background. Further, the work describes a method for a more thorough examination of history--personal, tribal, and national. At the same time, *WRM* stands as American literary art and American Indian literary art. It is a work of structural and thematic complexity. The study of its form and meaning frames instructional approaches to the work. For teachers of literature, composition, history, English, and courses which integrate these disciplines, *WRM* is an appropriate text.

The Epilogue, an interview with Momaday's Kiowa contemporary Gary Kodaseet, is most intriguing. Rarely do we get the chance to read an American Indian's critical response to the work of another American Indian. That this is a fresh, valuable, and much needed critical voice is clearly indicated. Kodaseet verifies matter-of-factly the existence of alternative tellings of the Kiowa stories in *WRM*: "Of all the stories that I read in *The Way to Rainy Mountain* there are several that stand out. I've heard the stories. The endings are the same, but the stories are different--little differences. . . . The changes could be because the story is oral history, and things change. You know, when you tell people, you either add to the story or maybe you take something away. But it comes out to the same ending" (147-148). His lack of preoccupation with changes is instructive to those who insist on "fixed" or "authoritative" texts of American Indian verbal arts. He expresses an appreciation for the aesthetic sense of a fellow Kiowa. In this interview Kodaseet refutes critical attacks that *WRM* is too anecdotal and too personal a work.

Kenneth Roemer has done an outstanding job in presenting us with maps, with useful directions. He shows us the many ways to *WRM*, a work which leads readers to self-discovery, a work which defies categorization and singular treatment, and thereby demands the attention of teachers and students.

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The Native in Literature: Canadian and Comparative Perspectives. Ed. Thomas King, Cheryl Calver and Helen Hoy. Oakville: ECW Press, 1987. Paper, ISBN 0-920763-16-2.

Papers from The Native in Literature conference in Lethbridge (1985) make up the major part of this book. I attended the conference as did a goodly number of Native people--established professionals, artists and writers as well as university students. Reactions to the papers were mixed; while non-Native presenters spoke of Native people as symbol and metaphor, Native people in the audience responded with bewilderment, frustration and occasionally, hostility. At one point two rows of Native people walked out; at another, spirited repartee took place.

The organizers are not to be faulted; the topic was clearly defined as the Native *in* literature, not a *Native literature* conference. My feeling of unease re-surfaced upon reading this book. I was reminded of a comment by the Indian comedian, Charlie Hill, who said that after years of saying "Ugh" and "How!", "Playing human beings is a big stress for us" (*Indian Time*, CTV, March, 1989).

The twelve essays in this book offer a wide variety of viewpoints, many totally acceptable to all readers. They are divided into three main categories, though ideas do overlap. The first group consists of general surveys which consider the presence of Indians and Indian culture in non-Native writing and thinking. The second section deals with writing by specific non-Native writers, and the third section deals with Native literature, though only two of the presenters are Native.

In the first article, Margery Fee maintains that the presence of Indians in contemporary Euro-Canadian writing is due to romantic nationalism. Indians possess all the qualities needed for romantic literature: a claim to the land, a past full of heroic deeds and an indigenous language and mythology. Problems arise for non-Indian writers because they have other histories and heritage, but it is only by stubbornly clinging to the "literary Indian" that Canadian nationalism manifests itself. To kill the literary Indian would be to forfeit Canadian nationalism. Does this provide consolation for the dispossessed, disenfranchised Natives in our midst who are still seeking social and economic equality?

Eli Mandel's essay categorizes literature on Indians as the myths of Indians as primitives, of the origin of ancestors, of frontier and identification with landscape, and finally the myth of marginality. He believes that no non-Native writer has fused with Indian culture so completely as to write as an Indian, but credits Rudy Wiebe with coming closer than anyone else. However, he ends on a deliberately ambiguous note, saying of Wiebe's writing, "I am one with the events but I cannot read them" (47).

Gordon Johnston entitles his essay "An Intolerable Burden of Meaning: Native People in White Fiction." He points out that no

ethical or social problems existed as long as writers were European and in no position to meet Indians, and as long as readers clearly understood the symbolic intent. In contemporary writing, he feels, Indians are often exploited, appearing in order to either justify or repudiate non-Native values. Direct experience is making symbolic use more difficult, so contemporary writers try to detach Indians from purely symbolic roles. He concludes,

The symbolic use of Indians by white authors is in itself not racist, but the use of anomalous symbolic Indian figures in a realist context is in danger of being racist since they are separated from the humanity of other characters and obliged to carry an intolerable burden of meaning. Their symbolic force must derive not from what whites make of them but from what they are. (65)

Terry Goldie expresses concern over Native peoples in contemporary Canadian, Australian and New Zealand literature. He questions whether aboriginal writers can take a European form such as the novel and use it to describe their own people. The essay is somewhat disappointing in that it does not fulfill its promise of discussing aboriginal literature from other countries, except in passing. An examination of, for example, Witi Ihimaera's masterful novel, *The Matriarch* (Maori), or Leslie Silko's *Ceremony* (Amerindian) or Colin Johnson's *Doctor Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the End of the World* (Australian aborigine) would have contributed to answering his question. He criticizes contemporary authors: "Indigenous people in literature are not a reflection of themselves but of the needs of the white culture which created the literature" (75).

In the second part of the book Leslie Monkman re-examines early exploration accounts and focuses on the modifications of contemporary writers as they use this material.

Terrence Craig compares and contrasts the religious writing of Charles Gordon (early 1900s) and the contemporary writing of Rudy Wiebe. He points out similarities and, while crediting Wiebe with greater historical accuracy and realism, points out that Wiebe is also creating stereotypes. A measure of these stereotypes, perhaps, was found in a reading that Wiebe gave at the 1985 conference. Wiebe was raised in the Mennonite tradition, and his rendition of Big Bear had all the cadences and nuances of a Mennonite minister rather than a Cree Indian. Significantly, most of the Indian listeners quietly left the room.

Angelika Maeser-Lemieux's paper on the Metis in Margaret Laurence's writing is, for me, the most disturbing paper. She uses a psychological-theological approach based on Jung. Maeser-Lemieux sees the Metis as a metaphor for the alienated and repressed parts of the individual and collective psyche in patriarchal culture. She believes the "polarity of psychological functions is revealed in the symbolism of colour and race. Darker colour Natives . . . are associated with the feared primitive, unconscious instinctual forces, repressed psychic powers . . ." (116). Maeser-Lemieux quotes Rayna Green's assertion that Indian women are portrayed as either "princesses" or "squaws" in non-Native literature. Green goes on to say that these are "unendurable metaphors" (126). However well-intentioned Maeser-Lemieux's words, two rows of Native people walked out during the delivery. The exploitation of Metis in this essay was, indeed, an "intolerable burden of meaning," an "unendurable metaphor."

Barbara Godard's essay is entitled "Listening for the Silence: Native Women's Traditional Narratives." This is an exciting topic, rarely explored in literature. She begins with a reference to Beth Cuthland, Jeanette Armstrong and Maria Campbell, three Native writers who expressed fear that if white women should write about Native themes the image of the squaw would predominate. Godard asks, "Whose symbolic systems are being furthered by the present formulation of Native women's religious beliefs?" (136). She examines Anne Cameron's *Daughters of Copper Woman* and Nan Salerno and Roslyn Vanderburgh's *Shaman's Daughter*. With her third choice, Lynn Andrews' *Medicine Woman*, she undermines her scholarship and loses credibility. She recognizes one weakness in the book (there is no tundra outside of Winnipeg), but she quotes Agnes Whistling Elk as an authority on the spirituality of Native women. *Medicine Woman* is a parody of Native culture which might even be humorous if it were not a travesty. (An excellent review of *Medicine Woman* by Lorelei Cederstrom can be found in the *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, 2:1, 1982.)

There may be merit in Godard's explanation of the conventions of "appropriate telling" by Native women; she refers to Beverly Hungry Wolf, Verna Patronella Johnston and Alma Greene. But the lesson to be learned from this essay is to leave well enough alone. Lee Maracle (*I Am Woman*, North Vancouver: Write-on Press, 1988) warns non-Natives to leave her spirituality alone; it is not available for corruption.

The third part of *The Native in Literature* begins with an essay by Robin McGrath, who refers to traditional Inuit narrative and

examines how it is influencing contemporary Inuit stories. She points out that modern works with connections to oral tradition are very popular, even when the connections are not readily apparent.

George Cornell (Chippewa) points out that early accounts of Indian life rarely attempted to interpret oral traditions as Native people understood them. Rather, the collective beliefs of Indians were used to place them in opposition to the social and religious dogma of colonial powers. Native history was "usurped by literary imperialism" (176) so Native people lost control of their history and became products of a foreign culture's imagination. He calls the interpretation of oral narrative outside the culture from which it springs "literary heresy." Western definitions have been, and continue to be imposed on Native oral tradition. A more fruitful exercise would be a comprehensive, multidisciplinary analysis which allows for emergence of "non-poetic" issues and commentaries. He then analyzes "Thrown Away," an allegory, as told by the Shawnee Prophet, to show how this can be done.

Two Native writers, Maria Campbell (*Halfbreed*) and James Welch (*Winter in the Blood*) are used by Kate Vangen (Assiniboine) to show how contemporary writers use humour as a narrative device. It is a technique to "defuse the power that oppression generates" (13) and a defiant gesture where Natives "make faces" at their white readership. Much of Native literature remains "underground" and must be kept there because of what Vangen calls "artifact-seeking outlaws" (199). Vangen believes that most Native humour has escaped literary interpretations because the gestures are not perceived or else not appreciated. But she also believes that the alternative world view that lies hidden beneath the humour can become accessible to readers who willingly accept it and explore its socio-political origins.

The last essay, by Jarold Ramsey, is on the assimilation of European folktales in Native societies in general and on "Ti-jean and the Seven-headed Dragon" in particular. The discussion is interesting but smacks of the "literary imperialism" identified by Cornell. Ramsey looks for the internal rules and dynamics of traditional oral narratives, imposing his culture's structures.

That Ti-jean becomes partially integrated because he is similar to "Heroic-boy protagonists" in some Native folklore is an acceptable concept, but when Ti-jean is compared to the trickster figure, the author treads on questionable ground. The trickster figure in Native mythology is sacred; Ti-jean is profane and foreign. The author does not seem to fully comprehend the significance of the trickster when he talks about "the outrageous quality of mischief-as-an-end-in-itself

that motivates Coyote and his kind" (208). He also shows disregard for the sacredness of the numbers four and seven when he repeatedly refers to Native "cult numerology" and goes so far as to say that "Seven must have been associated in Native minds early on with European culture through gambling and other usages" (214). He uses negative terminology which is bound to alienate. He speaks of "squaw-men," the Nez Perce Coyote myth becomes "a kind of origin myth," the Osage tale contains "internal confusion," Native folklore is sprinkled with "erotic narrative debris" and Ti-jean has a career in "Indian captivity."

How then, to sum up the value of a book such as this? It fulfills its promise of examining the Native in literature from many perspectives. The non-Native perspective dominates, and though Thomas King states in his introduction that the book is an "excursion into new land," much of it is recharting old territory. Except for the essays by Cornell and Vangen it has little to offer scholars of Native literature. I would hesitate to recommend this book to students of my Native literature classes since, once again, it objectifies and dehumanizes Natives and their culture because they are Native; and it places Natives firmly outside "Canadian" culture and literary scholarship.

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Recovering the Word: Essays on Native American Literature. Ed. Brian Swann and Arnold Krupat. Berkeley & Los Angeles: U California Press, 1987. \$60 cloth, ISBN 0-520-05790-2; \$17.95 paper, ISBN 0-520-05964-6.

Much of the title here must be taken in its most expansive form. "The Word" includes film, in Andrew Wiget's "Telling The Tale: A Performance Analysis of Hopi Coyote Story," which discusses the *Words & Place* videotape of Helen Sekaquaptewa telling a traditional story. "The Word" can also refer to sand paintings, kiva design and blankets in Paul Zolbrod's essay on signification in Navajo poetry, song and visual arts: "When Artifacts Speak, What Can They Tell Us?" "American" takes the broad sense geographically to include pre-Columbian texts discussed by Willard Gingerich in "Heidegger and the Aztecs" and Dennis Tedlock's "Walking the World of the Popol Vuh"; there is, however, no discussion or even recognition of contemporary written literature, whether in Spanish or in the indigenous

languages, by Native American authors in Latin America. Interaction between Native American traditions and European imports receives attention in Joel Scherzer's "Strategies in Text and Context: The Hot Pepper Story" and Donald Bahr's "Pima Heaven Songs" with Brian Swann's "A Note on Translation, and Remarks on Collaboration," which comments on his reworking of Scherzer's translation of the Cuna story. All these essays deal with Native American adaptations of European originals, and in the same category we may consider Anthony Mattina's essay on "North American Indian Mythography: Editing Texts for the Printed Page," which has special reference to his own edition of *The Golden Woman*, as well as Rudolph Kaiser's careful retracing of the various (genuine and spurious) versions of "Chief Seattle's Speech(es): American Origins and European Reception." And "Literature" includes, besides the visual and media arts already noted, the "Traditional Osage Naming Ceremonies" discussed by Carter Revard.

Noting here the subjects of ten of the 21 essays in this weighty collection (644 pages: even in paper it's heavier than a breadbox) suggests an emphasis on traditional and oral literature, and indeed such is the case. The first 10 articles come under a heading titled "Mythographic Presentation: Theory and Practice"; all the essays in this section have to do, one way or another, with oral texts: how they are represented (in print or on film or in sand paintings) and how they are translated--though representations/translations discussed here are exclusively those undertaken by non-Indians. The single exception is Krupat's essay on "Post-Structuralism and Oral Literature," which suggests a theory of interpretation rather than one of representation. (Discussions of traditional texts presented in written form in the original languages by Indian authors falls into the second part, with Tedlock's essay and H. David Brumble's piece on *Crashing Thunder*.) While this first part of the book is further subdivided into "Theory" and "Practice" sections, this reviewer does not see such clear-cut demarcations: Gingerich's essay on the Cantares Mexicanos clearly applies a philosophical system to illuminate the texts under discussion, whereas Wiget surely contributes to an as yet very sparse theoretical basis for discussing video representation of storytellers and their art. Potentially the most interesting part of this section, and of the book as a whole, is Mattina's attempt to engage the theories of Tedlock (ethnopoetics) and Hymes (measured verse) with his own translation theory and practice. All three authors are represented, but the debate never really gets under way. This is symptomatic of a lack of focus in the volume generally, which I return to below.

The second half of the book is titled "Interpreting the Material" and is also subdivided, this time into oral and written works. Written works in this case seems to mean works written down by Indian authors (i.e., the Popol Vuh, *Crashing Thunder*, the novels of Scott Momaday and James Welch). The curious exception is Kaiser's discussion of the various versions of Chief Seattle's speech. Interpretations of oral works lean heavily on the trickster figure: they include William Bright's excursus into coyote lore and tales in "The Natural History of Old Man Coyote," Barre Toelken's "Life and Death in the Navajo Coyote Tales," and a Cree Trickster tale in three (or four?) versions as set down by Howard Norman in "Wesucechak Becomes a Deer and Steals Language." Julian Rice on the significance of the meadowlark in "How the Bird that Speaks Lakota Earned a Name" and Carter Revard on "Traditional Osage Naming Ceremonies" remind us that there are other genres and modes.

Only two essays concentrate on interpreting contemporary works (I except Duane Niatum's "On Stereotypes" in this section, which is general or polemical or theoretical but not interpretive): Paula Gunn Allen's reading of *House Made of Dawn* in "Bringing Home the Fact," which develops parallels with Navajo ceremonials, especially Beautyway, and William Bevis's "Native American Novels: Homing In." Bevis's piece contains some of the most serendipitous discussion in the book, in particular his analysis of the animals in American Indian fiction as being "urban" and "downtown" to distinguish the Native American and European Romantic views of nature.

Many of the virtues of the book will be evident from the list of contributors and subjects sketched in above: Bahr's essay on the Pima heaven songs not only presents a model of careful translation but also introduces the reader to a little-known body of poetry. M. Dale Kinkade's "Bluejay and His Sister" is likewise exemplary in showing how linguistic scholarship will bring to light artistic nuances of translated texts. Kaiser's thoroughgoing pursuit of the text(s) of Chief Seattle's speech is a welcome reprint, contributing as it does to sorting out the history of a popular/populist text, and serving as well as a model of scholarship. It would be easy--and given space enough, a welcome task--to pick out other essays of particular importance; what must be clear by now is that this book is a rich and various collection of approaches, insights and even new texts.

There are also problems with the book, and insofar as they represent problems in the whole field of scholarship in American Indian literature, I believe they are worth noting. Some of these pieces are better than others; the reader will easily see which these are; this, however, is a hazard of any collection. More specific to this

subject: the editors acknowledge the eclecticism and incompleteness of the collection, while asserting that it presents "state-of-the-art" scholarship on Native American literature (bearing in mind the publication date of 1987; some pieces are already subject to revision, like Norman's, which--along with his other "Swampy Cree" texts--must be reconsidered in light of Brightman's and Nichols's critiques in *IJAL* [April 1989]). One cannot help suspecting that the editors of *Recovering the Word* chose "eclectic" as a preferred term for "unwieldy" in the characterization of their aims and criteria. A lack of focus, both in subjects covered and in audience approached, is acknowledged in the introduction, where we read that both "the sophisticated general reader" and "the professional student" should find things--but evidently not the same things --to chew on.

One might have expected even an eclectic volume, certainly one which purports to address the broadest range of issues in the field, to consider some of the unsettling theoretical problems. For instance, the question of just what is oral literature and what is written literature remains problematic, as noted above in comments on the placement of Kaiser's essay. The distinction between "theory" and "practice" supposedly made in the first section of the book likewise eludes one; would it not make more sense, in a volume intended to present the leading edge of theories, to have placed Dell Hymes's and Dale Kinkade's essays together, to offer a stronger argument for the non-idiosyncrasy of the "measured verse" method--rather than depositing one under the title "theory" and the other in the bin marked "practice"? Or, to take another instance, Brian Swann's reworkings of texts considered in both Bahr's and Scherzer's essays focuses these pieces, with Mattina's and Hymes's, on problems of translation. There are debates about translation, and Mattina outlines some of the positions that have been taken in his essay: would the reader (of whatever level of sophistication or specialization) not welcome some editorial perspective on the issue?

In summary, my judgment is that the considerable value of the individual essays here presented would have been immensely enhanced with more generous editorial commentary and apparatus. Such commentary would also have acknowledged some important neglected areas. Colonial and post-colonial written literature south of the Rio Grande is one subject already noted. Another is poetry in English: three widely recognized poets are among the contributors, but any extended analysis of a contemporary poet's oeuvre or of a body of poetry or even an individual poem is conspicuously absent. Still another is written literature in English before 1968; excepting a few pages on McNickle and the citation of "firsts" in the book's

introduction, the innocent reader might conclude that no other American Indian had set pen to paper before the 1960s. And what about (one of the best kept secrets in the field) drama? Some of these subjects do not enjoy the meticulous attention of well-placed scholars; like the question of why the figure of coyote gets disproportionate attention, the issue of where scholarly priorities are placed and why and with what results deserves some scrutiny in a volume on the "state of the art."

The editors will object that if they included all these things the book would be twice as fat and heavy as it already is, and they are right. This is a two-volume (at least) project that resists being cinched between one set of covers. Reading *Recovering the Word* is like seeing random blueprints and elevations for an elaborate monument: a pediment here, a pilaster there, any one of them a remarkable and admirable achievement, but giving little idea of what the edifice of "Native American literature" might actually be.

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D'Arcy McNickle. James Ruppert. Western Writers Series 83. Boise: Boise State UP, 1988. 55 pp., ISBN 0-88430-082-X.

James Ruppert's timely literary biography of D'Arcy McNickle will be a valuable resource for those teaching his works. It provides background material on his life and then summarizes the key points of his major publications. The "Fiction" section includes discussions of *The Surrounded* (1936); *Runner in the Sun* (1954); and *Wind from an Enemy Sky* (1978). The "Ethnohistory" section includes discussions of *They Came Here First: The Epic of the American Indian* (1949); *Indians and Other Americans: Two Ways of Life Meet* (co-authored with Harold Fey) (1959); *Indian Tribes of the United States: Ethnic and Cultural Survival* (1962); and *Indian Man: A Life of Oliver La Farge* (1971).

An overview of the range of McNickle's works is particularly welcome at this time because, as Ruppert concludes, D'Arcy McNickle's fiction, once out of print, is now attracting a far wider audience than the works received in their initial publications, and his stature as a writer grows. Moreover, through McNickle's ethnohistorical studies and his active professional and political life on behalf of native

peoples, McNickle is a very significant figure in the evolution of pan-Indian awareness and organization. He also has been an effective and articulate advocate for cultural relativism and cultural determinism when those concepts were not well understood in American life or literature.

The first ten pages of the pamphlet are devoted to a biographical sketch of D'Arcy McNickle's life. Five of these cover his first thirty years, but while some interesting data emerge, the portrait does not flesh out D'Arcy psychologically. What did young McNickle struggle with? How was he perceived by others as a boy? What is known about his family situation? Certainly more has yet to be written on this aspect of his life which could be particularly helpful in understanding *The Surrounded*. It also might help us understand McNickle's extraordinary lifetime dedication to redressing the wrongs of the wardship mentality in U.S. politics and policies.

The rest of the biography covers the achievements of an amazing man who through a series of bureaucratic appointments was able to impact national Indian policies and to go beyond them. In these latter biographical pages Ruppert is able to communicate McNickle's dedication and passion for Native American history and his belief that the dominant American society must make a place for Indian cultures and Indian self-determination. McNickle's activities are so extensive from age thirty-two to seventy-three, when he died of a massive coronary in Albuquerque (October, 1977), that one needs to read and reread Ruppert's summary to grasp the scope and significance of McNickle's achievements. To one who knows of him primarily through his fiction, this section of the biography is very informative.

In section two, "Fiction," Ruppert gives a summary of the plot and discusses key issues in each of McNickle's three novels. The strength of these analyses lies in Ruppert's knowledge of McNickle's non-fiction works. He is able to communicate a play of mind which ranges from contemporary events and crises to a grounded socio-historical perspective, and a need to have fiction address the cultural/physical complexities of becoming a displaced people in hereditary lands. When Ruppert insists that McNickle's "characters are developed more from what they believe and are brought up to believe as members of human groups than from individual psychology" (17), he makes a very important point. He also is correct in emphasizing that the Indian "communion with the land is through hunts, moving camps, and ritual action, rather than moments of mystic unity" (17). Ruppert also perceives, as in the case of Archilde, protagonist of *The Surrounded*, that "man's weaknesses, limited knowledge, and thwarted

desires are still sources of compassion and worth" (19). All McNickle's novels have characters who fail. Every one of them, including the evil Dark Dealer in *Runner in the Sun*, possesses human dignity.

Yet the most vital aspect of McNickle's fictional work is his ability to make us see and feel the enormity of the gulfs between world views when two cultures collide. The weakness in Ruppert's discussion is that he waffles between praising McNickle's cultural relativism and siding with a critical approach that sees the white guys as the bad guys. In Ruppert's analysis, Adam Pell carries the primary blame for the catastrophe at the end of *Wind from an Enemy Sky*, and Archilde's downfall is inevitable because of the cultural disruption brought about by white domination. Yet it is Henry Jim, the leader of the Little Elk tribe, who must, in part, be held accountable for the tragedy in *Wind from an Enemy Sky*. It is he who understood the power of the Feather Boy Bundle to his people and who stole it away. Moreover, McNickle's development of Max and Father Grepilloux does not permit a moral dismissal of white actions and motivations in *The Surrounded*. A true frontier is disorienting internally and externally whether one is Indian or White. Even a careful listener, a good-hearted dedicated man like Rafferty (Wind) can be caught in the web of honest, yet isolated and destructive, action.

Ruppert's interpretation of *Runner in the Sun* is also a surprise. He sees the primary action as Salt's journey to what we now call Mexico City, the central focus of the last one-third of the book. But the first two-thirds turn on the struggle between Dark Dealer and Holy One. In this novel, greed for resources and power is a human trait. Dark Dealer is willing to cut the spring water off from his community and to toy with the most profound beliefs of his people in order to achieve primacy for himself and his clan. The young hero, Salt, must earn his way into manhood amidst this power struggle before he can go on his journey South to seek what may save his community.

While the "Fiction" section has both strengths and weaknesses, the "Ethnohistory" section which follows is a fascinating exploration of McNickle's developing thought throughout his professional career. McNickle's B.I.A. work encouraged research and writing. As Ruppert highlights, McNickle used that research to educate the dominant white culture. He exposed negative stereotypes of Indians and the cultural myths surrounding them. He spoke of Indian architectural and artistic achievements, of Indian social organization and tribal diversity. In spite of "slavery and mass death" (34), in the face of

overwhelming pressures to assimilate and to vanish, McNickle celebrated their continuing cultural survival.

His non-fiction also constantly reflects on the period he knew intimately: the years of Indian exploitation before the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, Collier's encouragement of self-determination, the Eisenhower years of termination and relocation, the flowering of pan-Indian awareness in the 1960s, and the desperate political actions of the early 1970s, including the 1973 Wounded Knee confrontation. McNickle's concern was to reflect those decades accurately in their spirit and in the events that unfolded. He was an eye-witness and, at times, a participant, in a critical turning point for native peoples.

While aspects of the biography raise critical questions, James Ruppert's work successfully engages readers in an appreciation for the complexity of thought, the vision, and the energy of creation that distinguishes D'Arcy McNickle's life.

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The Faithful Hunter: Abenaki Stories. As told by Joseph Bruchac. Illustrations by Kahionhes. Greenfield Center, NY: Greenfield Review Press, 1988. 61 pp., paper, ISBN 0-91267-875-5.

The collection's title story exemplifies the values that the tales' tellers must have originally intended to inspire and reinforce in western Abenaki life. A hunter has just brought his wife and children for the long winter but dies when a sharp spruce branch pierces his heart. He rises and continues the season's work, providing shelter, food, furs, and ultimately a new canoe for his family. When spring comes, he sends his wife to her relatives, telling her to come back after three days. When the wife and her relatives return for the hunter, they find him under the old canoe, long dead.

But he has kept his family through the winter. Elsewhere in the book, the ability to put the welfare of others above one's own situation distinguishes the only wise man among the four human questers in "Gluskabe and the Four Wishes": he is the man who seeks to be a better hunter "to provide food for my family and my people." (Note that *four* here functions as fulfillment, contrasting with the many Indo-European tales of the three wishes, the three travelers, etc.) In other stories, the squirrel, the moose, Uncle Turtle, and even Glus-

kabe himself learn the importance of allowing other beings their natural pursuits. The stories in *The Faithful Hunter* seem to have been chosen for their concern with demonstrating context--that of human beings in a world of varied creatures, that of the individual person in the larger human society. As John Moody suggests in his introduction, relationships and relations are at the center of the book.

The stories' content suggests aspects of life among an Algonquian people whose interior location and seventeenth-century withdrawals have left historians with less evidence than in other cases. The importance of storytelling as a mode of socialization is evident. Other concrete behaviors within the society are suggested by the stories: for example, the skunk character is patted black with pipe ash as a punishment for its anger toward Gluskabe, a detail that mirrors the blackening of a misbehaving child's face that Gordon M. Day has described as an Abenaki disciplinary method.

In the early eighties, an exhibit on New England Algonquian culture in Boston's Children's Museum reminded visitors that "We're still here." The current publication of recreated narratives gives the same notice to readers, Indian and non-Indian. Joseph Bruchac has with *The Faithful Hunter: Abenaki Stories* (strikingly illustrated by Mohawk artist John [Kahionhes] Fadden of Akwesasne) provided yet another powerful evocation of the Abenaki side of his ancestry, and one accessible to varied age and educational levels. Bruchac is known as a poet in his own right, concerned with tradition-in-the-making (see review of *Survival This Way: Interviews with American Indian Poets* in this number of *SAIL*). Mingling his voice with those of centuries of storytellers results in vivid, stark stories whose lessons are inseparable from their actors. *The Faithful Hunter* is the second book of Abenaki stories told by Bruchac, following *The Wind Eagle and Other Abenaki Stories* (Greenfield Review Press, 1985).

Bruchac's interest in Iroquois oral tradition produced a 1985 anthology, *Iroquois Stories: Heroes and Heroines, Monsters and Magic* (Crossing Press). Since *The Faithful Hunter*, he has this year published a hardcover collection of Algonquian and Iroquoian stories, *Return of the Sun: Native American Tales from the Northeast Woodlands* (Crossing Press, 1989). The introduction to *Return of the Sun* provides needed information on Bruchac's selection of materials and his own methods of composition as well as a powerful reminder that the materials themselves originated in nonwritten traditions and in other languages.

But the stories persist from generation to generation of storytellers and audiences. In each generation, the need for the tales' values grows, but one generation of storytellers finds heirs, and small

presses reverse and expand the oral tradition to larger audiences. A collection like *The Faithful Hunter* exemplifies at the cultural level the sustenance and survival the hunter's care assured his family: individual lives end, but they yearn toward those who can continue their work. In their finding heirs in each generation, the bearers of Abenaki and other native cultures transcend death by continuing to cherish.

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Elderberry Flute Song. Contemporary Coyote Tales. Peter Blue Cloud/Aroniawenrate. 1989. White Pine Press, P.O. Box 236, Niagara Square Station, Buffalo, New York 14201. ISBN 0-934834-92-X.

Just when the academics thought they had him corralled, here comes Coyote again, sneaking under the fence and waving his penis at the women, tall-taling his grandchildren, dropping turds and people over the earth. The difficulty with *Elderberry Flute Song*, however, is that Coyote also has become a late Romantic, indulging in the visionary mopes when he ought to be tricking and treating, *bricoleur* and fabulist topmost on the tree. Unlike Jaime de Angulo's coyote tales, which are entirely narrative, Blue Cloud's is a collection of unrhymed lyrics, earthy vignettes, shaggydog stories, and, alas, flaccid reflections, that should, in its motley form, reflect Coyote's coat of fool and jester. What happens, however, is that we sometimes lose Coyote's ironic bite and the tale-teller's narrative drive in sentimentality and poetic posturing.

The collection is uneven in quality. In certain of the poems, for instance, we get the amoral clown and creator at his best: "Drum," "Snout," "Coyote Flies," "Sneeze." In "Drum" Badger's Son learns to make one because Coyote refuses to teach him; and so, as in all creation myths, he dreams a drum up:

‘And where,’ asked someone,
‘did such a fine drum come from?’
And Badger's Son said, ‘Oh, it was
Coyote Old Man who refused to teach me
to make this fine drum.’

Even the conventionally lewd shaggydog story works here as Coyote has his way with the happily deceived female, Saucy Duckfeather, who understands at once what to do with a suspiciously-prominent tree-limb. In this case the refusal to write succinct narrative results in satisfactorily loopy complications.

Blue Cloud, however, has turned Coyote's tales toward the lyrical and the sentimental, toward, in other words, reflections of the artist upon his art and upon mankind's woes, perhaps speaking as a sad Coyote and perhaps not. The finest of such poems is "Black Coyote," in which the dream world of poetic inspiration is set forth in carefully-pointed imagery and a subtly-tenacious narrative line. But much of this writing is not craftily crafted; the complexities of form and wit are abandoned in favor of hardcore pathos. In "As I Sit Here, Writing Down His Words," the nature imagery assumes the conventional stance of moody complement: "The human's eyes are closed and head still back/ and rain and tears stream down his face." There is too much of this:

Magic is the first taste
of ripe strawberries, and
magic is a child dancing
in a summer's rain. ("Coyote, Coyote, Please Tell Me")

And this, where the approach to the visionary leads only to mentalist gymnastics:

Because a mind of stone unturned
is winding into a core of crystal
which will shatter the very stars,
because I offer you vast stores
of food grown in the mind of Creation
and you eat instead the cold ashes
of an abandoned fire, and clothe
yourselves in where you think
you might be going, ("Why, Coyote, Why?")

The crazy lightfootedness of Coyote doesn't permit him the luxury of cosmic speculation. His ability to laugh at his failures and give an ironic bite to his tale makes this amoral trickster unwelcome in the sentimentalist's camp. De Angulo avoids making Coyote the tale-teller stand in for the tale-teller; this reflexive use of Coyote is a writer's gimmick that falsifies emotional response. Intertextual comparisons with earlier forms of the varmint remind us of what is missing. Pick up Jerry Ramsey's Oregon collection, or, hungry for

more, go back to Jacobs and Curtis and the underused Bulletins of the U.S. Bureau of Ethnology. In these collections, antic animal creation and the sharp strokes of elliptical, highly-metaphoric oral narration tell us what we have *really* lost, even in translation.

There is a lesson to ferret (coyote?) out here: Coyote's is certainly a continually seminal myth, and Coyote is available for spilling his seed even into the high-and-mighty poetics of Those Who Come After. Writers looking to the ancestral icons, however, have to sharpen their originating skills to save us from the banality of ancestor worship and give a new shining to that inherited power. Cultural imperialism works through the imagination, above all else, and the White Man's conventional language of feeling attenuates Coyote's demonic energy (or any other) only to reveal what we all know: it doesn't make the best White Man's poetry, either. *Elderberry Flute Song* is a pleasant read but the dis-cussed beast is only partially in view.

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Zuñi Folk Tales. Ed. Frank Hamilton Cushing. Foreword by John Wesley Powell. Intro. Mary Austin. Tucson: U Arizona, 1986. 474 pp., paper, ISBN 0-8165-0986-7.

Zuñi Pueblo is situated on an open plain peppered here and there with piñons and junipers. The high desert of red and yellow sand stands in marked contrast to the deep blue skies and large white clouds that loom over the flat-topped mountains. The Zuñis have lived in their Southwestern home since the beginning of time, an age when humans, plants, and animals lived as one tribe upon the earth. They shared their hopes and dreams, their joys and sorrows. The earth people, plant people, and animal people learned much from one another. As a result, the first Zuñis benefitted mightily, and the people shared their knowledge and wisdom, passing along to each new generation that which was learned and understood by the previous one. The depth of this process was prodigious, and the literature generated over the years was voluminous. The present work offers an introduction to traditional Zuñi literature and the "truths" of a unique Indian culture. Originally published in 1901, a year after Frank Cushing's death, the volume offers an array of legends that had never before been printed. The present volume is

a reprint of the first work, including introductions by John Wesley Powell and Mary Austin.

Cushing captured on paper the excitement and color of the Zuñi country. The author spent five years among the people, collecting information for the Bureau of American Ethnology. He listened carefully to the storytellers, absorbing some elements of the old literature of the Zuñi elders. Unlike many of the texts presented by anthropologists of Cushing's era, his narratives are lively, written in an enjoyable, flowing style. To do this, Cushing reworked the Zuñi literature presented orally to him. He fashioned the stories using his own style and method of storytelling. Most likely he did not change the characters or plots of the stories, but he changed the forms in which they were presented. The reason for this is clear; he was not a Zuñi and he wrote with his own biases for English readers, not Zuñis. Readers should be very cautious as they explore the tales of this book. Cushing does not offer literal translations of the Zuñi tales, and he took great liberty with the oral traditions. Dennis Tedlock and others have warned scholars of this specific problem, and all readers should be aware of this problem in approaching Cushing's work.

Many stories deal with Coyote, the great trickster-changer who delights, humors, and teaches everyone about themselves. In one story Coyote cleverly kills *Siviuki*, the Demon of Thunder Mountain, and wins the right to marry a beautiful maiden, the sister of Wolf, Mountain Lion, and Bear. When Coyote moved in with his wife and her family, he received a cold reception, particularly from the gruff Mountain Lion. When Coyote hunts prey with his brothers-in-law, he fails to find food. His relatives give him venison and send him home, instructing him to take the road to the right at the place where the trail forks. Coyote does not listen and takes the road to the left. His inability to listen costs him his life. In other stories, Coyote finds adventures with Locust, Blackbird, and Beetle. Other tales recount legends involving the animal people, such as Rabbit, Rattlesnake, and Raven. The stories are far more than a collection of cute tales. They teach many lessons and offer a limited understanding of Zuñi history, culture, literature, and society.

A major flaw of the book is the absence of an updated introduction. The editors of the University of Arizona Press would have done well to ask a native scholar from Zuñi or a scholar intimately familiar with the Zuñis to write a foreword to the book, providing insights into Zuñi literature in general and Cushing's work in particular. The introductions by Powell and Austin are outdated, superficial, and inadequate. Austin's discussion is offensive, if not racist. She

portrays Cushing as one of the greatest scholars of his time and Zuñis as primitive savages living in the stone age. The introductions by Powell and Austin are fine examples of the "scholarly" view of American Indians at the turn of this century, but they are of little value in analyzing Cushing's contribution to American Indian literature at the end of the twentieth century. The editors would do well to provide a new foreword to this book before reprinting it. In spite of this flaw, readers will find this an interesting book worth examining with a critical eye.

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The Moccasin Maker. E. Pauline Johnson. Intro., Annot., Bib. A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff. Tucson: U Arizona Press, 1987. 266 pp., paper, ISBN 0-8165-0910-7.

With the republication of E. Pauline Johnson's 1913 collection of short stories, *The Moccasin Maker*, A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff contributes to the reclamation of both women and Indian authors in Canadian literature. Daughter of a Mohawk chief and an English immigrant, Emily Pauline Johnson (1861-1913) became a poet, fiction writer, essayist, and most successfully, a stage performer. Although Pauline had less than fifty percent Indian blood (since her father was one-quarter white), "by Canadian law and by heritage she was Indian" (1). She was born on the Six Nations Reserve in Ontario, a mixed-blood in the remarkable position of having for a great-great grandfather "a member of the first council of the Iroquois Confederacy" (2) and for her mother's first cousin the American author William Dean Howells. "Billed as the Mohawk Princess," notes Ruoff, "Pauline became one of the most popular stage performers in Canada" (1) as well as a celebrated figure in the United States and Great Britain. Influenced by Mohawk oral tradition and history passed on by her grandfather, Smoke Johnson, speaker of the Council of the Iroquois Confederacy, and by British literary traditions taught to her by her mother, Johnson incorporated both Indian and Anglo perspectives into her work. The British Romantic writers, particularly Keats and Byron, along with Shakespeare, the British essayists, and American writers Longfellow and Emerson, were among her favorite authors. She wrote about Canadian Indian life, then, from a fundamentally Romantic point of view. Her works include three books of poetry--

White Wampum (1895), her first and most acclaimed collection, her less critically acclaimed *Canadian Born* (1903), and *Flint and Feather* (1912), a re-collection of earlier poems; and three books of prose--*The Legend of Vancouver* (1911), based on stories told by Chief Joe Capilano (Squamish), and *The Shagwanappi* (1913) and *The Moccasin Maker* (1913), two collections of short stories published after her death.

The Moccasin Maker, a "direct photographic reproduction of the 1913 edition published by the Ryerson Press of Toronto" (38), retains the original pagination but replaces the original introductory materials with Ruoff's. Since Ruoff does not discuss the original 1913 introduction, it is unclear whether, as was the case for many Indian authors, it included prefaces, explanations, and other such authenticating devices. Reprinting the original introduction would provide a sense of how Johnson's work was introduced to the reading public in 1913 when she was still known as a popular performer. Ruoff's introduction, however, provides a rich historical, biographical, and literary background. She presents an overview of Johnson's personal and professional history, a discussion of cultural and literary influences on Johnson's work, and an analysis of Johnson's contribution. Pauline was one of the writers of "the first renaissance in Canadian literature" (31), explains Ruoff, and was "among the first to introduce her frontier audiences in the Canadian West to the excitement of literature" (34). In her work Johnson challenged, yet sometimes perpetuated, the stereotypes of "savage"/"noble savage" Indians and "untrustworthy" mixed-bloods; she presented female protagonists from an Indian point of view; and she depicted the relationship between individuals and their vast Canadian landscape.

Most of the eleven short stories or sketches and one essay in *The Moccasin Maker* were published originally in *Mother's Magazine*. Johnson's themes include the predicament of mixed-bloods, especially the resistance to miscegenation; the relationship between whites and Indians; and the contrast between native religion and Christianity. Many of her stories, however, focus on women, particularly on mothers and wives. Whether Indian or white, almost all of Johnson's female characters are idealized, but notes Ruoff, "the situations in which Pauline involves her heroines are real" (33). Generally, Johnson "champions Victorian values," creating resourceful, domestic women who "triumph over difficulties" (22).

Three stories, in particular, stand out because of their "strong feminist perspective for the period" (25). "A Red Girl's Reasoning," "As It Was in the Beginning," and "The Derelict" all focus on the relationship between a mixed-blood or Indian woman and a white

man. In the first story, the protagonist leaves her white husband when she discovers he does not genuinely respect her Indian heritage; in the second, betrayed by her white lover, the heroine kills him ingeniously. In "The Derelict," however, the lovers finally come together. Usually, both sets of parents, Indian and white, actively resist these unions, even after the couple marries. Babies, though, especially grandbabies, never fail to win over disapproving parents on both sides.

No less than six of the eleven stories have as the central focus "mother-love." Three are devoted to white mothers: "My Mother," "Mother o' the Men," and "The Nest Builder"; and three to Indian mothers: "Catharine of the 'Crow's Nest,'" "The Legend of Lilloet Falls," and "The Tenas Klootchman." Like many stories by nineteenth-century women, these exalt domesticity, especially the intimate bond between mother and child. One story, for instance, describes how a woman with nine children, the oldest twelve years old, is never worried or discouraged, but always hard-working and generous, "good-natured and smiling" (195). Johnson presents a more dismal depiction of domestic life in "the Envoy Extraordinary" in which a mother and son are oppressed by the husband/father. Two of the stories, "My Mother" and "Her Majesty's Guest," are, in fact, slightly fictionalized accounts of her parents' lives.

Johnson's stories invite comparison with such Native American writers as Charles Alexander Eastman (Santee Sioux; 1858-1939) and Mourning Dove (Okanogan; 1888-1936), who both wrote about Indian/white themes using many nineteenth-century Euro-American literary conventions, who both criticized the hypocrisy of the white world, and who both served as "interpreter[s] of the Indian to non-Indian audiences" (31). In addition, Johnson's work recalls the fiction of local color writers, like Mary Freeman, whose stories focus on family relations, specific communities, and small female liberations. Johnson's stories and Ruoff's introduction, annotations, and bibliography are a welcome addition to the ongoing reconstruction of Indian literature in North America.

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Ghost Singer. Anna Lee Walters. Flagstaff: Northland Publishing, 1988. \$17.95, ISBN 0-87358-472-4.

Nothing is more important to a tribal person than family. Anglos, paper lovers and collectors, have captured in the Smithsonian the artifacts and genealogy of Native Americans; through losses from military defeats, economic deprivation, genocide and the by-products of colonialization, today's Indians have almost lost hold of their own history.

When I talked with her recently, Anna Lee Walters told me how it is with her when she travels to speak to Indian groups. "I have to describe my own genealogy. I have to explain how I am an Indian person . . . I have to show that I'm related to a family. Every person brought up in a tribal society knows what that means." In *Ghost Singer's* Smithsonian, Indian history and culture suffer at the hands of ignorant museum personnel. Medicine bundles are handled negligently, their insides spilled and jumbled with unlabelled medicine bundles of other tribes like so much cultural recombinant DNA. Tribal people, mummified or otherwise preserved, in parts or as whole beings, are tagged and stored, dislocated from the essential dignity of their death. The poet Wendy Rose says "I expected my skin/ and my blood to ripen/ not be ripped from my bones" (*Lost Copper*, 14) in response to the same issue of museum carnage.

Individual chapters are set on the Navajo Reservation or in Oklahoma, Washington DC, or Las Vegas, New Mexico, and each is presented from the perspective of a particular character. An 1830s raid on Beautiful Mountain sets off a chain of events. Red Lady and her daughter are captured and sold into slavery; all of Red Lady's descendants experience the blurred and troubled identity of people whose history has been plundered. For the first hundred or so pages *Ghost Singer* looks as if it might be a kind of genealogical ethno-mystery. Knowing I had to write this review, I noted clues, juxtapositions, dates, names, and gaps in the narrative. I constructed genealogical charts and speculated on relationships that I expected would be clarified in the happy light of the discovery process so crucial to endings in western cultures. But loose threads persisted.

Walters' intent is not to deceive but to illuminate. Some problems have no solution: a wild revenant, the novel's ghost, is terrorizing the Smithsonian staff with a song which drives them to suicide; Navajo slaves raised as Mexicans or other Indians are lost to the Dineh; an ethnohistorian won't dissolve the cultural and professional bias that occludes his judgments. Walters says that when there is no resolution to a problem in real life, no resolution is permitted in fiction.

Ghost Singer, Walters' first novel and fourth book (*The Sacred: Ways of Knowledge/Sources of Life; The Sun is not Merciful; The Spirit of Native America: Beauty and Mysticism in Native American Art*) is both powerful and tender. Walters evokes the dream knowledge shared by LeClair Williams and Wilbur Snake, caricatures the Anglo habit of excessive talking, inhabits the dying Rosa as she remembers her husbands, and reveres the land to which sensible humans make permanent attachment. The imagined audience is, deliberately, Indian, and Walters explains little that an Indian would already know. Instead of baffling non-Indian readers, this strategy invites active participation: if you have questions, you can find answers.

Annoying errors creep in (numerous typos, for example, and too many uses of "In the meantime" to signal scene changes) but *Ghost Singer* dramatizes complex issues clearly. Despite tragedies, an unwavering optimism marks each turn. In the last chapter, Nasbah Navajo, a sixth-generation descendant of Red Lady, dandles a baby at the camp on Beautiful Mountain. Surrounded by family, she is healthy and whole, a vital member of a vigorous clan. "As pitiful as we humans is, sonny," says Wilbur Snake, Walters' favorite character, "we got power. . . . The power we got is to live" (176).

Rhoda Carroll
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I Tell You Now: Autobiographical Essays by Native American Writers. Ed. Brian Swann and Arnold Krupat. Lincoln: U Nebraska Press, 1987. Cloth, ISBN 0-8032-2714-0; paper, ISBN 0-80327757-1.

Survival This Way: Interviews with American Indian Poets. Joseph Bruchac. Tucson: U Arizona Press, 1987. ISBN 0-8165-1024-5.

These two books are in many ways companion volumes: parallel, complementary and sometimes full of contrast. To begin with, ten authors are represented among both the 21 interviews in Bruchac's collection and the 18 autobiographical pieces in the Swann-Krupat volume. With these pieces the reader has a rare opportunity to encounter the nuances of voice in the transcribed oral text by comparison with the written autobiographical composition.

Some of the comparisons are extremely rich. Paula Gunn Allen's two pieces make a striking intertextual commentary: in her interview with Bruchac she dwells on the necessity for being "groun-

ded" and her lifelong imaginative reconstruction of her home in Cubero, while her autobiographical essay in *I Tell You Now* is a tour de force on the theme of place as the grounding of character, wherein she maps family history and memories of kin along the significant corresponding loci in the New Mexico landscape. Wendy Rose's two contributions likewise comment on each other; in her interview Rose distinguishes in carefully nuanced language the emotional, intellectual and artistic principles that she has both inherited and chosen from her multi-faceted background, while in her autobiographical statement she experiments with textual divisions resembling multiple voices in confronting experience of great pain while maintaining the integrity of her own unique artistic vision. Linda Hogan also develops themes of childhood adversity in her autobiographical essay, which can be seen to underlie the artistic and philosophical principles she articulates in her interview. Both Hogan and Joy Harjo express a humanistic vision growing out of analysis of class oppression and struggle as well as traditional values they see in their Native American background.

Gerald Vizenor's autobiography is another tour de force, reaching back to an earlier autobiographical essay and weaving commentary around an episode in it in a complex metastatement that, finally, probes the very nature of memory and the word. This is classic Vizenor; his interview with Bruchac would serve as gloss and commentary (a statement in prose, so to speak, by contrast with the artifice and experimentally poetic approach of the autobiography) in which Vizenor discusses how he sees language and story being able to both create and uncreate. The artistry in Carter Revard's autobiography is as deliberately crafted as Vizenor's but travels in another direction, the storytelling road. Revard is a splendid raconteur, sharing the adventures of an expansive, expressive and self-reliant Osage family in Oklahoma during the depression; there is plenty of nostalgia in reminiscences of bootlegging uncles, digging a pond, the cool sanctuary of a grandmother's house and the ups and downs of oil revenue. In many ways Revard's interview is a continuation or expansion of his essay, another treasure chest of anecdotes as he reminisces on his development as a poet.

Besides the authors already mentioned, Maurice Kenny, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Duane Niatum and Simon Ortiz are also represented in both volumes. For these authors as well, interview and written autobiography complement and comment on each other, and we begin to see a kind of dialogue among the participants as well. Ortiz's focus on language in his autobiography, for instance, comments on Vizenor's preoccupation with story as creative power. Both

Ortiz and Niatum are actually more specifically autobiographical in their interviews than in their written autobiographies, partly due perhaps to Joe Bruchac's astute questions linking some of their artistic principles to particular anecdotes in life. Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, likewise, takes the opportunity of her autobiographical statement to explore the philosophical/literary issues raised by the title/-label/ designation/category "American Indian poet" or "Lakota poet." Cook-Lynn brings into the foreground in this piece what is stated in one way or another throughout both books by many of the contributors: resistance to externally imposed designations and a sense of the questionableness of the "designated spokesperson" role which the external society often tries to impose on articulate individuals. Maurice Kenny, like Niatum and many other of the contributors, traces a complicated set of artistic influences and alliances that he sees in his work.

It is worth saying something about one other person who contributes to both volumes: Joseph Bruchac, who has an essay in *I Tell You Now* and who is very much present in each of the interviews in *Survival This Way*. Bruchac's autobiographical essay focuses on an issue I have encountered with some frequency in the classroom: denial of Indian ancestry, "passing" for EuroAmerican (in Bruchac's case, French). Students have told me similar stories: parents telling children to identify as "Mexican" and not to "admit" being Yaqui, grandparents cautioning "Never tell anyone you are Indian." Bruchac's interview questions frequently probe the values of American Indian cultures that may be hidden from the dominant majority, in keeping with his own search, as he relates it, for meaningful continuity with his inheritance.

The second reason for needing both of these books is simply the number of contributors that do not appear in both. Bruchac interviews Peter Blue Cloud, Diane Burns, Louise Erdrich, Lance Henson, Karoniaktatie, Harold Littlebird, N. Scott Momaday, Luci Tapahonso, James Welch, Roberta Hill Whiteman and Ray Young Bear. On the other hand, Swann and Krupat include pieces by Mary Tallmountain (who is interviewed in *SAIL* 1:1), Ralph Salisbury, Jim Barnes, Jack D. Forbes, Jimmie Durham, Diane Glancy, Barney Bush. Momaday and Welch have received wide recognition; their interviews will enrich criticism that already has a good start. Other pieces will provide serendipitous discoveries: in *I Tell You Now* Mary Tallmountain's moving and experimental prose/poem mixing reverie and fiction, Jack D. Forbes's recollections of southern California when being Black and Indian and Okie was a potent mix, Jimmie Durham's cathartic outspokenness.

Each of these two books does have its own unique identity, and a sense of unity linking the great variety of the individual contributions. Bruchac is an active interviewer in *Survival This Way*, often calling on his longstanding friendship with some of the authors to draw out their insights. There is an agenda that surfaces in all of the interviews and tends to pull them together almost as a symposium on the distinctions the authors perceive between Indian and non-Indian cultures. *I Tell You Now*, while composed of written essays, is in one respect closer to the classic American Indian autobiography/interview than to what we think of as the western (European) written autobiography: the book is manifestly a project of the editors, and these are clearly solicited pieces, accepted to fulfill the aims of the editors' project. In spite of their impressive variety, the pieces do show a striking similarity in format: inclusion of poems and/or extracts from fiction, discussion of artistic development and influences. The editors refer briefly in their introduction to the letter of request sent to potential contributors, but do not include the text--or texts? It isn't clear whether each person received the same invitation or a custom-tailored protocol, so to speak. The reader of *I Tell You Now* has the inevitable sense that, as with so many transcribed and edited autobiographies, part of the story has been suppressed; this outcome is surprising in view of Krupat's own exploration of the problem in his scholarly work.

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Hand into Stone. Elizabeth Woody. New York: Contact II Publications, 1988. Paper, ISBN 0-936556-18-8.

In her first collection of poems, *Hand into Stone*, Elizabeth Woody successfully bends the English language, instrument of analysis, distinctions, and separations, to express her native holistic world view in concrete intuitive associations; unobtrusive, serious puns; and a sturdy insistence on the literalness of what seems metaphorical. "Wild palms" are both trees and hands. When Woody speaks of her own heritage, she means literally:

I am her body in my father's hands.
She gave me her eyes

and the warmth of basalt.
The vertebrae of her back,
my breastplate, the sturdy
belly of mountainside.

("In Memory of Crossing the Columbia")

Elizabeth Woody is Warm Springs Wasco/Navajo. Her emphasis on the Columbia River and its people in the section subtitled "She Walks Along the River" testifies to the influence of the Warm Springs, Oregon, grandparents who raised her. As we read these poems, Woody intends that we remember Celilo Falls, traditional fishing site inundated by dams on the Columbia, that we bear in mind the struggles of the people to maintain treaty rights and recognize that women's lives express the union of human, river, and land as one spiritual being, desecrated by modern life and colonialization. In the second section, "She Walks Across This Country," Moody draws upon breadth of personal experience--she has lived in the Southwest, graduated from the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, and studied in Japan--as well her feeling for other colonized people and hard-used land.

By nature a storyteller, Woody is at her best when her voice speaks to relatives, elders, and neighboring tribal people of the poem dedications, or when she recalls the wisdom of her grandmother. My favorite poem is "Birds in this Woman," seven brief narratives based on incidents in the life of Woody's aunt, Lillian Pitt, artist and maker of ceramic masks. The sequence spans the contemporary ordinarieness of magpies at a cylindrical bird feeder and the magic of a conversation with Raven. The woman is blessed by her experience of birds. Furthermore, she passes this blessing on:

As witness, she makes birds,
makes animals and people who wear these feathers.
They have rushes and fibers sing from their mouths.
She pulls the feathers
from her bundle and places them,
liking the feel of wind
resisting the curving spines.

Woody clearly finds spiritual kinship with this other maker. (Photos of Pitt's work may be found in *Calyx: A Journal of Art and Literature by Women*, 8:2.)

Though she emphasizes the experience and mythic significance of women, like many tribal "womanist" writers, to borrow Alice Walker's word, Woody makes clear that both men and women carry necessary qualities for survival. In "Cold Blood" she expresses this

insight in a cluster of images involving both the adversarial relationship of fish and fisherman, and the dark, ecstatic cooperation of sexual union. The "final articulation of this blood" will be spawning, recreation of life in the river. The poem begins with imagery of urban Portland, but the motion evokes salmon fighting up the fish ladders:

. . . she has plunged
into the undertow,
wiping the streets with her back.
She has rolled out of moving vehicles
off the biggest bridges, and survived,
but not this.
He is a silver lure, spinning deceit.

She is not only the salmon, but the whole creaturely earth:

Before the grasses wave gold, the salmon, the nusoox
search for the other in her hair.

In the second half of Woody's collection, my favorite is again a set of narratives, "A Warrior and the Glass Prisoners." The sequence explores the responses of native people to colonialization. "The Glass Girl--a Dream," in the voice of a nineteenth-century Indian woman, offers on one level innocence, numbness, despair: "I like what the soldiers give/ If it shines or I see my face in it." On another level her consciousness is skeptical, canny, not ready to believe the soldiers' stories about where the tribal men have gone or how safe the women are. The persona of "Don't Touch Me When I Sleep" is a Cheyenne Indian veteran recalling the Vietnamese woman he lived with and the Vietnamese grandmother he was forced to kill. In contrast to the white soldiers of the preceding episode, he identifies the "enemy" with the self, saying,

I talk Vietnamese to the women.
I am sure they remember 'Nam
and that I killed their Grandmothers.
I wear fatigues when I Traditional Dance
at the veteran's Pow Wow.

In the third narrative a contemporary woman endures sexual exploitation by the colonizers, not soldiers this time, but cheerful truck drivers who give her "a name to acknowledge,/ numbers to call, when I can." The imagery resonates with the voice of the earth avatar, woman ancestor and leader Tsagigla'lal, portrayed in a well-known Columbia River petroglyph, as she speaks in Woody's poem, "She

Who Watches . . . The Names Are Prayer." Images of the Columbia River Gorge, mirrors and petroglyphs, Interstate 84 and the railroad all remind the reader of the earlier poem.

When Woody clearly conceives her speakers and settings, her voice is strong, with the forward motion of the very river of her inspiration. Unanchored moments, when the setting, speaker, or story are vague, produce the occasional weak poems, moments when the voice seems strained and the poem goes static. But all in all, this is a very promising book. I hope Woody will take as credo for her future work the last lines of her closing poem, "Our Reverence and Difficult Return," for here is her strength as a poet:

I will name all of my children
after landscapes
however they resemble and perpetuate this ache.

Linda L. Danielson
Lane Community College

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Savings: Poems. Linda Hogan. Coffeehouse Press, 1987. Paper, ISBN 0-918273-41-2.

Savings, by Chickasaw poet Linda Hogan, is a collection of poems written in clear, strong language that is so quiet that it occasionally fails to make an impact, but more often is so beautiful that it provides sparks of recognition. Women readers will identify with the speaker in "the Lost Girls" who misses her younger selves and ends her poem "loving all the girls and women/ I have always been." Anyone who has felt caught between two ways of being will recognize the man in "the Two Winds."

"Broken" is a recurring word in *Savings*. Sometimes it refers to the "broken souls/ wandering about in worn-out shoes/ and aching joints" in "What I Think," but more often it refers to breaks in our everyday world, where life comes bursting through, as in this description of the rain in the poem of the same name: "and birth waters/ are breaking down/ the sturdy legs of sky," or this description in "Geodes" of "all the life growing/ in the broken heart of things."

The title of the collection refers to a view of life that we can bank on. Hogan's poems are intended to make the reader realize what is important in our lives. What is important is not "this going

and coming to work/ the chatter in cars,/ and passengers crying on bad days" that she describes in "Potholes." What is vital in Hogan's poetry is the underworld described in "Germinal":

that world below
like old women
and blood stirring in the neck,
the older world
with its pale, thin roots of grass
and all things saved and growing.

That underworld is just as accessible to urban dwellers as it is to those who live far from the city:

and in the basement
there are only damp walls and rotten wood
surrounding heat and electric,
and further down, deep thoughts of the forest,
mushrooms, the black coal
with its inner light.

These lines from "What I Think" capture a distinguishing characteristic of Hogan's poetry: its anti-transcendentalism, a quality referred to in "The Truth of the Matter," the subtitle for the second group of poems in the collection. Her poetry celebrates an elemental life force emanating from within, like the light from within the black coal in the lines quoted above, or the "women of earth's core" described in "Geodes." This force is connected to ancestors, as the speaker points out in "Breaking": "It lives like we live/ off those before us." This force can help us combat the "narrowing life" referred to in "Pillow."

Although the tone of the poem is generally celebratory, Hogan is not blind to the ugly aspects of life. In "Workday" the speaker tries not to "think of children without food/ or how my sisters are chained to prison beds." She doesn't mean to "mention Victor Jara's mutilated hands" but her words make her readers feel "the shoulders which bend forward and forward/ and forward/ to protect the heart from pain."

Hogan's ability to make her readers see what they would rather not see, but hear what they need to hear is illustrated in the last stanza of "What I Think":

The woman downstairs is drunk.
The woman upstairs is singing
beneath the blue roof,

and I am boiling greens,
tomorrow's stew.

Hogan's poetry doesn't ignore the depressing, but focuses on what is worth singing about. Her poetry, like a good stew, provides sustenance for tomorrow. *Savings* is a book of poems worth saving, and savoring.

Cynthia Taylor
University of Southern
Colorado

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Greyhounding This America: Poems and Dialog by Maurice Kenny.
Maurice Kenny. Intro. William M. Kunstler. Chico, CA: Heidelberg
Graphics, 1988. \$7.95. ISBN 0-918606-07-1.

Greyhounding This America is uniquely Maurice Kenny. It is, however, the kind of book readers hope every poet would write. For not only do we find here a rich collection of Kenny's poems, the kind of poems which always stand strong on the page, but the reader is given autobiographical contexts for how each poem came to be written, what Kenny thinks it means or doesn't begin to know, plus some musings by him about the larger "politics" of the times surrounding the poems. It is, as he calls it, "poems and dialog"--a great genre provided that the poems and their commentator are worth all the fuss, and Kenny is.

What gives theme and focus to the poems is a bus trip Kenny took across the United States (actually several trips blending into one) in the late 1970s. Thus the autobiographical dimensions of the poem mix and merge with that greatest of all plots--the journey. Kenny's journey is simultaneously a quest, an exploration, a vacation--and work. He travels to see and to absorb impressions of landscapes and towns and flora and fauna, to meet people like intriguing Cherokee Marie, to "hound" America out of her injustices and complacencies (especially those affecting Native peoples), and to read his poems when the occasion calls--an occasion such as *Greyhounding This America*.

One of the great tonalities of the book is Kenny's conversational "reading" to the person turning the pages, and behind that, to his publisher, Larry Jackson, who recorded the dialogue. Behind them is the voice of that, by now, old radical: attorney William Kunstler.

There is, admittedly, an old-hippie air to *Greyhounding This America*, a nostalgic attempt to revisit the country when the zeal of Sixties' leftist reform was rampant across the nation. Much of that time has been forgotten, so it's fitting for Kenny to share these poems and Kunstler to loom out of the past, all in the same year which marks the twentieth anniversary of Woodstock. And in "Cyclist" Kenny offers his own tribute to one filmed icon of traveling those times, "Easy Rider."

Kenny reminds us that journeys once made must be repeated. Old ground becomes new ground for each new generation. This Kenny recognizes and accepts well enough. His hope held forth here, however, is that old ground not become the "same" ground.

Kenny's journeys, as his poems record, have been away from muddledom and depression, from heart attack and substance dependency, from callous and perennial attitudes toward the "Indian problem"--and toward sanity, health, and the celebration of ethnic and racial differences.

In Kenny's voicings "minorities" of all kinds gain an empathetic, albeit at times angered, champion. Something like a tattered, Mo-hawk Quixote, Kenny sallies forth to protest the stereotyping of American legends like Sacawajea (i.e., Sacagawea), Monahsetah (Custer's Cheyenne mistress), and their son, Yellow Swallow. And to lament the larger tragedies of Sand Creek and the more insidious one of Indian alcoholism and suicide.

Whether poets are politicians and propagandists and "legislators of the world" has never really been at issue. Kenny's poems and commentaries bring new acknowledgments of that fact. In a time when zeal for civil and human rights is languishing and the great American greyhound of fools seems careening toward contentment, it's no small comfort to know Kenny is around to hold forth the promise that the best might yet gain conviction, and the center just still might hold.

Robert F. Gish
University of Northern Iowa

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The Hopi Way: Tales from a Vanishing Culture. Ed. Mando Sevillano. Flagstaff, AZ: Northland Press, 1986. Paper, ISBN 0-87358-413-9.

Any new volume of Hopi narratives should be welcome to those who believe that North American Indians contribute significantly to the world's literature. And in the broad tradition of Native American storytelling, Hopi tales enjoy a special distinction for their combination of force, charm and cosmic understanding. As Mr. Sevillano himself says in his introduction, Hopi stories excite the "imagination like no others" (x). I am sorry to say, however, that this volume fails to demonstrate that declaration fully and does the fine tradition of Hopi storytelling less justice than it deserves.

Citing "W. L. Satewa" of Sichomovi on First Mesa as his source, Sevillano presents seven Hopi "teaching stories," four that were received in English and three others that were translated. By insisting that the process of assembling such a text is a painstaking one he implies an awareness of the delicacy of converting performance to print without elaborating on that key point in his introductory comments.

Overall, the introduction fails to convey the kind of useful ethnological background that we find in other recent collections of Hopi material like those assembled by Harold Courlander or Ekkehart Malotki, or earlier ones by Frank Cushing, Harry C. James and Elsie Clews Parsons. Instead, it contains a *pot pourri* of randomly assembled material that really bears no relationship to the stories themselves. Furthermore, his scholarship, such as it is, offers no substantial guide to the reader who wishes to locate Hopi storytelling in its proper ethnological context--a must if the stories are to be fully understood and appreciated. At one point he inserts a quote by James without explaining why it is there; at another he mentions Ekkehart Malotki's method of putting tales originally recited in the Hopi language into print but makes no corresponding bibliographical reference. Thus the book suffers overall from an editorial carelessness.

This text resembles Ekkehart Malotki's monumental *Hopitutu-wutsi* in its format, at least superficially. Like *Hopitutu-wutsi*, *The Hopi Way* bears a shape and a set of stylized designs and illustrations characteristic of Hopi art. But unlike it, Sevillano's illustrations and line drawings do not subtly underscore the structure and content of Hopi narratives. Nor do they represent Hopi graphics authentically. The colors of Sevillano's cover resemble those of Malotki's, but there the similarity ends. Not only is the production of *The Hopi Way* inferior, the integrity and the polish of Malotki's translations simply

are not fully evident in this work. It looks to me as if Sevillano was influenced by the physical appearance of *Hopitutuwutsi*, but that he missed the important connection between its format and the narratives, with their implicit sense of design and their understanding of the crucial relationship between tribal life and the forces of nature.

A tale that appears in Sevillano's volume under the title "A Witchcraft Story" demonstrates the consequences of that oversight. It is an abbreviated variant of an exquisite rendering which Malotki calls "Kokosori and His Witch Wife." Where the former comes across as an awkward, truncated account of a farmer whose wife practices witchcraft, the latter explores the relationship between the waste of precious food and the behavior of the Powakas--evildoers from the lower world who traditionally oppose the forces of harmony which bind the human community with members of the spirit world. If he wanted to include this narrative, the editor might have served his overall purpose better by acknowledging Malotki's version and perhaps even saying something about why variants exist in a preliterate tradition.

To be fully effective, collections like this one require that kind of supplementary commentary, to say nothing of fully detailed scholarship carefully compiled. It is too soon for English versions of stories like the ones included here to stand alone if we are to persuade a wider audience that there is indeed a significant poetic tradition to be harvested from tribal peoples in the Americas.

Paul G. Zolbrod
Allegheny College

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BRIEFLY NOTED

My Friend the Indian. James McLaughlin. Intro. Robert M. Utley. Lincoln: U Nebraska Press, 1989.

University of Nebraska has reprinted an important document from twentieth-century Indian/non-Indian relations. This book by a person sympathetic to Indians illustrates all the debilitating stereotypes and prejudices justly criticized by later writers and points to the necessity for awareness of present-day blind spots that can be equally destructive.

I Become Part of It: Sacred Dimensions in Native American Life. Ed. D. M. Dooling and Paul Jordan-Smith. Intro. Joseph Bruchac. New York: Parabola, 1989.

The editors have collected writings on the sacred which have appeared in *Parabola* during the past years: some traditional tales, some pieces by scholars such as Sam Gill, Elaine Jahner, Joseph Epes Brown, Barre Toelken.

Four Masterworks of American Indian Literature. Ed. John Bierhorst. Tucson: U Arizona Press, 1984. Paper.

This is a welcome item in the University of Arizona reprint program, assisted by a grant from the Center for Inter-American Relations; it makes available once again Bierhorst's original edition of 1974.

Forever There: Race and Gender in Contemporary Native American Fiction. Elizabeth I. Hanson. New York: Peter Lang, 1989. \$29.95 cloth.

Reader, beware. This book does not discuss gender or race; it is replete with sexist language, Eurocentric bias and proofreading errors; if you spend thirty dollars on it you can't sue.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Hertha D. Wong is an Assistant Professor of English at California State University, Chico, where she teaches American literature, Native American literatures, and autobiography. She has published several articles and is working on a book on the Indian captivity narrative as a model for ethnic American autobiographies.

Now that Native American literature is finding a place in the curriculum, **Paul G. Zolbrod** takes pride in having pioneered a course in ethno-poetics twenty years ago at Allegheny College, where he is Frederick F. Seeley Professor of English. He is the author of *Dine Bahane': The Navajo Creation Story*.