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The SAIL Review

An Announcements and Reviews Publication

Editor: Julianne Newmark
Editorial Assistant: Navid Etedali Rezapoorian

Notes from ASAIL

Happy Spring, ASAIL members and soon-to-be ASAIL members! As I write, we are gearing up for the 2026 ASAIL conference. The ASAIL Executive Board is hard at work planning the 5th annual virtual conference "Views from the Shore: Film, Television, and Visual Narratives," which takes place Thursday, April 23 & Friday, April 24. We're very excited for our keynotes, the renowned Cuyuga actor from the Six Nations of the Grand River, Gary Farmer, and brilliant Cherokee Nation scholar Liza Black, as well as our fabulous slate of presenters. Once again, this year we have kept the conference free for ASAIL members, which is one of the many benefits of membership.

ASAIL was founded to celebrate the power of Indigenous creative expressions and, particularly, to work to bring Indigenous literatures not only into the classroom but to the center of curriculums and conversations. The organization still holds these commitments, and our recent conference demonstrates this ongoing attention to pedagogy as well underscoring the significance, abundance, and breadth of visual, literary, and material Indigenous creative arts. At the current moment, when access to Indigenous literatures and other arts is under threat in U.S. classrooms, we need your support more than ever. We have a new membership auto renew option, and I ask that you consider renewing with that option and that you would make it your mission to bring one other person into the organization. Together, we have broader reach, a wider array of knowledges, and a stronger and more vibrant community: https://www.asail.org/membership/

MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENT

It's time to share tea, coffee, conversation, and scholarship to nurture and nourish our community together in person again!
Please put **ASAIL'S 2027 IN-PERSON CONFERENCE** on your list of save-the-dates.

WHEN: Thursday, 9/9/27 to Sunday, 9/12/27
WHERE: On the campus of Northern Arizona University (NAU) in Flagstaff
WHY: To commemorate the legendary 1977 MLA/NEH workshop that was central to the start of the organization

Awards

There is much to celebrate in the current moment. ASAIL is catching up on 2023 and 2024 awards and planning for 2025 awards with the help of our Awards Coordinator. This new Exec Committee position is held by the fantastic Mandy Suhr-Sytsma (Emory University) who has been working tirelessly to get us on track to recognize the excellent work in Indigenous literature and Indigenous studies more broadly.

Nominate your favorite 2025 books, essays, story collection, and/or edited collection by Friday, May 15, 2026: https://www.asail.org/hello-from-reykjavik/resources/awards/

Please join us in congratulating the winners of two 2023 awards who will be honored at the 2026 conference:

1) The winners of the 2023 Electa Quinney Award for Published Stories are the James Bay Cree Storytellers in partnership with Ruth DyckFehderau for E nâtamukw miyeyimuwin: Residential School Recovery Stories of the James Bay Cree, Volume 1 (Wilfred Laurier UP).

2) The winner of the 2023 Beatrice Medicine Award for Scholarly Essay in American Indian Studies is David Gaertner for "#HonouringIndigenousWriters: Visiting with and through Indigenous Literatures in the 'Digital Turn,'" *Transmotion* 9.1/2.

Stay tuned as we will hold a virtual awards ceremony in the fall for the 2025, 2024, and the remaining 2023 awards. We are looking forward to making the fall awards ceremony a new ASAIL annual tradition.

On that note, we need you to serve on awards committees. To complete our slate of award committees, we need nearly 21 committee members to help us recognize the good work of you and your colleagues. Longtime and emeritus colleagues, new members, and graduate students, please consider supporting the organization and offering your time and service to the profession and your colleagues by joining an awards committee. New folks—this is a legitimate cv line! Contact Mandy Suhr-Sytsma to join: mandy.sue.suhr-sytsma@emory.edu

EXEC COMMITTEE THANKS, NEW MEMBERS, NEW ROLES

Speaking of service to ASAIL, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Executive Committee and to welcome new members. Award Coordinator is not our only new position. **Malou Brouwer** (University of Alberta) has taken on the position of Communications Coordinator and has already done so much excellent work for the organization. Malou was the backbone of our conference from the program to the registration to the facilitation of the event and has also been working on the website revision--an ongoing project--among many other invaluable contributions. Malou stepped into the nearly unfillable shoes of **Jeremy Carnes,** who left ASAIL Exec this past year after over ten years of service. He is sorely missed. We deeply appreciate your service to the organization, Jeremy! Also earning ASAIL accolades is **Jeff Berglund** (Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff), who continues his tireless work as ASAIL Treasurer, which means he wrangles each of us in all the ways. Thank you, Jeff! (FYI--Jeff will be looking to retire from this position in the next year or two; please think about serving the organization as his replacement. Please contact me at tatonett@ksu.edu with questions.)

Awards

Renae Watchman (Diné / Tsalagi, McMaster University) has been a fabulous addition as Vice President and will offer strong leadership as she steps into the presidency in August. At that same time, we welcome **Kirstin Squint** (East Carolina University), who will take on the Vice Presidency as I will step into (what I hope will be, pending an ASAIL vote) the newly created role of past president. **Susan Bernardin** (Oregon State University) has been a tireless and valuable member of the EC in her role as secretary, which she steps out of in August when we will welcome **Jenna Hunnef** (University of Saskatchewan). **Becca Gercken** (University of Minnesota Morris) continues in her long-standing and important role as Professional Development coordinator while **Brian Twenter** (University of Central Oklahoma) continues as Pedagogy Committee Chair. Notably, Brian supports all things ASAIL, particularly helping facilitate the recent ASAIL elections and continuing to plan ASAIL panels at allied organizations' conferences. As well, we are so happy that **Bob Nelson** (University of Richmond, emeritus faculty) remains in the crucial role of Historian, keeping track of ASAIL's web of relationships and activities. Stay tuned as Bob is currently working on drafts of ASAIL's history for the website revamp. Finally, deep gratitude, as well, to **Madison Fowler-Niblock** (University of Oregon), who has served as our ASAIL graduate representative for three long years. While we will greatly miss Madison, we are happy to welcome two new ASAIL graduate representatives in August, **Amelia Ali** (Emory University) and **Aries Farrington** (University of New Hampshire). With these fresh voices joining the mix, ASAIL continues to have strong leadership as the organization looks towards the compelling future of Indigenous literary studies.

EVENTS TO LOOK OUT FOR!

Second reminder: Save the date! ASAIL 2027 in-person conference at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff from Thursday, 9/9/27 to Sunday, 9/12/27. We will have hotel recommendations though no set conference hotel due to the prohibitive costs. More information coming this fall.

Keep your eyes out for a new and improved **ASAIL Bylaws** document to discuss and vote on. The Executive Committee has been hard at work completing a long overdue revision of the ASAIL bylaws. Many of our bylaws rest on pre-Covid expectations and we're revising the bylaws—especially voting practices--to align with our current practices.

Importantly, **the Exec is proposing a change in term lengths.** Currently Vice President and President each serve two-year terms. We're proposing the **addition** of an I**mmediate Past President role** and a **revision of President and Vice President roles to a one-year term each**. Thus, a Vice President, once elected, would serve a year-long term, then rotate into a year-long term as President, then rotate into a final year-long term as Immediate Past President.

Process: In alignment with our current ASAIL Bylaws, we will first share a draft of the revised Bylaws, then hold an open meeting and subsequent vote.

I want to close by thanking all of you for the important work you're doing in difficult times. I have been a member of the ASAIL community since I was a graduate student, and I have learned so much and felt warmly supported by the organization. I look forward to working together with you to mentor and learn from the next generation of young scholars with the same generosity of spirit that has long been a hallmark of ASAIL.

Sincerely,
Lisa Tatonetti
2026 ASAIL President

Book Reviews

The Serpent's Plumes: Contemporary Nahua Flowered Words in Movement. Adam W. Coon. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2024.

Review by Jessica Sánchez Flores

A textile equals a text. This is certainly true of the cover for the groundbreaking book *The Serpent's Plumes: Contemporary Nahua Flowered Words in Movement*. In a conversation with Adam W. Coon during our Abiayala Book Club, he stated "it was important for me to see the textile work in the cover because it [encapsulates] what literatures are, a story, not in the written form but in the textile."

When taking a closer look at the eye-grabbing painting/textile by Nahua artist Eneida Hernández, we witness four different shapes of flowers in a piece of cloth that is mapped out with blue, red, green, and white thread. The red needle wrapped in white thread evokes the connection between the lower (earth) and upper (sky) level (19). The title of the book is printed in a red circle above the field of flowers suggesting that the words and the needle are one and are forming the flowers. This is a beautiful way to visualize the book's content of the flowered words of Nahua production creators as ones that are in movement, evolving, growing and expanding across the territories.

Despite the robust body of research conducted on and about Nahua peoples, very little has been written about contemporary Nahua knowledge production. Adam W. Coon's *The Serpent's Plumes: Contemporary Nahua Flowered Words in Movement* endeavors to fill this gap and counter the presumption that Nahuas are from a romanticized past and that they only exist in Mexico.

To achieve this, Coon provides a thoughtful way of centering Nahua knowledge production with the theoretical framework of three concepts and ideas in the Náhuatl language weaved throughout the chapters: "ixtlamatilistli (knowledge with the face), yoltlajlamikilistli (knowledge/remembrance with the heart), and tlaixpan (altar/ that which is in front). Centering the ways Nahuas have for a long time produced knowledge invites us to start a conversation that brings forward dynamic voices and texts and cultures across territories. In fact, these knowledge productions will be different depending on the territory the authors are from, the generation and gender.

Coon examines and analyzes six Nahua creators from three different territories–Veracruz, Guerrero and Tlaxcala–to situate diverse Nahua perspectives. In the first chapter, Coon focuses on Natalio Hernández, a ueuej (wise person) from an older generation of Nahua poets. He compares two of Hernández's texts, one from 1985 and another from 2016, challenging stereotypes that the Mexican state created Indigenous peoples. Hernández was a pioneer in Nahua literary production and activism, laying the foundation for others to "dialogue or debate with him" (74). In chapter two, we learn about the work of Martín Tonalmeyotl, a member of a younger generation from Guerrero, Mexico. His work, shaped by his upbringing, focuses on defending territory and

highlighting the violence inflicted on the land and the people who have been disappeared, murdered, and forgotten.

Chapters three and four highlight the work of Nahua women, who critique their male counterparts. Despite facing numerous challenges, these women write and publish. In chapter three, Ethel Xochitiotzin Pérez from Tlaxcala, redefines women's agency in a male-dominated environment through her use of language and landscape. Coon also draws connections between Pérez's work and that of other marginalized voices, including Yolanda Matías García, Isabel Martínez Nopaltécatl (Yancuik Meztli), and Fabiola Carrillo Tieco. Chapter four focuses on the work of Judith Santoprieto from Córdoba, Veracruz, who challenges "the prevalent view in Mexico that one must speak Nahuatl to be Nahua" (160).

Chapter five centers the work of Mardonio Carballo and his translingual work with the radio program that he has been working with for over two decades to share Native perspectives. Coon uses what Mapuche scholar Luis Cárcamo-Huechante calls "acoustic ecology" to capture the relationality with all surroundings that Carballo incorporated in his work when denouncing the challenges and injustices Indigenous peoples face. Finally, chapter six examines the poetry and visual work of Ateri Miyawatl from Guerrero, Mexico. In her poetry book Neijmantototsintle and play Tsintatak, Ateri presents the sorrows of a community affected by violence. Through her use of language and landscape as metaphors, she uses this medium of literature to cope with on-going trauma.

Adam Coon's prismatic approach to Nahua literature resonated with me deeply, as I am Nahua from Guerrero, Mexico, and was displaced due to the violence my family and I experienced. The words of many of these , authors, especially the voices of Nahua women, resonate with me, and I see myself in their stories. They remind me that ongoing injustices continue to displace our people from our territories, yet the land— which never forgets us—calls us back. I am grateful for all the voices showcased in this book, as they remember and document parts of their territories' history that are often sought to be erased. It is a must-read for not only Nahua people, but for all Indigenous scholars, writers, and non-Indigenous readers interested in learning about the powerful ways Indigenous peoples use literature and their social media to denounce, document, inspire, and weave a future of possibilities.

Jessica Sánchez Flores (Nahua descent from Guerrero, Mexico) is currently an Assistant Professor in the Spanish and Portuguese Department at Colorado College. Her research centers primarily on the cultural production by Indigenous artists and creators from México and the diaspora.

Indigenous Comics and Graphic Novels: Studies in Genre. James J. Donahue. University Press of Mississippi, 2024.

Review by Shelli Rottschafer

James Donahue is a professor and assistant chair of the Department of English and Communication at the State University of New York, Potsdam. He is the author of several academic texts regarding Native Literature, Colonizer/Settler histories, and Social Justice for marginalized communities.

In his most recently published scholarly text, I*ndigenous Comics and Graphic Novels,* Donahue wonders "Why indigenous comics? Why now? (3). He explains that there is a glaring gap of availability in both popular reading and literary studies regarding Indigenous literature in general, but especially when it comes to comics or graphic novels written by Natives people and illustrated by Native people.

Scholarly attention isn't the primary goal of Indigenous comic artists, rather their motive is to gain an audience (4). Comics and graphic novels are no longer on the fringe of popular culture; this is apparent with the shelf space provided at larger brick-and-mortar bookstores. The popularity of comics and graphic novels, shows no waning, and this includes ones created by Native creatives (5). Although some publishing houses are recognizing Native authors, many authors are publishing and promoting their work independently (7). This is part of the gap of which Donahue speaks: a general readership "would absolutely benefit from the inclusion of an Indigenous superhero, who would bring new perspective" (7).

Scholars are turning their attention to the genre of comics and graphic novels, as well as those authored and illustrated by Native peoples. This signals a major shift in literary studies, where Indigenous authors are being recognized for their work and how it applies and appeals to a wider audience (7).

One prevalent problem within this genre, however, is the concern that Native authors' stories are not being illustrated by Native creatives. Rather than Anglo or non-Native artists, who might play into stereotype and caricature, these narratives should have a paralleling imagery that is authentically portrayed by Natives who understand traditions, cultures, and languages that pertain to the storyline (13).

Many Indigenous comics artists write within sci-fi and/or superhero tropes, yet the message contains a socio-political agenda (15). Within these storylines, they might question, "those 'facts of culture' [such as] race" (17). In so doing, these new authors are questioning societal norms and presenting those doubts to a younger and teachable audience in the hope of changing mindsets, promoting diversity, and questioning the powers-that-be.

Chapter 1, "Super Problems Require Super Heroes: Indigenous Superheroes and Their Communities" considers oft-described "caped crusaders and heroes with enhanced powers" (18). Yet, these new authors use this genre to "perform narrative activism" (18) by combating socio-political ills that especially target Native people.

Chapter 2, "Indigenous Travels in Space, Time, and Technology," explores sci-fi narratives which questions the concept of "indigeneity." Wondering and illustrating what it means to be Native on the page helps readers engage with this question themselves.

Chapter 3, "The Past Is Part of the Present: Indigenous Historical Graphic Narratives," provides an argument demonstrating the importance of "understanding the past for contemporary Indigenous peoples" (19).

The final segment, Chapter 4, "Pushing the Boundaries of Representation: Indigenous Experimental Graphic Narrative," highlights authors who also include a blend of traditional tribal arts, new technological advances, and challenges previous forms associated with comics or graphic novels.

Overall, Donahue's point of this text is to counter the absence of Indigenous peoples and cultures through the use of comics and graphic novels, thereby inviting a wider reading audience to approaching and understanding Indigeneity. Donahue contends that, "It's time for readers of all stripes to catch up to the wonderful work being done by Indigenous comics artists" (20). Donahue's text is a scholarly read specifically for those interested in the comic-graphic novel genre, as well as those analyzing, reading, and enjoying Native Literatures. It is recommended for graduate level or scholarly study.

Shelli Rottschafer (she/her/ella) completed her doctorate from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque (2005) in Latin American Contemporary Literature. From 2006 until 2023 Shelli taught at a small liberal arts college in Michigan as a Spanish professor. She also holds an MFA in Creative Writing with a concentration in Poetry from Western Colorado University, Gunnison (2025). Now she lives and writes in Colorado and New Mexico with her partner and their rescue pup. Discover more of Shelli's work at: www.shellirottschaferauthor.com

Indigenous Poetics. Inés Hernández-Ávila and Molly McGlennen. Michigan State University Press, 2025

Review by Aitana Monzón-Blasco

Scholarship on contemporary Native American poetry has expanded considerably over the past four decades, producing a steady stream of anthologies and critical studies. Yet, many voices remain uncollected, many perspectives underexplored.

It is against this backdrop of ongoing recovery and reframing that *Indigenous Poetics,* edited by Inés Hernández-Ávila and Molly McGlennen, emerges as a vital and timely contribution. Published in 2025 by Michigan State University Press, the volume gathers essays by seventeen poets and scholars, offering a textured, multi-vocal engagement with poetry. It serves not only as an indispensable scholarly resource for American Indian literary studies but also as an engaging entry point for students and readers of Indigenous literature. The editors frame the collection within a genealogy rooted in the legacy of N. Scott Momaday, whose literary vision continues to shape successive generations of Native poets. This recognition reflects the editors' expansive view of poetic practice as simultaneously canonical and communal. A foreword by Diné poet Esther Belin deepens this orientation, positing that the ear, rather than the eye, is the organ through which poetry reaches the heart—a metaphor that foregrounds the embodied and affective dimensions of lyrical craft.

The opening essay by Kimberly Blaeser (2025: 1-21) sets the tone for the collection. Blaeser highlights poetry's epistemological challenges —its ability to unsettle linguistic certainties and confront the limits of knowledge. She insists, however, on poetry's relational nature, rooted both in the urgencies of the present and in the unhealed traumas of colonial violence. For Blaeser, Indigenous poetics cannot be disentangled from histories of disruption; trauma is simultaneously a wound and a source of cultural continuity. Her claim that "through Indigenous language use we enact sovereignty, we claim continuance" (8) exemplifies how language functions as both aesthetic practice and political affirmation.

By invoking nonhuman relationality, she expands poetic inquiry beyond human-centred frameworks, situating it within ecological and ontological interdependence. Several essays extend this attention to trauma and healing. Natahnee Winder (45-64) develops the concept of Colliding Heartwork, an affective methodology that embraces discomfort as a necessary step in confronting settler colonial legacies particularly the intergenerational scars of boarding schools. By allowing themselves "to be comfortable with being uncomfortable" (48), Winder argues, poets and scholars alike participate in collective processes of *survivance* and transformation. Moreover, Layli Long Soldier (65-70) explores the anxieties of literary production within Native epistemological and aesthetic systems. She conceives of poetry as prayer —not religious in a conventional sense, but as meditative offering, trance, and artisanal practice. In her account, the poet emerges as a craftsperson. Language, sovereignty, and world-making recur as central concerns.

Beth Piatote (113-126) underscores how Indigenous languages, through their syntactic and shaping language, carry ceremonial and metaphysical weight. Jake Skeets (71-79), in turn, reflects on memory as both immaterial and embodied. For him, memory and land are inseparable, and remembering becomes a mode of *survivance*. His concept *memory field* frames radical remembering as an act of storytelling and cultural endurance: a practice that sustains communities and nations across generations. By treating memory as a physical and ontological reality, Skeets underscores poetry's power to shape both perception and collective identity.

Rain Prud'homme-Cranford and Carolyn Dunn's reflection extend this discussion to the relationship between poetry, embodiment, and ecology. Linking creative expression to the experience of illness, they position the body as a site of knowledge and naming. Their use of *tidalectics* emphasises cyclical, nonlinear patterns of relation between humans, nonhumans, and place, while their notion of "embodied tribalography" (83) reframes LeAnne Howe's influential theory as a lived and transformative process of movement across space and time. These concepts illustrate the volume's broader claim: Indigenous poetics emerges through relational processes that connect history, embodiment, and futurity.

Such conceptual frameworks orient speakers differently toward time, space, and relationality than does Standard American English. Language is thus not a neutral medium but an epistemological horizon, one inseparably tied to sovereignty and *survivance*. The book also foregrounds the role of Hawaiian poet kuʻualoha ho ʻomanawanui (127-154), who situates Native Hawaiian poetry within the oral traditions of chant, ritual, and performance. She highlights the *ko ʻihonua*, or genealogical chants, as forms that articulate both cosmic origins and kinship among people, land (ʻāina), and nonhuman life. Ethnopoetic devices such as repetition, allusion, and metaphor serve dual purposes: aiding oral transmission while imbuing texts with dense figurative layers. In her account, time and space function as the axes grounding Indigenous poetic practice.

Janet McAdams (155-168) adds a more existential register, contending that language is the singular human faculty capable of sustaining *survivance* in the face of what she calls "the looming uninhabitability of the world" (156). For her, poetic expression enacts "critical acts of personhood and cultural sovereignty" (163), situating poetics as both a response to ecological crisis and a vehicle for cultural continuity. Complementing this, Shaina A. Nez conceptualises breath — language in its most elemental form— as an extension of self, kin, and ancestor. By exercising it, she argues, Indigenous people remain aligned with the harmony of elements and land, participating in a continuum that affirms both relationality and resilience (177).

In conclusion, *Indigenous Poetics* is less a codification of theory than an invitation to dialogue. It expands the field of Native literary studies by amplifying diverse voices and epistemologies, affirming that Indigenous poetics cannot be constrained by singular models. Instead, it unfolds through dynamic processes of creation, remembrance, *survivance*, and relation. Hernández-Ávila and McGlennen's collection offers an indispensable resource — one that testifies to the vitality of Indigenous poetic expression and the urgency of attending to it in our present moment.

Aitana Monzón-Blasco is a PhD candidate in English Studies at the University of Zaragoza (Spain), where she is completing her dissertation on the poetry of Louise Erdrich. She is currently undertaking a predoctoral research stay at the University of York under the supervision of Prof David Stirrup. She has published in journals such as *EJAS*, *REDEN*, *Acta Poética*, and *Atlantis*. Beyond academia, she is a renowned poet in Spain, having received, among others, the 4th International Poetry Prize (Editorial Espasa, 2021) for her collection *La civilización no era esto*. Her latest poetry collection is entitled *Salve* (Espasa, 2025).

Sensitive Negotiations: Indigenous Diplomacy and Romantic Poetry. Nikki Hessell. State University of New York Press, 2021.

Review by Hayley Salo

Speaking as a Romantic scholar to others in the field, Nikki Hessell calls for a stronger engagement with "the living legacies of the poetry we study" and the Indigenous writers who utilized the poems. (19). In case studies of John Brandt (Mohawk), Elias Boudinot (Cherokee), George Copway (Ojibwe), Sol Plaatje (South African), and Rēweti Kōhere (Māori), Hessell's *Sensitive Negotiations* explores how the "the act of quotation . . . remakes the quoted text into a diplomatic artifact and simultaneously remakes the diplomatic encounter into a collage of genres in which poetry, including English poetry, can find a suitable home" (4). Romantic poetry proved useful to Indigenous writers because, "In its focus on justice, sympathy, land, humanity, idealism, kin relationships, and fellow feeling, British Romanticism offered a cultural shorthand for the values that Indigenous negotiators wished to reference and mobilize" (11).

In *Sensitive Negotiations*, Hessell proves that quotation is a critical part of Indigenous diplomatic texts and an opportunity for scholars to revisit approaches to Romantic poetry.

Chapter 1 foregrounds a confrontation over the values embodied in a poem. John Brandt, a Mohawk emissary who traveled to England, confronted Thomas Campbell, a Scottish poet, about his poem *Gertrude of Wyoming*. Campbell wrongfully depicts Joseph Brandt (John's father) as "Monster Brandt," the villain of the Battle of Wyoming (22). Campbell's eventual revisions were insufficient; he placed the poem's story and aesthetics above its depiction of Joseph, and the explanatory note did not alter public perceptions of Joseph (50-1). Brandt is engaged in "a quest for accountability and justice" where the precise wording of Romantic poetry matters (23). Hessell ends the chapter in a pointed question to Romantic scholars that echoes Brandt's frustrations: "What kind of world do we uphold when we say that lines of poetry must not be changed but liens in a proclamation, in a treaty, or on a map are indefinitely editable?" (58).

Hessell then turns to the diplomatic deployment of Romantic quotations. From 1828 until 1831, a time when "sympathy was treated as a viable political weapon," the *Cherokee Phoenix* editor Elias Boudinot published sixteen poems by Felicia Hemans (61, 102). The poetic quotations reminded settler audiences "of their own cultural values involving land, loss, and community and to connect those values to the documentation of the unfolding diplomatic crisis in Cherokee country" (72). Boudinot capitalized on the recognizability of Romantic poetry, as did George Copway, the focus of Chapter 3. In his travel book *Running Sketches of Men and Places* (1851), Copway quoted extensively from Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (104). Hessell proposes the term "digressive diplomacy" to describe Copway's abrupt movement between quotations of poetry and speeches, and the resulting "collage" of genres "inhabits the structure of Ojibwe diplomacy" (130). To a settler audience, the use of Romantic poetry is "dramatic and unexpected" and "predictable and convincing" (141). For Boudinot and Copway, the fixedness of Romantic poetry created an avenue for emotionally involving their settler audience in matters of Indigenous-settler diplomacy.

In the last two chapters, Hessell reinforces the diplomatic uses of emotion and expands on Indigenous ownership of Romantic poetry. Chapter 4 focuses on Sol Plaatje, a South African writer, and his 1916 book *Native Life in South Africa.* Plaatje quotes extensively from Oliver Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*, and Hessell emphasizes the resulting "portability of Plaatje's rhetoric" (144). Like Boudinot and Copway, he uses poetry a settler audience will recognize and that "demands the mobilization of existing British cultural understandings of land, sympathy and dispossession in the service of action" (165). Land becomes a focal point in chapter 5, a case study of how Māori writer Rēweti Kōhere uses quotations from Byron and Thomas Babington Macaulay to advocate for Māori independence and land rights (18, 184). Kōhere creates a space for "cross-cultural diplomacy" in which Romantic poets "belonged to the Māori world too" (201, 193-4). The act of quoting Romantic poetry fit within existing Māori practices of repetition even as the words themselves come from a colonizing culture. By identifying the complexity of Kōhere's quotation practices, Hessell presents an alternative way to read poetry that has otherwise been primarily studied as a colonial legacy.

Although Hessell points to an informative pattern of Indigenous writers' quotation practices, the depth of her argument is sometimes obscured by general statements. In the introduction, she explains that "Indigenous peoples approached the act of quotation similarly, but they perceived the aim of the diplomatic process very differently. For them, quotation operated as part of a much wider set of actions designed to requicken the alliances between peoples" (3). Initially, the argument for a global quotation practice seems like an oversimplification of Indigenous writers' choices and cultures. However, the introduction's occasional generalizations do not detract from the value of the book as a whole. The later chapters add nuance to the similarities by placing more emphasis on the writers' local contexts. For Kōhere, for instance, repetition was an existing Māori practice and an effective way to engage settler audiences. In contrast, Plaatje turned to quotations and public writing after the South African diplomatic communication processes—in this case, a direct line of communication with the British monarch—proved ineffective (149).

Hessell's study of quotation as diplomacy is an essential contribution to Romantic studies and Indigenous studies. Even though she does not position herself as an Indigenous literature scholar, her work is grounded in the scholarship of both fields and foregrounds Indigenous cultural practices. Her attention to how "Indigenous diplomats were both participating in and generating new diplomatic literary cultures" is especially poignant because it further unsettles the notion that Indigenous writers were affected by, but did not affect, literary history (14). *Sensitive Negotiations* is therefore well positioned to be an influential text for scholars studying the movement of Romantic poetry or the literary work of Indigenous diplomats.

Hayley Salo completed her PhD in Interdisciplinary and Public Humanities at the University of Louisville. She primarily researches the artistic and literary aspects of nineteenth-century embroidery samplers created in England and the USA. Hayley currently teaches English composition and Humanities classes at the University of Louisville.

Redface: Race, Performance, and Indigeneity. Bethany Hughes. New York: New York University Press, 2024.

Review by Phillip Zapkin

Bethany Hughes's *Redface: Race, Performance, and Indigeneity* builds on existing analytical frameworks of redface performance, primarily in spaces like movies, TV, and sports. Hughes's book expands this by focusing specifically on the history and resonance of the Stage Indian, through which Americans encounter(ed) living bodies coded as Indian. In this review, I follow Hughes in using Indian to refer to the Stage Indian as a dramaturgical/cultural construct, in contrast to the real experiences of Indigenous people. Hughes argues that the construction of a legible Stage Indian from the earliest colonial period through to the present delimits, delineates, and reifies what it means to be Indigenous in the American popular consciousness, and that this construct negatively impacts real-world relations with Indigenous people. As Hughes puts it, "redface is a collaborative, curatorial

process by which audiences and artists construct a legible Indian body onstage, a Stage Indian. It is a complex configuration of embodied markers, dramaturgical techniques, and claims of authenticity that also work beyond the stage to racialize Indigenous people and reduce the political potency of Indigenous sovereignty" (3). She builds this argument by tracing histories and assessing layers and ideological investments of redface performance.

Hughes's first chapter looks at a broad history of Indian performance, from the earliest European depictions of Native North Americans into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which saw the broadest range of Indian plays. Through this history, she argues that five key components create the racial legibility that defines the Stage Indian: racialization, repetition, standardization, modification, and interpretation (28). Indian characters were identified through specific costuming (e.g., the ubiquitous use of feathers, fringed buck skins, etc.), verbal style (e.g., grunts or "Hollywood Injun English"), and physical performances (e.g., walking or breathing 'like an Indian'). Repetition of these signs across stages in the colonies/United States taught audiences to recognize them as Indian. Although the Stage Indian has standard elements, it is also flexible enough to undergo modification based on what Anglo-America requires of ideologically constructed Natives. And central to the entire edifice of the Stage Indian is the legibility of the figure: that audiences consistently recognize these as performances of Indians.

The second, third, and fourth chapters build on this history, expanding and deepening the analysis of the Stage Indian in context. Hughes' second chapter turns specifically to depictions of Pocahontas to explore gendered differences and similarities in redface performance. She claims significant differences between performances of male and female Stage Indians, but that each essentially serves the same purpose: to highlight the myth of the "vanishing Indian" (88). Male redface focuses on violence, power, hunting, and fighting (while losing fights to the forces of colonialism), while female redface performance—with Pocahantas as the female Indian par excellence—emphasizes sexual/romantic desire for white men, and therefore the dilution of "Indian blood" through interracial marriage/reproduction. The third chapter focuses on the stakes for "authenticity" in redface performance, showing how historical attempts to root Stage Indian performance in historical or ethnographic reality effectively curated a generalized Indian, while erasing the specificity of individual nations, tribes, or bands (118-119). Her fifth chapter compares the original 1940s production of *Annie Get Your Gun* to a 1999 revival to show that even when updated for more contemporary sensitivities, the basic tools of redface continue the processes of reification and and homogenization to remain legible as depictions of Indians (168-169). The tools that built redface's house cannot destroy that house.

The book wraps up (sort of) with a Provocation, arguing that a more complex and nuanced approach to depictions of Indigenous people (as opposed to Stage Indians) could revise how Americans see Native Americans. As Hughes points out, redface presents an epistemological problem—a problem of how we know/think we know Native people—but, "Redface, like all embodied performance practices, is ephemeral and iterative, a constant process or remaking, negotiating, and reconstructing. These are also the process

with which we can build something new" (217). This provocation is intriguing. However, it doesn't provide specific recommendations for how theatre makers might re-constitute depictions of Indigenous people. There are brief recommendations to foreground the work of Indigenous dramatists and other theatre artists, take off the cultural blinders of redface, and invoke US ideals like equality and liberty to expand performance opportunities (217-218). But this section is brief. On the one hand, this cursory nature is necessary to avoid an overly prescriptive and reductive solution, but it means that approaches for moving forward ethically are ill-defined.

I say the book sort of wraps up with the Provocation, which is followed by the beginning of the essay "Hinushi Inla," about the history of Indigenous performance. But it is followed only by the beginning. The essay is divided throughout *Redface*, with portions scattered across the pages. As Hughes explains, this intentionally disrupts traditional linear reading, offering readers various ways to approach the essay—read separately at the end of the book, and therefore jumping around, or reading it in pieces as we move cover to cover, or some other way (19). I read the "Hinushi Inla" separately, after reading the main portion of the book straight through —Hughes asks readers to reflect on how and why we read the essay.

Redface will be useful for those in Native American studies, theatre and performance studies, Americanists focused on theatre/drama or literature, critical race theorists, or those interested in popular US culture. Hughes's writing style is clear and accessible, meaning this book will be readable not only for experienced scholars but for graduate students and upper-level undergrads. It is, again, a valuable contribution to existing scholarship on redface, expanding existing scholarship with assessment of how Stage Indians function as embodied performance to limit and define Indigenous peoples' position within US culture.

Phillip Zapkin is an Associate Teaching Professor of English at Pennsylvania State University, with a PhD from West Virginia University. His scholarship primarily focuses on contemporary theatrical adaptations of Greek drama and myth, but his interests range wide, including First Nations Canadian and Native American drama. Phillip's first book--*Hellenic Common*--was published by Routledge in 2022, and his articles have appeared in *PMLA*, *Modern Drama*, *Comparative Drama*, and elsewhere.

The Bone Picker: Native Stories, Alternate Histories. Devon A. Mihesuah. University of Oklahoma Press, 2024.

Review by Miriam Brown Spiers

At just over 150 pages, *The Bone Picker* is a slender book that encapsulates a surprisingly wide range of characters, genres, and locales within its twelve chapters. The stories may initially feel somewhat disparate, but they are ultimately connected by Devon Mihesuah's deeply rooted Choctaw worldview. In fact, as the Afterword illustrates, the stories may be best understood through the lens of Mihesuah's many other works, both creative and scholarly. Thus, although the relationship between the "Native stories" and "alternate histories" of the subtitle is not immediately obvious, closer examination reveals that the stories resonate with and speak to one another through their subtle but insistent grounding in the space of the Native South.

Readers who interpret the reviewers' blurbs or the book's subtitle as a promise of flashy genre fiction will need to adjust their expectations: *The Bone Picker* is not Native genre fiction in the vein of Stephen Graham Jones's (Blackfeet) horror or Daniel Wilson's (Cherokee Nation) science fiction. Instead, in story after story, Mihesuah quietly subverts genre expectations. While "The Lighthorseman and the Shampe" initially looks like a Western, for instance, the story ultimately highlights the importance of establishing community with and respect for outsiders. both human and non, rather than emphasizing independence and conquest as we might expect from a traditional Western. Similarly, "Kashehotapolo: The Deer Man" reimagines a murder mystery through an Indigenous lens. By telling the story from the perspective of Choctaw homicide detective Monique Blue Hawk, Mihesuah demonstrates that, while Deer Man may be genuinely terrifying, he is not actually a threat. The importance of Indigenous values like balance and respect is even reinforced in "The Cornfield," despite the fact that this story was inspired by texts like *The Twilight Zone* and Steven King's "Children of the Corn" (153).

Rather than expecting sensational stories that borrow mainstream genre tropes, readers should take the book's subtitle at face value: the most important quality of these "Native stories" is that they are told from a distinctly Choctaw (and occasionally Cherokee) perspective, and the key concept at the heart of the collection is the importance of understanding the world through Indigenous, place-based knowledge. Repeatedly, the stories emphasize that our world—either in present-day encounters or in the lives of historical figures—cannot be understood through Euro-American interpretations alone. The characters in Mihesuah's stories, whether they live in 1835 or 2018, remind readers that "nonhuman entities" are woven into the fabric of our world—that these figures followed the Choctaw "on their forced removal in the 1830s from the Southeast to Indian Territory," and that they continue to shape the world we inhabit today (3). It does not matter whether we believe in them: as the pretendian Chad so gruesomely proves in "Tenure," non-Natives who enter Choctaw territory and foolishly lay claim to Choctaw identity are equally susceptible to the rules that govern the Choctaw world..

The Bone Picker is at its most compelling when the other-than-human beings intercede in the lives of the human protagonists. The range of interactions—

from the Little People who encourage teenager Richard to become a medicine man to the Oka Nahullo, who transform two abusers into pale, river-dwelling creatures like themselves—serve as a reminder that each entity has their own complex motivations and role within Choctaw culture. The necessary cultural contexts are woven smoothly into the stories, and the book welcomes both Native and non-Native readers into a rich and fully developed Choctaw world. The historical stories, however, would benefit from some additional context earlier in the book. For readers who have not read all of Mihesuah's scholarly work, or who are unfamiliar with historical figures like Jackson Crow and Charles Wilson, the brief summaries included in the Afterword offer much-needed context that would be more helpful to readers if placed before the stories, whether as an introduction to a distinct section or simply through the strategic use of endnotes.

On first reading, audiences may find themselves wishing for more: the stories are often understated, and many of the encounters between humans and non-human entities are framed as catalysts for something larger, but Mihesuah rarely tells us what will happen next. Will Lighthorseman Wood Nall develop a relationship with the Shampe he encounters? Will Richard's family secrets be revealed? What will happen when Eskeilay's seeds "burst forth into the world" (151)? Instead of answering these questions, *The Bone Picker* leaves readers to imagine what comes next. And perhaps that is the point: as Mihesuah explains, "if you do catch a glimpse of [the beings you fear], it is only partial" (2). Instead, she simply offers readers a glimpse into life in Choctaw country, which has always included such encounters. The silences and open endings in Mihesuah's quiet stories invite readers to reflect on the ways that her lessons might apply to our own lives, encouraging us to consider our responsibilities to the world at large and to the other-than-human beings who dwell here.

Miriam Brown Spiers is a settler scholar and Associate Professor of English and American Studies at Kennesaw State University, where she also serves as the director of the M.A. in American Studies. She is the author of *Encountering the Sovereign Other: Indigenous Science Fiction* (Michigan State UP, 2021). Her work has also appeared in journals including *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, *Transmotion*, and *Native South*.

Indigenous Archival Activism: Mohican Interventions in Public History & Memory. Rose Miron. University of Minnesota Press, 2024.

Review by Jenna Hunnef

Historian Rose Miron's debut monograph, *Indigenous Archival Activism: Mohican Interventions in Public History & Memory,* is a polished, masterful work of historical and archival Indigenous studies pertaining to the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Nation, written in accessible prose that is readily understood beyond its immediate discipline. The result of over ten years of community-engaged research carried out collaboratively with the Mohican Nation, Miron's book presents a history of

the community's Stockbridge-Munsee Historical Committee (SMHC), an almost entirely woman-led initiative, and its astonishing efforts since 1968 to recover, collect, assemble, and organize the nation's historical materials. As Miron illustrates, these labor-intensive activities have enhanced the access of tribal members to these materials, facilitated the expression and exercise of Mohican sovereignty, and contributed to the creation of new narratives with which to challenge the inaccuracy of existing narratives about the people's history and tell their own stories.

"Indigenous archival activism" is the term Miron uses to denote a form of Indigenous political action consisting of Indigenous-led initiatives to create and mobilize nation-specific archival materials to alter how that history is "accessed, represented, taught, and written" (3). In her comprehensive introductory chapter, Miron identifies "three pillars" upon which Indigenous archival activism rests:

1) access: enhancing tribal members' access to their nation's archival materials;

2) sovereignty: the collection, assemblage, and description of a nation's archival materials is an expression of sovereignty, as is the mobilization of those records in the defense and/or promotion of nationhood; and

3) new narratives: using the records to challenge existing narratives about the nation and create new historical narratives informed by the materials.

All of the book's five chapters are laser-focused on demonstrating the operation of these three pillars in the Mohican Nation's exercise of Indigenous archival activism, including descriptions of the various methods the SMHC has used over the past fifty-plus years to expand the Mohican tribal archive. On its own, each chapter illustrates a unique facet of the SMHC's activities. Chapter 1 details the SMHC's efforts and methods used to recover and collect existing historical sources pertaining to the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Nation stored in geographically disparate archives, such as the speeches and letters of Hendrick Apaumut. Chapter 2 documents the SMHC's deliberate creation of new resources to document the nation's history and ongoing presence, namely, a series of oral history projects that were initiated and led by the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. Chapter 3's focus is on the use of tribal archives to shape new narratives for local audiences, primarily within the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, and the mobilizing of archival materials for legal purposes, such as its (successful) efforts to reclaim an eighteenth-century Bible and Communion set. Chapters 4 and 5 move the discussion out of the archives and onto the land (Chapter 4) and into the broader public (Chapter 5). Chapter 4 recounts the goals and significant outcomes of over a dozen historical trips that the SMHC began organizing in 1968, in which participating tribal members return to their homelands in the Mahicannituck (Hudson) River Valley. Chapter 5 turns its lens to the way the tribal archive has been mobilized in public history and education initiatives for external audiences. Miron illustrates how these initiatives have successfully challenged prevailing narratives about Mohican history and produced new ones that demonstrate Mohicans' ongoing presence in and connection to their homeland despite its geographic distance from the nation's reservation in Wisconsin.

The process of documenting the SMHC's methods also fulfills Miron's stated goal of drawing on sources originating within the Mohican Nation itself (29). For example, Chapter 2 cites material from the oral history projects described therein; Chapter 4 draws upon the journals kept by participants in the historical trips organized by the SMHC to the Mohican homelands in the Northeast.. The book itself contributes to the SMHC's ongoing goal of expanding the nation's archive. The contents of the oral history interviews Miron conducted with three Historical Committee members as part of the book's research are employed as primary sources in the work and represent new sources within the tribal archive, their copyright having been legally transferred from Miron to the Stockbridge-Munsee Community (88).

At times, Chapters 4 and 5 present a risk of moving too far afield from the book's disciplined focus on Indigenous archival activism. However, just when the discussion appears to be moving in that direction, Miron skillfully reminds her readers of its relevance to the three pillars, namely, that these activist efforts are made possible by the historical documents and materials that the SMHC's decades'-worth of labor have collected, assembled, and made accessible in the interest of defending their sovereignty and telling their own stories. The book frequently alludes to the painstaking nature of that labor and the fact that it has largely been undertaken by women. These related subjects, triangulated with Indigenous archival activism, are worthy of more sustained treatment. However, to have discussed them at greater length in this study would risk undermining the integrity of the book's most appealing structural quality, its tight focus on the operation of the three pillars of Indigenous archival activism in different contexts

A non-Indigenous historian, Miron possesses qualifications that befit a work of this nature: at present, she is the Newberry Library's Vice President for Research and Education and former Director of the D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies; she is also an affiliate faculty member in the Department of History and Center for Native American and Indigenous Research at Northwestern University. These credentials are impressive in their own right, but the foundation of this work's exemplary quality rests upon the collaborative and relational framework that informs its contents. While Miron is careful to note that the Mohican Nation's efforts and her work with its Historical Committee are not meant to be a "template" (27) that, with modification, could be adapted to any tribal context, the broader applicability of the book's thesis and theoretical apparatus proliferates thought-provoking questions and possibilities for other contexts; for example, what might Indigenous archival activism look like in the context of Indigenous communities that, unlike the Mohican Nation, do not have a centralized governing structure, such as urban Indigenous communities?

In *Indigenous Archival Activism*, Miron and her collaborators illustrate the active, living qualities of Indigenous archives and archival documents when they are intentionally managed by the nations to whom they belong. Contrary to popular perceptions of archives as clinical spaces closed off from the living publics whose histories they contain, Indigenous Archival Activism illustrates the crucial role that archives play, not only in the building of nations and production of historical narratives, but also in producing new narratives with the power to influence public education. It is essential reading for anyone at the graduate level and beyond who is working with Indigenous archival materials or pursuing archival studies in the field of Indigenous Studies or one of its subdisciplines. It also provides an aspirational model for ethical, reciprocal,

and responsible collaboration between external researchers and Indigenous communities. The considerable results of the time and generosity that the members of the Stockbridge-Munsee Historical Committee and Miron invested in each other speak for themselves.

Jenna Hunnef is a settler scholar and Assistant Professor in the Department of English at the University of Saskatchewan on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. She is a specialist in the Indigenous literatures of Turtle Island and the principal investigator on a funded research project about allotment debates in Indian Territory newspapers, ca. 1886-1907.

Inscribing Sovereignties: Writing Community in Native North America. Phillip H. Round. University of North Carolina Press, 2024.

Review by Frank Kelderman

In his 1887 volume *History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan*, the Odawa historian Andrew Blackbird gave an account of his father's career in the decades after the American Revolution and his subsequent efforts to make an orthography for the Odawa language. Blackbird recounts how his father, Macka-de-pe-nessy was inspired by the spiritual and political movement of the Shawnee prophet Tenskwatawa and Tecumseh to become, as Phillip H. Round puts it in *Inscribing Sovereignties*, "a vernacular orator of some repute, weaving together traditional Odawa rhetorical and social practices with literacy education" (185-6). It led his son to remember him as "the only man who was friendly to education," and who used it to produce an Ojibwe alphabet he called the Paw-pa-pe-po. Rather than a mere instrument to advance writing instruction or a tool of conversion, Macka-de-pe-nessy's orthography carried a "communitarian power" in his L'Arbre Croche community as a "new mode of communication among the Anishinaabewaki" (186). In the diasporic Odawa community at the turn of the nineteenth century, Macka-de-pe-nessy's Paw-pa-pe-po offered a way to "maintain solidarity … through the power of epistolary connection" (187).

This story is a telling one for Round's insightful new book, *Inscribing Sovereignties: Writing Community in Native North America*, which explores how Native people alternately resisted and adapted the alphabetic literacies imposed by settler ideology, and in doing so tells a broader story about the enduring diversity of Indigenous languages and media in North America. The physical act of inscribing (making a mark) is central in Round's analysis, which attends to traditional forms of inscription as well as forms that were adapted from European models to advance Indigenous languages through alphabetic writing. Round examines an impressive range of Indigenous orthographies that he reclaims as more than instruments for advancing Western-style education but as systems that Indigenous people developed to ensure the continuation of Indigenous languages and communication practices.

The first chapter, "Spelling 'Indian,'" offers a broad synthesis of scholarship in Native American and Indigenous studies that has traced the development of settler-colonial ideologies of language, which pitched Native people as "without language" and therefore in need of education and conversion. Round traces the assimilative logics at play in this colonial history, while meaningfully highlighting Native responses that complicated or refused these tropes. A vivid example is Round's reading of *The Middle Five*, a 1900 autobiographical novel set in a Presbyterian school, written by the Omaha writer and anthropologist Francis La Flesche. In the novel, Round suggests, La Flesche resists representing the Omaha characters' "school learning" as being "central to the birth of the bourgeois individual" (74) and instead offers a "reversal of assimilative tropes" and tells a story that gives "voice and agency to a specifically Omaha identity" that is in essence a shared, communal identity (76).

The remaining three chapters consider the relation between Indigenous languages and different forms of inscription in specific Indigenous-national (and regional) contexts. The second chapter, "Kahiatónhsera," traces the social uses of alphabetic literacy in relation to wampum, woodcarving, and other forms of media of the Haudenosaunee. The third chapter, "Wowapi," focuses on the Oceti Sakowin, examining how missionary alphabets migrated from the Dakotas in present-day Minnesota to the Lakota of the Northern Plains. The fourth chapter, "Paw-pa-pe-po," focuses on the Odawa, Ojibwe, Meskwaki, and Ho-Chunk nations in the Great Lakes, who used a variety of nonalphabetic scripts while also developing an alphabetic script that is still used today by various descendant communities.

A major strength of Round's work is that it is cognizant of the ideological, technological meanings of alphabetic scripts, while always prioritizing the social and political purposes for which Indigenous individuals and communities used them. While the individual chapters have a clear cultural and historical focus, Round does not insist on an overarching analytical frame that might flatten these stories into an abstract thesis. *Inscribing Sovereignties* tells (and re-tells) stories that offer insight into the motivations, false starts, and imagination that went into Indigenous people's development of orthographies, in their effort to advance Indigenous nations' communicative needs and language projects.

Another strength of the book is that it consistently shows that translation is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also takes place in shifts from orality to writing and the transposition of texts in form of media to another. While the book is about alphabetic literacy and its relation to Indigenous languages, the multimedia context of writing is always at the forefront in Round's analysis. For instance, in an analysis of a condolence ceremony transcribed by the Kanien'kehá:ka leader John Desorontyon in 1782, Round compares the manuscript to other Kanien'kehá:ka writings to show that the transcription reveals "an effort … to make the two-dimensional page do the work of an in-person performance" (108). Similarly, in his analysis of John G. Neihardt's transcription of Nicholas Black Elk's life story in 1932, Round vividly demonstrates the type of alphabetic-text translation that emerges from a performative context, such as when Black Elk performed a hanbloglaka (vision-telling story) in front of an intergenerational audience of more than 200 people, and Neihardt was able to look up to see Black Elk's vision of the "flaming rainbow" painted on a tipi cover (137). For this reason, the phrase "writing community" in the book's subtitle barely captures the richness of the sources and

interpretation in *Inscribing Sovereignties.* Indeed, Round himself sums up how Native spaces in North America "hummed with voice and song, bristled with all manner of media, and sometimes absorbed alphabetic writing into their constantly adapting communications practices" (196). This evocative phrase serves as a good characterization of the textured historical analysis that Round offers in this book, and as an apt phrase to understand the richness of Indigenous media and communication practices.

Frank Kelderman is Associate Professor of English at the University of Louisville, where he also serves as the Director of the Individualized Major Program. He is the author of *Authorized Agents: Publication and Diplomacy in the Era of Indian Removal* (SUNY Press, 2019) and numerous articles on Native American literature.

Assimilation, Resilience, and Survival: A History of the Stewart Indian School, 1890-2020
Samantha M. Williams. University of Nebraska Press, 2022.

Review by Geoff Hamilton

Samantha Williams's new book explores the history of the Stewart Indian School (1890-1980), charting the evolutions of its nearly century-long status as the only off-reservation Native American boarding school in Nevada, along with its conversion to a commemorative cultural center and museum in the decades after its closure. Setting her account within the broader context of American assimilation programs, she draws on the testimony of former students and their families in order to illustrate both the profound suffering generated by Stewart's policies, and the achievements of a longstanding, creative resistance to them. The book moves chronologically through four major periods corresponding to changes in federal policies. It examines the assimilative efforts of Euro-American authorities, the impact on Indigenous peoples of often brutal efforts at cultural erasure, and the *survivance* of those who crafted a measure of autonomy at the school and worked toward reforming it.

Among Williams's dominant themes is the significance, for Stewart and other schools, of white supremacist ideologies which informed official ambitions and provided rationalizations for the harms committed in attempting to carry them out. She ably demonstrates how settler colonialism was expressed through an ostensibly humanitarian enterprise aimed at voiding Indigenous identities, and how that ideology was challenged, either overtly or discreetly, at the school itself. Particularly incisive are her commentaries on the racist assumptions and duplicity of the school's policies. She explains, for instance, how so-called "outing programs," which were presented by the school as promising trade apprenticeships, were in fact designed to funnel Indigenous students into low-skilled, low-paying manual labor and ultimately functioned as "a way to uphold the racial hierarchy by making sure Native children understood that they were being trained to work for, rather than with, white Americans" (23-24). Also sensitively explored here are the parts played by white reformers of the school system, including John Collier, whose efforts as commissioner of Indian Affairs – though

sometimes compromised by lingering commitments to assimilationist ideals – helped augment educational opportunities for Native students and contributed to the end of the allotment program.

Emerging most vividly in Williams's chapters are the myriad ways in which Indigenous students and families worked successfully to transform the school, mitigating suffering and cultural loss and improving the educational opportunities on offer. The complex interactions between legislators, local administrators, and Indigenous peoples affected by the school are tracked insightfully, and the story told comes alive, especially in those moments when individual voices speak to personal struggles with the formidable bureaucratic structures surrounding them. A particularly salient feature of resistance at Stewart, as Williams brings to light, is the way in which students affirmed, in various written expressions, their interest in working for themselves and becoming prosperous after graduation, rather than fulfilling the more humble destinies the school had intended for them. Although the reforms prompted by students and their families were often halting and sometimes transitory, the book makes clear how real progress, from the freedom to speak tribal languages at school to the eventual incorporation of an at least nascent coverage of Indigenous histories in the curriculum, was achieved over time.

Williams devotes her concluding chapter to an overview of the cultural center and museum which has taken the school's place, meticulously documenting its gradual development and the role it has come to play in responding to official accounts that have whitewashed the institution's history and silenced the voices of those it affected most deeply. As she notes of the collaborative process involved in this recuperative enterprise: "Just as Stewart students and their families did when the school was open, Indigenous communities have subverted, resisted, and countered efforts to erase their experiences from the historical record since the school's closure" (203).

This book represents a significant contribution to our understanding of Stewart and similar institutions, and it speaks eloquently of "the strength and resilience of generations of children and their relatives who stood up for themselves and refused to accept settler notions of white supremacy and Indigenous inequality" (243).

Geoff Hamilton teaches humanities at Medicine Hat College in Alberta, Canada. He is the author of *The Life and Undeath of Autonomy in American Literature* (U of Virginia P, 2013), *Understanding Gary Shteyngart* (U of South Carolina P, 2017), and *A New Continent of Liberty: Eunomia in Native American Literature from Occom to Erdrich* (U of Virginia P, 2019).

Coming Soon:

Our sister publication, the journal *Studies in American Indian Literatures* (*SAIL*), will be releasing a special issue entitled "Ethical Relations in Indigenous Literary Studies" in the coming month. Keep your eyes open for its release!

Don't forget that we are always eager to publish reviews of new works in North American Indigenous Literary Studies. Send inquiries to sail.book.reviews @gmail.com

And before we go . . .

Thanks for reading our first issue in a few years of *The SAIL Review*! Before signing off, we wanted to introduce ourselves, your new editorial team for this twice-yearly publication. We are Julianne Newmark (Julie) and Sayyed Navid Etedali Rezapoorian (Navid) and we are very excited about the renaissance of this important publication to all of us who like to stay abreast of the latest news related to our society and books in our field. Please feel free to reach out to us at the email address above if you have any feedback, comments, or questions. Before we go, here is a bit more about us.

Julianne Newmark, the Editor of *The SAIL Review*, is an assistant professor of English at the University of New Mexico. A settler scholar, Julie has been a member of ASAIL for twenty years and served on the Editorial Board of *SAIL* for five years. She is the author of *The Pluralist Imagination from East to West in American Literature* (Nebraska, 2015) as well as many articles on Native American activist authors of the Dawes Era. She is the Director of Technical and Professional Communication at UNM, where she focuses on bureaucratic communication within the Bureau of Indian Affairs, UX and user-centered design, and Indigenous rhetorics

Sayyed Navid Etedali Rezapoorian, the Editorial Assistant for *The SAIL Review*, is a PhD Candidate in American Literary Studies at the University of New Mexico. His work has appeared in journals such as *American, British and Canadian Studies*, *American & British Studies Annual*, and *Ideas: Journal of English Literary Studies*. His dissertation examines Iranian American literature through the lenses of diaspora, race, and cultural essentialism, focusing on how ethnocentrism and engagements with whiteness shape its transnational possibilities . He has also contributed to the co-edited volume *The Turquoise Trail: An Anthology of New Mexican Poetry* by Alice Corbin Henderson.