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EDITORS
JAMES H. COX, University of Texas at Austin
DANIEL HEATH JUSTICE, University of Toronto

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Jeff Berglund
PO Box 6032
Department of English
Northern Arizona University
Flagstaff, AZ 86011-6032
Phone: 928-523-9237
E-mail: jeff.berglund@nau.edu

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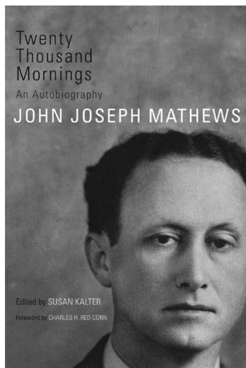
FROM THE EDITORS

In this, the penultimate issue of our editorial tenure, Adrienne Akins and Jonathan Wilson turn to two of *SAIL*'s favorites, Leslie Marmon Silko and Louise Erdrich. Indeed, this journal has published more articles on Silko and Erdrich than any other authors. In 2008, the last time we counted, *SAIL* had published approximately twenty articles on each. In her article on *Ceremony*, Akins addresses "how the novel treats the themes of education and cultural memory within the historical context of the schooling of American Indians." Wilson focuses on a familiar topic in the field, *home*, as Erdrich considers its meaning for the Ojibwe characters in *Tales of Burning Love* and *The Bingo Palace*.

In the issue's other article, Aubrey Jean Hanson approaches Beatrice Culleton Mosionier's *In Search of April Raintree* from the perspective of her own work as a Métis educator. Teaching a book such as *April Raintree*, Hanson asserts, "is and must be tied to questions of social responsibility, as it is a political project with material consequences for Aboriginal people." *SAIL* readers, we believe, will agree with Hanson's pedagogical view. If you haven't already, you might also take this opportunity to read Mosionier's wonderful book and consider the way it resonates with much of Silko's and Erdrich's writing.

James H. Cox and Daniel Heath Justice



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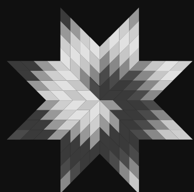

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“Next Time, Just Remember the Story”

Unlearning Empire in Silko’s *Ceremony*

ADRIENNE AKINS

Leslie Marmon Silko concludes the preface to the thirtieth anniversary edition of her novel *Ceremony* by stating that “in all things related to the writing of *Ceremony*, I feel I was blessed, watched over, and protected by my beloved ancestors, and the old ones who told me the stories—Grandma A’mooh, Aunt Susie, and Grandpa Hank. May the readers and listeners of this novel be likewise blessed, watched over, and protected by their beloved ancestors” (xix). Silko tells the personal histories of these “old ones” who shared with her “the stories” in her 1981 work *Storyteller*; significantly, all three of the family members she mentions in the preface to *Ceremony* were students at historic American Indian boarding schools, and Silko explores their experiences with education in detail in *Storyteller*. Silko’s great-grandmother “Grandma A’mooh” and great-aunt “Aunt Susie” graduated from the infamous Carlisle Indian School, whose founder Richard Henry Pratt summed up his educational philosophy in stating: “A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one, and that high sanction of his destruction has been an enormous factor in promoting Indian massacres. In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man” (260–61). Silko’s Grandpa Hank graduated from Sherman Institute, a boarding school that, at the time of his attendance, similarly promoted American Indian assimilation into the mainstream of white American society, though not, as Silko highlights in her telling of Grandpa Hank’s story, to the extent of offering equal opportunity.

During his time at Sherman Institute, Grandpa Hank "became fascinated with engineering and design and wanted to become an automobile designer. But in 1912 Indian schools were strictly vocational schools and the teachers at Sherman told Grandpa that Indians didn't become automobile designers. So when Grandpa Hank came home from Sherman he had been trained to be a store clerk" (*Storyteller* 192). Throughout *Storyteller*, Silko highlights how her influential relatives Grandpa Hank, Grandma A'mooh, and Aunt Susie both utilized and resisted the lessons they learned during their boarding school educations.

Silko most fully explores the educational philosophy of her great-aunt Susie Reyes Marmon, who pursued higher education after graduating from Carlisle and taught for many years in a one-room schoolhouse at Laguna Pueblo. The author characterizes Aunt Susie as a lifelong learner, a "scholar / of her own making" (*Storyteller* 7), noting that "[w]hen she returned to Laguna / she continued her studies / particularly of history" and that "[s]he had come to believe very much in books / and in schooling" (*Storyteller* 3–4). Silko underscores Aunt Susie's dedication to education in general as well as her profound awareness of the ways in which the "oral tradition in Laguna culture / had been irrevocably altered by the European intrusion— / principally by the practice of taking the children / away from Laguna to Indian schools / taking the children away from the tellers who had / in all past generations / told the children / an entire culture, an entire identity of a people" (*Storyteller* 6). Aunt Susie reconciles the tension between her love of all learning and her recognition of the potential dangers of white-dominated schooling by devoting herself, through both written and oral storytelling, to the preservation of "an entire culture" that was "passed down" through "word of mouth / an entire history / an entire vision of the world / which depended upon memory / and retelling by subsequent generations" (6). Silko further describes Aunt Susie's teaching philosophy in terms that emphasize the collective nature of learning and the preservation of cultural memory: "As with any generation / the oral tradition depends upon each person / listening and remembering a portion / and it is together— / all of us remember-

ing what we have heard together— / that creates the whole story / the long story of the people" (*Storyteller* 6–7). Given the prominent place that Silko gives to Aunt Susie and her other highly educated relatives in her preface to the latest edition of *Ceremony*, it seems imperative to consider how the novel treats the themes of education and cultural memory within the historical context of the schooling of American Indians.

Ceremony has received a wealth of critical attention. A number of scholars have identified the novel's treatment of education as a colonizing force used by the white American power structure to coerce assimilation of American Indians. For example, Peter Kerry Powers adeptly highlights the novel's depiction of the fragmentation of Pueblo traditions and culture as a result of "the story of enlightenment propagated by the educational system" (69).[1] Powers explains that "[a]ccording to this story, human beings forget their ignorant past for the knowledge of modernity. The educational system embodies this active forgetting by disengaging Native Americans from traditional views of the landscape and wildlife around them. In school cultural aggression wears the thin disguise of useful knowledge" (69–70). Powers thus underlines the uneasy relationship between cultural memory and the formal educational system in *Ceremony*, but as his focus is on Native spirituality rather than on education, he does not explore this relationship in depth.

Claudia Eppert has contributed the most thorough treatment to date of the connection between education and cultural memory in *Ceremony*. Eppert asserts that Silko's protagonist Tayo participates "in a ceremonial journey of 'remembrance-learning'" over the course of the novel (727). In Eppert's formulation, Tayo "must unlearn colonizing discourses and exercise Native ancestral memories that he had abandoned or repressed" (727). For Eppert, the "long and systematic erasure of Native traditions through school practices" poses a serious obstacle to Tayo's need to remember the cultural history of his people in order to achieve personal and collective healing from trauma (729). Eppert analyzes how Ku'oosh, Betonie, and Ts'eh, whom she characterizes as "[t]hree unortho-

dox teachers," help Tayo learn how to remember rightly, concluding, "If Tayo is to cure the witchery, he must radically and creatively reconfigure his education to meet his contemporary needs" (730). Eppert's study represents a significant advance in the exploration of the relationship between education and cultural memory in *Ceremony*, but she does not situate Silko's work within its specific historical context. Of course, Eppert is not alone in this omission; despite the fact that the historical setting of *Ceremony* was atypical of most other critically acclaimed works during the 1970s, few scholars have focused on its role as a historical novel.

Perhaps because of the importance of the "time immemorial" stories that Uncle Josiah and Grandma repeat to Tayo, most critics have not given sufficient attention to the fact that *Ceremony* is a work thoroughly grounded in its historical setting. Like Silko's Aunt Susie, Grandma A'mooh, and Grandpa Hank, as well as Silko herself, Tayo and his cousin Rocky are educated in Bureau of Indian Affairs schools. Tayo and Rocky attend Albuquerque Indian School, a boarding school approximately forty-five miles from their family home at Laguna Pueblo. Beginning their formal schooling in the 1920s, the cousins are educated at the height of a half-century-long effort by the bureau to "civilize" American Indian students through the boarding school system. David Wallace Adams characterizes the period from 1875 to 1928 as "a new phase" in the US "war against Indians," one in which education was the chief means of conquest (27). Contemporaneous advocates of the Indian boarding school system made similar comparisons: at the annual meeting of the "Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indian" in 1888, Lyman Abbott argued that the US government should provide mandatory education for all American Indian children because "Schools are less expensive than war. It costs less to educate an Indian than it does to shoot him" (212). Thomas J. Morgan, the US commissioner of Indian Affairs from 1889 to 1893, advocated for the education of American Indian youth in similar terms, asserting, "To leave these thousands of Indian children to grow up in ignorance, superstition, barbarism, and even savagery, is to maintain a perpetual menace to

our western civilization" (251). Throughout *Ceremony*, the words of such policymakers about American Indian "superstition" and "ignorance" are echoed in the rhetoric of the schoolteachers that Tayo and Rocky encounter in their BIA school.

The treatment of education-related themes in *Ceremony* reflects not only the novel's historical setting but also the historical context of its composition. During the 1960s and 1970s, the United States saw an unprecedented number of extended studies of historical and contemporaneous American Indian education, some of which had important ramifications for legislative policy. These key developments were most likely known to Silko, who spent three semesters as a law student in the American Indian law program at the University of New Mexico Law School immediately after completing her BA in 1969 (Nelson 18). The Indian Education Act of 1972, which is to date "the only piece of equal education opportunity legislation specifically focusing on American Indians" (Wright, Hirlinger, and England 13), was preceded by the 1969 Senate report *Indian Education: A National Tragedy—A National Challenge*. American Indians played a crucial role in this report's development: in their research, the Senate committee members chose "a course of learning as obvious as it has been ignored. We have listened to the Indian people speak for themselves about the problems they confront, and about the changes that must be made in seeking effective education for their children" (ix). Marking a historic break with centuries of federal policy, the committee further asserts that the education of American Indians "should no longer be one which assumes that cultural differences mean cultural inferiority" (x), admitting: "A careful review of the historical literature reveals that the dominant policy of the Federal Government toward the American Indian has been one of forced assimilation which has vacillated between the two extremes of coercion and persuasion. At the root of the assimilation policy has been a desire to divest the Indian of his land and resources" (9). Identifying "the school and the classroom" as "a primary tool of assimilation" for American Indians, the committee recognizes that

> Education was the means whereby we emancipated the Indian child from his home, his parents, his extended family, and his cultural heritage. It was in effect an attempt to wash the "savage habits" and "tribal ethic" out of a child's mind and substitute a white middle-class value system in its place. (9)

This assessment of the historical role of white-controlled education of American Indians calls to mind *Ceremony*'s portrayal of Albuquerque Indian School's pedagogy, particularly as it affects Rocky, who successfully assimilates and succeeds in American culture but also adopts his white teachers' view of his home Laguna culture as backward and even dirty.

In the same year that the Senate report on Indian education was completed, another landmark work dealing with the education of American Indians was published. This book, *Our Brother's Keeper: The Indian in White America*, edited by Edgar S. Cahn and David W. Hearne, was often cited in contemporaneous discussions of education in American Indian circles.[2] *Our Brother's Keeper* asserts boldly that "Education for the American Indian today follows a pattern of 'cold war,' modeled on a time-tested formula" that includes unfulfilled promises, cultural and physical displacement, and "[u]nremitting pressure toward total submission, leading to personal, cultural, and ethnic annihilation" (27). *Our Brother's Keeper* further underscores the role that the erasure of cultural memory plays in this annihilative process:

> The significance, relevance, and even the existence of the Indian world and its values is systematically denied by school administration. The Indian child is kept in deliberate ignorance of his culture, history, and heritage. He is taught, simultaneously, that he should be ashamed of it. (35)

Silko's own experiences with education, particularly during her elementary school years, when she attended the Bureau of Indian Affairs school at Laguna, lend support to many of the assertions made in the 1969 Senate report and *Our Brother's Keeper*. In an interview with Donna Perry, Silko describes her education in the BIA school as

> a completely hideous, traumatic experience. . . . It was when I started there, at five years old, that I first learned about these invisible borderlines that authoritarian figures use. When you crossed the line and stepped onto the school grounds, you weren't to use the Laguna language anymore. If you were caught using it, you got in a whole bunch of trouble. (Perry 317)

Silko was especially sensitive to "the horror of what was being done to the other kids, especially the kids who didn't speak English," but she also remembers that "[a]t the same time, I had had all of this reinforcement about education from my great-grandmother and from old Aunt Susie, who were Carlisle Indian School graduates" (Perry 316). She explains of her predecessors' experiences and lessons that

> the reason the Pueblo people have survived as long as they have and intact is because they were real thoughtful about how to outlast people who come along and hassle you and push you around. There was the sense that if you learned enough about the whole wide world, especially the western European way, you might be able to survive. (Perry 316–17)

In a statement that recalls her characterization of Tayo's BIA schoolteachers in *Ceremony*, Silko asserts, "I was acutely aware of how the teachers made fun of Pueblo beliefs about animals and plants. It was really shoved in the faces of Native American people how backward they were and how white man's science was just so great and so wonderful" (Perry 318). In the same interview, Silko contends, "The way time is computed in western European cultures is completely political. Colonialists always want time and history not to go back very far" (Perry 329). Silko's remarks in her conversation with Perry indicate that her interest in the role of cultural memory in American Indian education was inspired not only by family history and contemporaneous scholarship but also by direct personal experience.

In Silko's portrayal of the education of Tayo and Rocky, she depicts the clash between Native culture, traditions, and stories and the BIA teachers who present scientific explanations of natural

phenomena as the only true reality and characterize Native cultural memory as "nonsense" and "superstition" (18, 87). Through its representation of various ways of knowing and its exposé of the dangers of science divorced from ethical concerns, *Ceremony* challenges the conception that Western science has a monopoly on truth. Silko's challenge to the deification of Western science and education does not, however, constitute a wholesale rejection of the benefits, insights, and tools that they may provide; significantly, the teacher figures presented most positively in *Ceremony* are those elders who encourage the integration of stories and lessons from multiple cultures in the learning process. Through the examples of his uncle Josiah and the medicine man Betonie, Tayo learns the importance of remembering the stories that bring hope and healing.

In Betonie, Tayo finds a model for reconciling traditional stories and ways with the most helpful knowledge of the "white outside world" (47). As a medicine man, Betonie serves as an alternative teacher, and his incorporation of lessons from different cultures in his teaching philosophy calls to mind Silko's characterization of her Aunt Susie in *Storyteller*. Like Silko's Grandpa Hank, Betonie attended Sherman Institute; he was sent to Sherman by his grandmother, a medicine woman who trained him in her ways of healing, who wanted him to attend the school because the healing ceremony "is carried on in all languages now, so you have to know English too" (112). Much like Aunt Susie, Betonie is able to synthesize the lessons of his boarding school education with the stories and ceremonies that he preserves.[3] Betonie's knowledge of English and identification of the positive potential of some Western innovations help him to keep the community's stories alive in a rapidly changing world.

Betonie plays a central role in helping Tayo work through the import of his memories without rejecting or forgetting them as he was prompted to do by the white doctors and medicine in the Los Angeles veterans' hospital. At a crucial point in the narrative of *Ceremony*, Tayo recounts to Betonie the key memory that haunts him from the novel's opening pages, his experience of seeing his uncle Josiah among the Japanese soldiers his company killed in the Philippine jungle. Despite Rocky's detailed explanation of why "what he

had seen" was "an impossibility," an explanation full of the "facts and logic" that dominated the cousins' education in BIA school, Tayo nonetheless cannot shake the feeling that he has killed his beloved uncle, and "[h]e shivered because all the facts, all the reasons made no difference any more; he could hear Rocky's words, and he could follow the logic of what Rocky said, but he could not feel anything except a swelling in his belly, a great swollen grief that was pushing into his throat" (8). Tayo's education has left him unable to deal with experiences that do not fit within the boundaries of a Western scientific perspective on reality, but with Betonie's guidance Tayo is finally able to understand the truths in his visions of his uncle among the Japanese soldiers his company kills.

In contrast to the materialist logic that Rocky uses to try to comfort Tayo by explaining away his experience, Betonie accepts Tayo's visions as valid and offers an alternative explanation that significantly alludes to the Bering Strait theory, a hypothesis proposed by Western scientists to account for American Indian presence in the Americas, while affirming Tayo's ethical sense of human interconnectedness: "'The Japanese,' the medicine man went on, as though he were trying to remember something. 'It isn't surprising you saw him with them. You saw who they were. Thirty thousand years ago they were not strangers. You saw what the evil had done: you saw the witchery ranging as wide as this world'" (114–15). The balance that Betonie strikes in his espousal of the theory that the ancestors of American Indians emigrated from the Asian continent is tricky, of course, since the Bering Strait theory and the ways in which it has been appropriated in attempts to legitimize white claims to Indian land have been criticized and challenged by many American Indians.[4] One clue to unpacking the implications of Betonie's assertions is revealed in an interview with Silko that took place just before *Ceremony* was published. In this 1976 conversation, interviewers Larry Evers and Denny Carr asked Silko, "How is it that the Japanese come into your novel?" (20). Silko recounted a number of influences on her interest in Japan, notably commenting: "I was already aware of Aunt Susie's story, her theory, about how we got over to this con-

tinent. I wrote that in a letter for the front part of Abe Chapman's book" (20). The letter that Silko references is quoted by Abraham Chapman in the introduction to his edited collection *Literature of the American Indians: Views and Interpretations*. In this letter Silko explains that her great-aunt "told a story which she said (from her knowledge of archaeological theories) seemed to corroborate the theory about a Bering Sea route. This was a story she heard from her grandmother as a child and she said she thought of it immediately after an anthropologist mentioned the Bering Sea theory" (qtd. in Chapman 5). In the story that Aunt Susie recalled, "the people had been traveling for a long time when they came to the edge of a vast body of water—a great ocean. They sent scouts up and down the water edge to see if there was any land route around it or through it" (qtd. in Chapman 5–6). The people did not know what to do until they spotted a "giant sea turtle" who

> identified himself as their grandfather, and he told them to get on his back and he would carry them across to another land. He did, and that was how the people crossed the ocean and how they were once again able to continue their journey south. Mrs. Marmon talked to anthropologists a lot, and she called this a "migration story." (qtd. in Chapman 6)

Aunt Susie's approach to the idea of a Bering Strait migration represents a synthesis of traditional community stories and values with Western scientific theories, rejecting neither source of insight out of hand. Betonie mirrors Aunt Susie's approach in his statements about Tayo's kinship with the Japanese. Betonie incorporates the Bering Strait theory into his treatment of Tayo, not to downplay the importance of American Indian claims and connections to ancestral lands in the American continents, but to stress the common humanity of the Japanese among whom Tayo sees his uncle Josiah.

Though Betonie plays a crucial role in the novel's depiction of alternative forms of education, one could argue that Tayo's most important teacher is Josiah. The lessons Josiah teaches Tayo about the old stories, hard work, innovation, integrity, and kindness surface repeatedly in the novel; furthermore, the contrast between the

dehumanizing education Tayo receives within the BIA school system and the humanizing approach to learning exemplified by Josiah is underscored throughout *Ceremony*, most poignantly in one of the novel's key scenes. In this scene a young Tayo has spent the afternoon killing flies in the family's kitchen, and when Josiah asks his nephew what he is doing, Tayo cites his BIA teacher who said all flies should be killed because "they are bad and carry sickness" (93).[5] Josiah responds by telling a story describing how the greenbottle fly saved the Laguna people from starvation "way back in the time immemorial" (93). In response to this salvific act, the Laguna people have since honored the fly in grateful memory. After hearing this tale, Tayo becomes distressed, but Josiah comforts him by saying, "'I think it will be okay. . . . People make mistakes. The flies know that. That's how the greenbottle fly first came around anyway. To help the people who had made some mistakes.' He hugged the boy close. 'Next time, just remember the story'" (94). Unlike the BIA teachers who mock and harshly punish students to promote conformity to Euro-American practices and values, Josiah is gentle with Tayo. Josiah's dedication to the preservation of Laguna cultural memory through stories told with compassion and flexibility makes him an ideal educator. In Josiah's kitchen classroom, chastisement is replaced with simple encouragement to "remember the story" as a guide for future action.

Josiah and Betonie both urge Tayo to remember what the BIA curriculum pushes him to forget: the cultural heritage of his people. In this theme *Ceremony* again reflects and interacts with important developments in the history of education taking place near the time of the novel's composition. The aforementioned 1969 Senate report *Indian Education* proposes that in order to remedy past problems with the education of American Indians, "[s]tate and local communities should facilitate and encourage Indian community and parental involvement in the development and operation of public education programs for Indian children" (135). Such involvement is key for many reasons, not the least of which is the tendency of "the non-Indian" to forget "certain basic truths about

Indians that must never be forgotten," namely, that the lands that make up the current United States have been home to American Indians for thousands of years, during which time they developed cultures and knowledge that should not be rejected based on Euro-American standards (200). Silko's work emphasizes the importance of preserving the wisdom of the past while meeting the changes of the contemporary world. Her characterizations of Josiah, Betonie, and Aunt Susie all offer profound lessons in the valuable role that cultural memory can play in unlearning empire. By including the lessons of American Indians in the reconsideration of American educational history and identity, *Ceremony* challenges Western hegemonic claims to knowledge and allows for the possibility of a new future in education.

NOTES

1. See also Dennis Cutchins and Sara L. Spurgeon.

2. For one such discussion, see *Proceedings: Second National Indian Workshop on School Affairs* (47–49).

3. Susie Reyes Marmon's educational philosophy and contributions to American Indian education are discussed at length by Amelia V. Katanski in *Learning to Write "Indian": The Boarding-School Experience and American Indian Literature*: as a schoolteacher "Aunt Susie was to become known for creating her own curriculum, which included both European American and Laguna knowledge and skills. The dedicators of the Susie Reyes Marmon Elementary School explained in 1990, 'Mrs. Marmon exemplified the blending together of two cultures, retaining the old ways while learning the new'" (Katanski 20–21). Katanski asserts that the program for this school's 1990 dedication "exemplified Susie Marmon's inclusive teaching philosophy: astronomy, art, and literature exhibitions stood beside staging areas for Laguna storytelling, song, and dance" (225).

4. See, for example, Joy Harjo and Vine Deloria Jr.

5. Tayo asserting that his teacher urged her students to kill flies because "they are bad and carry sickness" is yet another element of *Ceremony* thoroughly grounded within the historical context of the novel's setting. For more information, see Naomi Rogers and Eric W. Engles (106–12).

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"Through White Man's Eyes"

Beatrice Culleton Mosionier's *In Search of April Raintree* and Reading for Decolonization

AUBREY JEAN HANSON

In Search of April Raintree by Beatrice Culleton Mosionier (now Mosionier) is a text that continues, over twenty-five years after its initial publication, to call its readers to reflect on racism in Canada and beyond. It is precisely this call that must incite readers also to exercise a vigilant critical consciousness and to seek out spaces in the text that require—in Sherene Razack's words—"unmapping" ("When" 5). In her essay "Gendered Racial Violence and Spatialized Justice: The Murder of Pamela George," Razack challenges, or unmaps, the naturalization of violence in the social space of Aboriginal womanhood and the converse naturalization of the violent and colonial brutalization of Aboriginal women by white men. In this essay I employ aspects of Sherene Razack's formulations on race and space in a decolonizing reading of *In Search of April Raintree*, with a twofold purpose: first, to demonstrate and advocate for a decolonizing approach to reading and, second, to locate readers' social responsibility to read with a decolonizing approach within the context of relations of domination in North America.

This essay is particularly concerned with the teaching of Aboriginal literatures and emphasizes that such teaching is an endeavor embedded within a broader social context.[1] The dynamics of power and domination—rooted in North America's colonial history (and present)—that shape interactions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples necessarily come into play when teaching Aboriginal texts. As such, this pedagogical endeavor is and must be tied to questions of social responsibility, as it is a political project

with material consequences for Aboriginal people (Episkenew 65; Womack 14). In my work, it is also fueled by personal responsibility; I am, as a Métis educator, working to envision anticolonial education and to employ literature as a tool for challenging Eurocentrism and racism.[2] Teaching Aboriginal literatures in a socially responsible manner entails exercising critical reflexivity in reading. Further, it entails a decolonizing approach to Aboriginal literatures. In building my decolonizing approach to *In Search of April Raintree*, I have drawn upon the work of theorists and literary critics who advocate socially responsible and "Indigenizing" approaches to Aboriginal literatures, which entail their own, anticolonial ways of reading.[3] I agree with Sharron Proulx and Aruna Srivastava that, without a critical approach, the potential exists to perpetuate or exacerbate systems of oppression targeting Aboriginal people, particularly in that Aboriginal literatures often examine such oppression (189).

As I have stated, the basis for my own critical approach in this essay is Sherene Razack's 2002 collection *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society*. In this book, Razack analyzes relations between race, space (both material and social), and the law in order to enable the "unmapping"—or denaturalization—of the dynamics that constitute "the racial structure of citizenship [in] contemporary Canada" (5). In her analysis of the rape and murder of Pamela George, an Aboriginal woman working as a prostitute in Regina, Saskatchewan, in 1995, Razack delineates and challenges the naturalization of violence in the social spaces of Aboriginal womanhood and prostitution. The violence enacted against Pamela George, she argues, must be seen within the broader context of Canada's "colonial project" with its intrinsic racializations and racialized hierarchies (126). (I echo this insistence below in my discussion of the violent brutalization of April in Mosionier's novel, which strikingly parallels that of Pamela George.) I wish to take up Razack's constructions, particularly as represented by the concepts of "degeneracy" and "civility," used to characterize racialized social and material spaces. Razack's contention is that when whiteness is characterized by civility and Aboriginality by degeneracy, Pamela George comes to be seen as "a *rightful target* of the gendered violence inflicted" by

her white killers (144). Consequently, the significance of the murder could be diminished within the legal justice process (126). Razack thus employs these concepts of race and space to challenge the legal articulation of "justice" shaped through the trial of George's murderers. My intent in this essay is to use these concepts in order to denaturalize the portrayal of parallel spaces within Mosionier's *In Search of April Raintree*. Specifically, I want to examine April's resistance to being or becoming that "rightful target" of violence. Because the struggles of the novel's protagonist are located amid the characterization of Aboriginality and whiteness as, respectively, degenerate and civil spaces, Razack's formulations offer strategies for unmapping the text and constituting an anticolonial reading.

Beatrice Culleton Mosionier's *In Search of April Raintree* is the story of two Métis sisters, April and Cheryl Raintree, and their differing struggles to find a sense of self in relation to their Aboriginal legacy. The primary setting of the sisters' story is Winnipeg, where, as young children, they are taken away from their parents and placed in separate foster homes. April, in particular, experiences abuse, neglect, and exploitation at the hands of one family, the DeRosiers. As the girls grow up, Cheryl receives encouragement to connect to Aboriginality, while April receives and internalizes the values of broader white society. This contrast between the sisters parallels their physical appearances, as April, with her mother's "pale skin," can pass for white, while Cheryl's black hair and brown eyes and skin leave "no doubt" that she is "of Indian ancestry" (Mosionier 11).

Throughout the ensuing tale, April conceptualizes Métis identity as a "degenerate space," and it is during this early part of the novel that she begins to internalize the oppression targeted at Métis and other Aboriginal people. As a child, living with the DeRosiers—where she is insulted as a "half-breed" and exploited for household labor—she already perceives that her identity is undesirable. She condemns the portrait of Métis people that she is internalizing:

> Being a half-breed meant being poor and dirty. It meant being weak and having to drink. It meant being ugly and stupid. It meant living off white people. And giving your children to

> white people to look after. It meant having to take all the crap white people gave. Well, I wasn't going to live like a half-breed. When I got free of this place, when I got free from being a foster child, then I would live just like a real white person. (47)

April does not simply reject what she has learned about being Métis; she rejects the identity entirely, failing to challenge the naturalization of what "being a half-breed meant," and determining instead to pursue a "real white" social location. As Margery Fee has pointed out, April perceives her (lack of) options dichotomously: she can either become one of what she calls the "gutter-creatures" or she can assimilate ("Upsetting" 170; Lundgren 63).

April's decision to pass for white demonstrates the extent to which her social space is conscribed. Cheryl Harris, in her essay "Whiteness as Property," delineates some of the complexities of passing and white privilege. She describes her grandmother's experiences of passing for white in order to work, stating that it was a survival strategy precipitated by the racist social context: "passing is well known among black people in the United States; it is a feature of race subordination in all societies structured on white supremacy" (277). Harris also emphasizes the self-denial, invisibility, and "risk of self-annihilation" involved in passing, and the extent to which the phenomenon of passing itself exposes the "valorization of whiteness as treasured property in a society structured on racial caste" (277). April's determination to pass for white is clearly shaped by the dynamic that Harris describes: in identifying against herself, April becomes "complicit in her own oppression" (Harris 277).

April's determination to live a white li(f)e is fed by the white people with whom she is forced to interact as a foster child, including the social worker in charge of her and Cheryl, Mrs. Semple. After the girls attempt to run away from the abusive DeRosier family (where Cheryl has briefly joined April), Mrs. Semple gives them "a little speech about what she called the 'native girl' syndrome" (62). This speech explicitly introduces the sisters to the degeneracy that, according to their social worker, characterizes Aboriginal identity:

> It starts out with the fighting, the running away, the lies. Next come the accusations that everyone in the world is against you. There are the sullen, uncooperative silences, the feeling sorry for yourselves. And when you go on your own, you get pregnant right away, or you can't find or keep jobs. So you'll start with alcohol and drugs. From there, you get into shoplifting and prostitution, and in and out of jails. You'll live with men who abuse you. And on it goes. You'll end up like your parents, living off society. . . . Now, you're going the same route as many other native girls. If you don't smarten up, you'll end up in the same place they do. Skid row! (62)

Although April does not even understand the speech yet—she remarks to herself "I'd never heard the terms shoplifting, prostitution . . . And what the heck was skid row?"—at this point, the sisters must react specifically to this projection of their futures (63). April determines that she will resist the narrative, and reassures Cheryl: "We're going to make it. Do you understand me? . . . We are not going to become what they expect of us" (64). Despite her determination to defy it, April remains aware of this "syndrome" as she grows up within a society in which problems such as poverty and alcoholism are perceived as inherently linked to Aboriginal identity.

In responding to the posited degeneracy of Aboriginal womanhood, April continues to deny her position in that social space and instead attempts to locate herself within a civil space by passing for white. When she is rescued from the DeRosiers by a new social worker, she leaves behind her degraded role and seizes her first opportunity to blend into a space characterized by civility—a girls' boarding school. She is successful in doing so: "going to St. Bernadette's was good for me. I had many friends, and . . . on weekends, I was invited to go to other girls' homes." She succeeds because she is able to pass—"I was white as far as the other girls were concerned" (84). Notably, passing at school involves severing herself from her family: April claims that her "parents died in a plane crash" rather than explaining her family's history (82). She also discourages Cheryl from joining her at the boarding school, having long ago

realized the difficulty of "pass[ing] for a white person when [she] had a Métis sister," and "especially when [Cheryl] was so proud of what she was" (47). While April loves Cheryl and feels that she "could never cut [her]self off from her completely" (47), her dream of escaping from the conscription of Métis identity into whiteness entails separating herself from her visibly racialized sister, and the distance between them begins to grow.

The sisters' trajectories continue to split as April moves into her "promising future in white society," while Cheryl volunteers at the Native Friendship Centre, intending to help her people through social work (97–98). April's perception of whiteness as a "civil" space is validated by her experiences of social success within white, middle-class space. While working as a secretary at a law firm, she meets Bob and, before long, finds herself freshly married into the luxury-shopping, wealthy, urban Toronto set. April feels that her bright white future—which she had almost dismissed as "fantasy" (98)—is realized when she settles in with her new husband in his "mansion . . . on a sprawling estate" (103). She is thrilled by her new surroundings and by the time spent entertaining, shopping, visiting hair salons, learning about etiquette, and attending "social events and theatres and concerts and dinners and clubs" with her mother-in-law, "Mother Radcliff" (103). Attention to the role of class and race reveals that Mother Radcliff sees April as being on a different "social level" and disapproves of her son's marriage, but, for a moment, April seems confident that she has transcended the social space of being Métis (103–04).

However, April's attempts to displace her Métis identity eventually fail, and her unsustainable married life is ruptured. In many ways Cheryl embodies April's inability to leave her Métis self behind: she reappears in this role when April invites her to Toronto for the Christmas holidays. Cheryl is conspicuously out of place and targeted as a racial Other in Mother Radcliff's social world, and April feels the discomfort of trying to reconcile her fractured and oppositional loyalties (103–12). It is after Cheryl's visit that April's marriage breaks down. April overhears a conversation that exposes Bob's affair with another woman (who is white) as well as Mother Rad-

cliff's desire to sabotage the marriage because of her fears of miscegenation: Bob's mother proclaims "I would simply dread being grandmother to a bunch of little half-breeds!" (116). April confronts Mother Radcliff and the mistress: "that Bob's mother would rather have a person like you, a hypocrite, an adulteress, as her daughter-in-law, rather than risk a few grandchildren who would have Indian blood in them, well, that's beyond my comprehension" (116). April's response here is significant, suggesting that the betrayal she is experiencing pushes her toward self-reconciliation. It is worth noting that although she condemns her mother-in-law, April's internalized attitudes parallel Mother Radcliff's: "I did have a fear of producing brown-skinned babies. How could I give my loving to such children when I still felt self-conscious about Cheryl?" (117). Nonetheless, April leaves her illusory life with Bob behind (with a hefty divorce settlement) and, not long after, is called back home to help Cheryl, who has meanwhile had her own illusions shattered by a successful search for their father.

Up to this point in the text, Cheryl has been the one to oppose April's perception of Aboriginality as inherently degenerate space. Cheryl consistently challenges April on her views of Aboriginal people and on the "shame" she exhibits, and seeks to explain the sociohistorical dynamics that shape the contemporary reality of Aboriginal people (101, 105). As Sharon Smulders states, Cheryl's voice in the text "disrupts the linearity of April's retrospective narrative, correcting its bias, enlarging its awareness, and disputing its conclusions" (84). One conversation in particular exemplifies Cheryl's attempts to decolonize her sister's perspectives. The sisters are discussing Cheryl's work at the Friendship Centre helping young Native women when they begin to argue:

> "What you aim to do is very commendable, Cheryl, but I can't see you changing a whole lot of people. . . It's the ones who are dirty and unkempt and look like they've just gotten out of bed with a hangover and who go to your neighbourhood department store, they're the ones who make a lasting impression."

> "Well, there are just as many white people out there who are in the same state," Cheryl shot back.
>
> "It's not the same. I don't remember the white ones, I only remember the drunk natives. It seems to me that the majority of natives are gutter-creatures, and only a minority of whites are like that. I still think that's the difference."
>
> "I still think our project with the native girls is worthwhile. Damn it, April, why do you have to be so prejudiced?" she exclaimed.
>
> "I'm not prejudiced, Cheryl. I'm simply trying to point out to you how I see things."
>
> "Through white man's eyes." (105)

Cheryl's retort here is incisive, and provides the key to an anticolonial reading of Mosionier's novel: because April overwhelmingly sees the world and herself "through white man's eyes," it is consistently necessary to maintain a critical distance from her perspective.

Thus, seen through an anticolonial lens, Cheryl's critical awareness and pride thus far establish her as a positive foil for April, by contrast exposing the extent to which the oppression April has internalized precludes her from achieving self-acceptance as a Métis woman. However, the shift that follows Cheryl's meeting her biological father exposes the nature of her own "fantasy"—that is, her idealized vision of their parents (98). She had imagined her father as "a tall, straight, handsome man" who, "in the olden days," could have "been a warrior if he had been all Indian" (198). However, upon meeting him, she sees instead "a gutter-creature!" and decides that she "should have listened to April" and abandoned her search (198). Cheryl's meeting with their father precipitates the collapse of her foundations—"all [her] dreams to rebuild the spirit of a once proud nation are destroyed in this instant" (198)—and she loses her motivation for resisting the naturalized "native girl" identity, apparently unable to envision any alternative—or less illusory—reason for doing so. Within the terms of the story, Cheryl loses her self-respect and abandons herself fully to the degeneracy of the social space around her, quitting university, becoming an alcoholic, moving in

with an abusive man, and taking up work as a prostitute. Her earlier pride and anticolonial perspectives are revealed as stemming from an unsustainable idealization of Aboriginal identity. Therefore, although Cheryl provides a great deal of support to an anticolonial reading, we cannot rely entirely upon her, either, and it is vital to see both the potential and limitations of her viewpoint.

Concurrent with April's discovery that Cheryl has been pushed into "degenerate space," April is raped—an event that constitutes her own forcible confinement in that space. April has returned to Winnipeg from Toronto upon receiving a call stating that her sister is in the hospital, injured from a beating. Cheryl asks April to go to where she has been living to pick up her "things," as she wants to avoid "a scene" with her boyfriend (125). April agrees, venturing into "a rather rundown section of the city" (126), and so crosses the social and spatial distance between her world and Cheryl's. April is then (unbeknownst to her) literally mistaken for Cheryl by three white men who have been waiting for Cheryl, sent by a rival to "put a scare into" her (166). The men force April into a car, drive her out of the city to the countryside, beat her, and rape her. The rape scene is loaded with racialized and sexualized violence. The men call her a "bitch," "squaw," "cunt," "slut," "whore," and "savage" as they beat her, rape her repeatedly, and degrade her by "peeing . . . right into [her] mouth" (127–32). They leave her in the countryside retching into the snow, but just before they do, she is "able to make out the licence number" of their car (132), and the men are eventually tracked down by the police. The ensuing court case finds the main rapist guilty, while April remains traumatized by the violence inflicted upon her. It is worth noting that this part of the novel relates to Sherene Razack's analysis of the murder of Pamela George in more ways than I can discuss here; the two are strikingly similar. What is most significant for my argument is the concept of violence and degradation becoming naturalized—as it is for April's and Pamela's white, male attackers—in relation to the body of an Aboriginal woman working as a prostitute.

The men's violence against April becomes an important locus in the text, in many ways forcing a crisis of identification. This crisis of

identification is a "brutally literal" one, in that the violence is instigated because April is mistaken for her sister (Derry 209), but it also forces April once again to confront her Métis selfhood. The multiple aspects of April's crisis here converge around her conflicting feelings that she was both misrecognized and recognized as a "rightful target"—in Razack's words—of the violence enacted upon her.

First, her belief that *mis*recognition is at work allows her to persistently avoid facing her identity as a Métis woman. As Margery Fee points out, April must make this confrontation only as long as she still believes that she was the intended target of the men's violence: when she finds out that the rapists had mistaken her for Cheryl, her anguish ceases somewhat—for example, she does not feel the need to take her "ritual bath" that night (Fee, "Deploying" 221; Mosionier 167). In other words, once April is able to perceive the violence she experienced as having been aimed at Cheryl, she can blame Cheryl for what happened, and once again she is able to displace her own Aboriginality onto her sister (167). She strives to dismiss the racialized nature of the violent crimes against her as misrecognition. Her court case resonates overwhelmingly with Razack's description of Pamela George's murder trial, but April resists the racialized narrative interwoven with her deracialized self-perceptions, insisting that she is "entitled to justice" (Razack, "Gendered" 155). She suggests this self-perception during the trial: "that bastard, Donnelly, had raped me. He had done more than rape me. He deserved to be found guilty and nothing else" (169). In her article, Razack states that "Pamela George never left the racially bounded space of prostitution and degeneracy during the trial, a space that marked her as a body to be violated" (148); April, by comparison, is removed from that space, and the "guilty" verdict validates her position. April's revelation that she can displace the blame onto Cheryl further strengthens this self-perception.

However, April must nonetheless deal with the fact that the violence against her was predicated upon a target of degenerate Aboriginal womanhood—that is, with the consequences of *recognition*. She is initially mystified as to why the men called her a "squaw," wondering how she could be "mistaken as a native person" (146).

This question precipitates her to reinterrogate herself, as she admits: "Mistaken? There's that shame again. Okay, identified" (146). The men have treated her, as did Pamela George's murderers, as a "licentious and dehumanized squaw" (Razack, "Gendered" 133); April is thus thrust (back) into that "space of degeneracy" and must reconcile her experiences there with her sense of self. The rape echoes the dynamic established when April realizes that Cheryl's Native appearance would always undermine her attempts to pass for white. Through the rape, April's attempts to disconnect from the degenerate space of Aboriginality are again countered by the social inscription of her sister's body. It is Cheryl who repeatedly "connects April to a Native world of degradation that she wants desperately to escape" (Derry 209). The fact of literal misrecognition does not completely erase this connection to Cheryl. Further, even when she learns that Cheryl was the intended "target," she is forced to confront her own conceptions of who a "rightful target" might be, in that she does not want to feel that Cheryl deserved the violence either. Her beloved sister Cheryl and her own selfhood collide with violence and degeneracy because of the rape, and April struggles thereafter to assemble a coherent identity.

The remainder of the novel following the rape trial offers complex, and in many ways unresolved, developments of April's and Cheryl's struggles against the conscription of their social space. The sisters' relationship continues to deteriorate, and April never has a chance to make things "okay" with Cheryl (Fee, "Deploying" 223). Cheryl ultimately does not survive the collapse of her resistance to "native girl syndrome": making the same choice their mother had, she commits suicide. April, mourning Cheryl's death, makes yet another significant spatial journey, entering her sister's bedroom to "pack all of Cheryl's things away" so that she can preserve her memories (194). While in Cheryl's room, April makes another confrontation, this time with alcoholism, which has been prominent throughout the novel as a marker of the "degenerate space" of Aboriginal identity. She sees an empty whiskey bottle on Cheryl's dresser and is "suddenly . . . filled with a deep hatred of what it had once contained" (194). She smashes the bottle "into a million pieces"

and screams, crying: "I HATE YOU! I HATE YOU! I HATE YOU! . . . I hate you for what you've done to my sister! I hate you for what you've done to my parents! I hate you for what you've done to my people!" (194). Her anger at alcohol here is significant in that it represents a step away from her previous attitudes, which entailed her blaming alcoholics for their weakness or choices. (She condemns her parents earlier in the text, for example, feeling that they "abandoned" her and Cheryl "all for a bottle of booze!" (91).) This confrontation also brings April closer to reconciling herself with being Aboriginal.

April's ultimate acceptance of her Métis identity coincides with the opening up of a new future raising her young nephew, Cheryl's son, whose existence she discovers after his mother's death. This acceptance occurs within a few lines of the story's ending, after April arrives at Cheryl's friend's house to meet and pick up Henry Liberty Raintree:

> As I stared at Henry Lee, I remembered that during the night I had used the words "MY PEOPLE, OUR PEOPLE" and meant them. The denial had been lifted from my spirit. It was tragic that it had taken Cheryl's death to bring me to accept my identity. But no, Cheryl had once said, "All life dies to give new life." Cheryl had died. But for Henry Lee and me, there would be a tomorrow. And it would be better. I would strive for it. For my sister and her son. For my parents. For my people. (207)

April's story ends with acceptance, hope, and conviction; her transformation, occurring through the loss of her sister, is a triumph, as she has overcome so much internalized loathing to arrive at self-acceptance. April's future will no doubt still involve struggles against the racism surrounding her as a Métis woman and with her long-held perception that Aboriginality is inevitably and inherently characterized by degeneracy. In fact, the ending presents no further challenge to the construction of "degenerate space" that her narration has in many ways naturalized throughout the novel and does not offer a clear vision as to how, exactly, her new life with little Henry

will be "better." Nonetheless, April's final self-acceptance and projection of a brighter future, rooted in her bond to her relations and Aboriginality, is redemptive within the text. It is a redemption that gains significance through an anticolonial reading, opening up space within April's identity and history for decolonization.

In Search of April Raintree engages its readers in April's struggles with internalized colonialism and racism as she variously escapes and confronts the social contexts that overdetermine her identity as Métis. Her sister Cheryl enriches the text, providing important elements of an anticolonial and antiracist perspective to the narrative. While Cheryl disintegrates, losing her former strength and agency and ending her life, April gains a new appreciation of the perspectives that Cheryl has represented. Through an anticolonial reading, we can see this text as one that ultimately suggests the importance of challenging internalized oppression, of countering racism and the colonial construction of Métis identity. It is a text that encourages the kind of unmapping that I have sought to carry out here through Sherene Razack's theories of race and space, and is rich with opportunities for critical anti-oppressive analysis.

However, this kind of decolonizing approach to the text entails reading against both Cheryl and April at different times in the story. While Cheryl provides a decolonizing voice, the reader must come to terms with the fact that her pride as an Aboriginal woman is based on illusory and unsustainable ideals. Meanwhile, April's internalized views of what "being a half-breed meant" (47) lead to the fact that she is in many ways the primary voice of racism in the novel. As a result, inasmuch as April spends two hundred pages struggling to come to terms with her identity, the reader must spend those same two hundred pages struggling to maintain a vigilant and critical decolonizing analysis of April's perspective. Negligence on this front risks the perpetuation—for the reader and for the reader's students when that reader is a teacher—of the racist and colonial views with which April struggles. In other words this text is pedagogically challenging because uncritical readings may impact the reader in dangerous ways, (re)inscribing the normalization of Aboriginal peoples' oppression.[4] In order to read to decolonize, the reader must unmap

the social space that April's life experiences lay out for her—that is, we as readers must constantly disagree with and challenge the novel's protagonist. No character within the novel is able to fully envision self-determination, and thus the responsibility to continue that work rests with the reader. *In Search of April Raintree* constitutes a powerful incitement for readers of Aboriginal literatures to work for decolonization.

NOTES

1. The question of defining "Aboriginal literature(s)" is one that deserves its own nuanced study: this convenient nomenclature, for instance, risks suggesting a homogenous and unified body of texts, as Fagan argues.

2. My work here is informed by critical writings on anticolonialism (including Dei, Hall, and Rosenberg; Dhruvarajan and Vickers) and anticolonial education (including Battiste; Battiste and Henderson; Ermine; Findlay; Hampton; and Barman, Hébert, and McCaskill).

3. To consider further how we read Aboriginal texts, see Armstrong; Eigenbrod; Episkenew; Ruffo; and Womack.

4. Other literary critics, including Janice Acoose and Jo-Ann Episkenew, also insist upon careful readings of *April Raintree*. Acoose, for instance, states that the novel "may leave readers with mis-informed notions about the Métis," and contends that readers must "look outside the text and take responsibility for their own education" ("Problem" 235).

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Old Wives, the Same Man, and a Baby

Location and Family as the Foundation of Home in *Tales of Burning Love* and *Bingo Palace*

JONATHAN WILSON

> We never ask for all this heat and silence in the first place, it's true. This package deal. It's like a million-dollar worthless letter in the mail. You're chosen from the nothingness, but you don't know for what. You open the confusing ad and you think, Shall I send it in or should I just let the possibilities ripen? You don't know shit! You are left on your own doorstep! You are set there in a basket, and one day you hear the knock and open the door and reach down and there is your life. (156)
>
> Lipsha Morrissey, in *Bingo Palace*

Bingo Palace and *Tales of Burning Love* suggest that *home* must be revised to include, negotiate, and, at times, embrace tenets of Western ideology in order to find or secure one's home. While various other Louise Erdrich works and characters address similar issues of belonging or (re)defining space or place, *Tales of Burning Love* and *Bingo Palace* are directly connected through a reverberating sequence of events that leads the novels' central characters into chronological circles of cultural/economic bankruptcy, rebirth, and eventually home. In *Tales of Burning Love*, a rather clueless Jack Mauser knows about his Indigenous heritage, but he firmly embraces the Western world of big business construction for the greater part of his young life. Starting over at the end of the novel, not only does Jack reassess the value and direction of his initial Western ambition, but his re-conception of place within the world

now differs to include his son, the land, and understanding with and about the numerous women he marries and hurts throughout the novel. In a similar fashion *Bingo Palace*'s Lipsha Morrissey and Lyman Lamartine redefine Native perceptions of *home* in the reality of contemporary social, economic, and cultural forces that oscillate and collide in the spaces between Indigenous communalism and modern capitalism, where the characters subsequently discover that their existences can never be fixed to one or the other.

Noting such confusing circumstances for Native Americans, John Gamber and Jill Jepson both address the problematic issue of *home* within the modern American Indian context. In "'Outcasts and Dreamers in the Cities': Urbanity and Pollution in *Dead Voices*" Gamber examines *home* as a "mobile" or "transformative" term that not only should but must include new locations such as cities. Noting William Bevis's "homing motif," Gamber argues that "Indian narratives . . . find hope for the survival of Indian people and narratives, challenging the widespread assertion that they cannot thrive in the cities, that their only refuge is on the reservation" (180, 179). In "Dimensions of Homing and Displacement in Louise Erdrich's *Tracks*" Jepson seems to take a more traditional stance on Native peoples' relation to land. That is not to claim that Jepson suggests that urban centers cannot be true homes for Native Americans, but instead of arguing the specifics of urban versus rural, Jepson contends that "home refers to both a physical place and a network of belonging and history" and that "loss of identity" results from the "loss of social context, disconnection from the past, and displacement from the land" (27, 26). Jepson concludes that these alienating forces are the "intricate, interwoven forces that operate for and against Anishinaabe homing" (38).

I agree with Gamber and Jepson's assessments, but my claims elaborate on how the term *home* is (re)defined or created by people, community, space, and language, regardless of urban or rural setting, and how (re)connection to the community, the past, and the land is possible. It is the connections between the above elements that work in tandem and complimentary manners to construct home. Home becomes more than preservation of Indigenous cul-

ture and location; it becomes a mosaic made from distinct pieces of the Native and Western worlds. In Jonathan Little's terms, "Erdrich creates a narrative of overlapping spaces between cultures while also depicting the enduring strength and resiliency of the Ojibwa heritage" (499). Home cannot be defined by simple dualisms, such as Western or Native. Home is a definite correlation of elements that correspond to belonging to a space or place.

In Erdrich's *Tales of Burning Love* home is something that is layered through Jack Mauser's multiple marriages, the retelling of "tales of burning love" by his ex-wives, the birth of his only son, and his eventual return to the land of his birth.[1] While a majority of the novel is set within the confines of a snow-bound Ford Explorer and revolves around Jack's relationship with each woman and his subsequent false death, the conclusion of *Tales* finds the characters not only firmly positioned in one central location but also making up a network of familial connections. In essence home is created for and by the characters through their connection to Jack as much as by the stories they share with each other and the place they come to (re)define as home. In "Ceremonial Healing and the Multiple Narrative Tradition in Louise Erdrich's *Tales of Burning Love*" Roberta Rosenberg explains the significance of this type of "healing" storytelling, but she also adds that Erdrich charges her stories with Native themes and tropes: "Erdrich makes use of the healing power and magic of pre-Enlightenment Western and Native American storytelling while reinscribing and revitalizing it within an Indian context" (119).

The opening chapter of *Tales* simultaneously sets up Native overtones toward home and Jack's inability to commit to any one person long enough to create a true home (in any sense of the word). Erdrich begins *Tales* with June Kashpaw struggling to go home.[2] Waiting for her bus back to the reservation, June meets Jack for the first and last time. As June quickly discovers, and as many other women and wives later find out, Jack is not that "different" man they all wish him to be (7). After a drunken, hasty, and questionable "marriage" to June, Jack drives June to the outskirts of Argus, where he fails to consummate their "marriage" and, most importantly, allows her to leave the safety of his truck during a bliz-

zard. As a result June resumes her journey home on foot, freezing to death in the process. While Jack's action, or inaction, plagues him throughout the course of his life, at the time Jack, drunkenly and ferociously, claims that "He was not the one," not the one that had "to be different" for June (10, 7). Ironically, by the end of the novel Jack is the "one" that pulls his wives, son, and self firmly to the landscape by creating circumstances that foster "family" connections with each other.

As is the case with so many of Erdrich's characters, Jack's search for family and place begins with abandonment. The "fatherless and motherless" Jack is unable to commit to any of his wives because he believes it better to leave them before they leave him (13, 40). Jack's search for place or space is only transformed into his final reverence for a home that includes the earth, birthplace, motherhood, and physical and emotional love by acknowledging that the people and places he discarded or disregarded are necessary to creating or defining home. The fact that Jack finds these elements of home with multiple wives reflects one of the many Native undercurrents in *Tales of Burning Love*.

In Erdrich's *Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*, Old Kashpaw is saddened by the thought of losing even one of his wives because of their individual attributes and contributions to his home. Jack is no different. He has "*always relied on women*" (*Tales* 158). Jack needs women in order to invent the home he never had, just as much as he needs to return to the location of his birth. "For Jack had come full circle, at last. His latest and final wife had also grown up in Argus" (14). Fittingly, Jack's latest wife, Dot, is also a mixed-blood whose sphere is only completed by "coming back here" and the inability "to shake this town" (17). Still, Erdrich does not invoke the notion that these two mixed-blood characters are destined to meet, marry, and define each other in any Native or Western sense of the terms. Instead, Erdrich dispels the existence (or even possibility) of such a dichotomy by presenting a picture of two characters who not only confess that they know almost nothing about their Native ancestry, but who are, on the surface, submerged in Western cultural and economic systems. Dot's diverse and largely nonbiolog-

ical "family" centers on the heart of Argus (her aunt's butcher shop), and Jack is the head of his own construction company.

> Jack did not see the land in the old-time Ojibwa sense, as belonging to nobody and nothing but itself. Land was something to use, space for sale. It did not occur to him that the ground he put his house on was alive, could crumble, cave in, betray him. Simply turn against him, or in any way fail to return his investment. Land didn't do that. Land seemed dead to Jack. (153)

But in order for Jack to realize the error of his ways, his predominately Western version of home and identity must first be destroyed.

As a land developer looking to get rich quick, Jack is hastily and cheaply building "model homes" in a subdivision on the outskirts of Argus. As in his relationships with women, Jack does not take the time and care he needs to in order to create a solid foundation or competent structure. Upon his own closer scrutiny, even the home he resides in is hardly anything more than a contemptible illusion of a modern abode. The painters did a "slapdash job," the showers did not work, and, most importantly, "the smoke alarm was faulty" (103, 109). This last fact is especially imperative because as Jack warms himself from the flames of his fireplace, he realizes that the fire is not contained and has already burned a small basket of pinecones adjacent to the fireplace's opening. At first a now drunken Jack is hardly concerned, rationalizing that the fire will extinguish on its own; then it dawns on him: "he was insured. He had paid the premiums, in spite of how tight things were, paid them in advanced even, just to save the paperwork" (110). Here Jack decides that "God had smiled a big hot smile on him," and in order to take advantage, Jack decides to fake his own death by allowing the fire to burn down his own home and "maybe the next, the next, the whole damn cul-de-sac," freeing him from both the responsibility of his construction project and resulting financial debt (110). Making sure to leave behind his "porcelain bridgework," a belt buckle, and all of his clothes, Jack jumps from a window of his home into the harsh reality of freezing snow.

Reborn from the cleansing flames of arson, Jack emerges, literally, naked into a world where he must redefine himself as father, husband, lover, friend, and family member within a home space that offers him a new chance and outlook on life. But as with all births, Jack's is painful: "He was crushed of importance, pathetic in his fetal ball, naked, gray, same color as the pale gray snow, stuffed with unspent anger, almost dead" (160). Presumed deceased after the fire, Jack holes up in "the smallest of his four twice-mortgaged properties, the one with an office and a coffee pot. No night watchman, no access" (161). Here, in dreamlike disorientation and pain, Jack begins his journey home. Starting with vivid memories of his mother's "secret, wild, despairing love that mothers bear their boy children, an ardor bound up in loss and foreignness and fury," Jack commits himself to resurrection as a new man, the "one" June initially wished him to be (184). While Jack is maybe unaware of the direction on which he is embarking, in a vision of light and color Jack knows that his course begins by seeing his son, Jack Jr.:

> Jack looked away from the desk and fresh clipping, and out the office window to the vaulted windows of the concrete garage, where pale lavenders and golds of a noon sun trembled through the industrial-glass ripples and floated, cold splendor in octagons of chicken wire. Now sweeter, redder fires flared into the sky, and shafts of cathedral intensity, bold and strange, held for long seconds in Jack's vision a fractured emblem.
>
> *My son!* (257–58)

This realization is Jack's first step toward creating a true home.

But as Jack shortly finds out, growing into the home he eventually helps construct is equally as agonizing and confusing as his rebirth. Jack enters the residence of former wives Candy and Marlis (the mother of his son) to discover that they "slept together as lovers" (261). Initially Jack is overwhelmed by this fact; however, Candy and Marlis's relationship is also an instrumental building block to the ultimate construction of home out of the chaos of old wives, the same man, and a baby, which Jack decides (with the best of inten-

tions) to abduct. This choice makes Jack responsible for his son's later, accidental kidnapping, but even this deed cannot circumvent the power of home that Jack places into motion. The unwitting kidnappers are none other than Dot's first husband, Gerry Nanapush, and his son, Lispha Morrissey. This coincidence is seemingly spectacular, but as noted by Allan Chavkin, Erdrich's "individualistic prose style includes the juxtaposition of the mundane and the fantastic, gritty realism and dreamlike hallucinations, the conversational and the lyrical, and existential bleakness and slapstick exuberance" (Chavkin 2). Thus, by employing this very approach, Erdrich brings *Tales*' story full circle by the most unbelievable circumstances that oddly enough seem to fit the plot: Jack chases Gerry, Lipsha, and his son straight to the home of his birth—the reservation.

In the meantime all of Jack's former wives become stranded together in a blizzard. Karah Stokes contends that Dot and Eleanor (wives number five and two) enjoy an early "sister"-like connection that is also facilitated by the confines of a vehicle—a ride home where Eleanor and Dot bond, alienating Jack from their newfound relationship. In a similar manner, the forced proximity of Jack's Ford Explorer becomes the germinal ground of both understanding and family for Jack's four remaining wives. As Rosenberg argues, this forum for the wives' stories is imperative because "the truth about Jack and love remains within a 'web' of seemingly contradictory and paradoxical stories" (125). Thus, while *Tales of Burning Love* does live up to its title—Jack's ex-wives share the secrets of their relationships with Jack—Stokes adds that

> in addition to formal features . . . Erdrich's work also draws on characters, plot patterns and relationships from traditional Anishinabe culture and mythology. Specifically, stories about Oshkikwe and Matchikwewis, a polar pair of sisters in a cycle of stories commonly told by Anishinabe women, gives the reader a new perspective on the relationships between women that are central to Erdrich's novels. (Stokes 89)

In this case, the stories that Jack's ex-wives share act as a therapeutic common ground between them, despite their divergent relation-

ships to Jack. Rosenberg claims this type of curing dialogue is foregrounded in *Tales of Burning Love*'s opening conversation between Jack and first wife, June Kashpaw. In Rosenberg's view, this dialog "provides a paradigm for cross-cultural sharing and intertextualities of all kinds, including the universal storytelling process which is unconcerned with ownership but asks only that each speaker/listener benefit from gained wisdom and pass it on" (Rosenberg 113). It does not matter that Jack's wives are Westerners or, in Dot's case, have minimal Native ancestry. Erdrich "uses the storytelling frame and multiple narrators to heal and reconnect the fragmented world in *Tales of Burning Love*" (116).

While Rosenberg's overarching claims center on the syncretic weaving of Native and Western traditions together to form a unique structure of its own, her perspective on language's ability to "heal" and "reconnect" complements the idea that language is instrumental to creating or re-creating a space or place for the characters of *Tales of Burning Love* (Rosenberg 114). Jack's ex-wives solidify their connection to each other through their stories, but the stories also play a necessary part in the scheme of Erdrich's plot: doomed to freeze to death if their voices fail, the telling of their stories keeps the women from falling asleep. It is not by accident that Jack's first wife, June Kashpaw, could not be rescued from that same dismal fate because no words could sustain her. Far from her traditional home, June is without a "family" network to protect and guide her, and Jack cannot even remember his new "wife's" name to call her back into his truck. "Her [June's] aborted journey is a cautionary tale to everyone about the dangers of alienation from community" (Rosenberg 123). June dies cold and alone, only looking toward home, never reaching it. Annette Van Dyke adds to this analysis by noting that June is denied the ability to feel safety or belonging even early in her life: "June's childhood is so horrendous—being raped by her mother's boyfriend—that she never comes fully into her own power" (Van Dyke 139). Jack's four other wives, on the other hand, have a chance to reach, define, or create home for two reasons: First, they have each other to count on for protection and connection. Second, Jack's rebirth/resurrection makes him the "one" June Kashpaw wished he

had been: he now realizes that the people he loves, needs, and cares about are all ground to the same location as himself and that he belongs with them.

However, it would be a mistake to accept Jack's emotional and mental transformation as the catalyst of the novel. From Jack's absentee mother to his fifth wife, Dot Adare, women profoundly affect Jack's social and self-identity. In *Of Vision Quests and Spirit Guardians: Female Power in the Novels of Louise Erdrich*, Annette Van Dyke argues that traditional Euro-American concepts of Indian women are "defined by their relationship to men and are not seen as powerful in their own right" (130). *Tales of Burning Love* confronts this viewpoint by presenting "independent and feisty woman characters" (Van Dyke 130) and the novel's male protagonist, Jack Mauser, as notoriously romantic and co-dependent. In Erdrich's own words, "there is a kind of wild energy behind . . . many women that is transformational energy, and not only transforming to them but to other people" (qtd. in Van Dyke 130). Home, for Jack, is not wealth or the poorly build houses erected by his construction company; Jack's hopes and dreams lie in belonging to the place and people he previously shunned, especially his wives and son. While attempting to rescue his son from Lipsha Morrissey and Gerry Nanapush, Jack finally comprehends that he has had everything he wants right in front of him in the first place, but "now he was out in the middle of a blizzard. Heading north. Trying to save a baby he'd been too stubborn and blind to claim when that could have made a big difference in all of their lives" (*Tales* 379).

Here Erdrich again brings the novel to a circular intersection: Jack recalls June giving him the doorknob from her purse. This is a seemingly empty and odd gesture on the surface, but the significance of the gift is that it opens the door to a home Jack refuses: the love of woman who just wanted "someone different."[3] Jack cannot make the same mistake twice. In the cleansing waves of the blizzard Jack comes to terms with Candy and Marlis's relationship; he remembers the "protective arm" and "wild and fascinated" face of his mother; and, most importantly, he follows the ghost of June into the blinding snow. While the outset of this path does not seem

promising, Jack understands that "it was all right. . . . She [June] was bringing him home" (385). The connotation here implies more than a simple location. Jack is brought back to his Native heritage, the wives he wronged, and the son he subsequently dismissed. Fittingly, Jack later recites Shakespeare's line "All the world's a stage" (405).

Erdrich's first four hundred pages set this stage, but the characters take their places at the conclusion. Jack's ex-wives, including June, fix themselves to the space or place that defines home for each character within the larger framework of Argus and the reservation: June's ghost finally makes it back to the reservation. Dot decides to remain in Argus, going into business with her aunt and mother (419). Candice and Marlis purchase a home in Jack's subdivision (421). And after accepting Lyman Lamartine's proposal to write a book about the reportedly deceased Sister Leopolda, Eleanor takes up residence in "an old farmstead at the edge of the reservation, where she could interview an ancient priest, Father Damien, who'd known Leopolda in her youth" (446).

It is at this location that Jack and Eleanor again reunite, but this time their relationship is different. They still need and love each other, but they both understand that they cannot uphold, nor do they desire a traditional relationship with each other (421). Still, that fact does not suggest that their association is over or even stagnant. Their relationship evolves through an understanding that maintains passion, comfort, love, and distance between them. As Eleanor states in tender thought, "*Through you, in you, with you, as long and often as I can stand you*" (452). Parallel to the composition of their new relationship, Jack and Eleanor sexually unite in what seems to be half tenderness and half pain. They balance precariously on both the banister and steps of a staircase, chancing splinters and scratching shoulders, but the act is well worth it. As Eleanor theorizes, "*What happens in between is an uncontrollable dance, and what we ask for in love is no more than a momentary chance to get the steps right, to move in harmony until the music stops*" (452). "Fearing no complication they simply leaned into each other with all their weight" (448). While this conclusion may seem specific to Jack and Eleanor, Erdrich's final scene offers a much more fruitful interpretation: Jack

and Eleanor's actions are ones of love, comfort, understanding, and, most importantly, belonging to people(s) and place, no matter how unorthodox the circumstance or relationship.

Therefore, location definitely matters in both Gamber and Jepson's terms, but its importance is only equal to the characters' connection to that place. For Jack, Eleanor, his other wives, and his son, Argus and the reservation (the site of the forthcoming *Bingo Palace*) is the space they are drawn to and bound to, but it is only because they are there. Jack is partially Native American and harbors fond memories of his mother and the land, but that fact pales in comparison to Eleanor, his other wives, and his son's power to hold him to a fixed location. Home for Jack, his wives, and son is more than a specific location. Home is the interrelation of all that is "poetically endowed" to land and family (Said 55). Only through his past and present can he foresee a future. If even one element is amiss, Jack cannot (re)construct or (re)define home. As Jack gazes out the window of Marlis and Candice's new residence, he is "gripped for a moment, mesmerized by the silence of the sky, the field, the peace of the scene" (*Tales* 421). In a powerful and profound scene Jack's moments of levity and clarity pronounce home's affect on the characters who now define themselves within the context of both location and family.

Jack's final actions and thoughts are a far cry from the money-hungry, land-destroying womanizer of the novel's opening chapters. Instead, the reader is given a Jack Mauser "hit by feeling" for the land and how his Ojibway mother "loved the place" (401). Still, Jack is not transformed into a tribal spokesman or an "in the blanket Indian" at the end of the novel. Despite his journey, Jack cannot escape the reality of an ever-encroaching world that adheres to capitalistic notions of progress and productivity. As Jack states, "It had not been easy for her, for June, when she froze to death, no. But it was also hard to bear the pain of coming back to life" (452). Jack may have found a place and purpose in the world, but he still has to survive. And his Indian "cousin" Lyman Lamartine has just the plan.

In an attempt to capitalize on Jack's Indian heritage and ruined financial situation, Lyman proposes that Jack become "head of

operations" for Lyman's plans to erect a casino on Native land. Jack knows he is a pawn, but "there was no way he could turn this [offer] down or back out" (408). "He was a hostage of his past and his life of temporary fixes" (408). Like other Native people, Jack has to make choices that guarantee his survival. However, the location of Jack's future opportunity is only equal in magnitude to the fact that it is also a return to his past: "He had the sense of a swift undertow, pulling . . . tugging. *Home*. An old anxiety formed. He had thought he might come back here if he failed. But never that he'd come here needing to save his skin" (408, emphasis added). Therefore, even in the context of dread, sense of failure, and "developing" Indigenous lands for monetary gain, home (place and people) also remains a force of remedy and rescue. While Jack excitedly begins to think about "beams, boards, steel, stone, and below him the earth of his same childhood dirt—rising around his ankles" (408), the underlying current of his inner thoughts suggests that Natives can and will continue to relocate or negotiate home in any viable space afforded to them or forced upon them. As John Purdy contends, "[Erdrich's] novels suggest that loss need not be irrevocable; colonialism can be countered" (9). Finally realizing that his fate is not sealed and that opportunities are possible, Jack concludes, "There was no golden life out there. Only the uncertain ripening of fields" (*Tales* 421).

Bingo Palace's opening chapter "The Message" sets the stage for the plot of the novel by ceremoniously introducing a host of complexly interrelated characters who, like Jack, face the task of attempting to reconcile Native American culture, beliefs, and customs within a postcolonial world. Lulu Lamartine is a promiscuous woman with a sorted past, whose multifathered sons reflect various clans of the tribe. Shawnee Ray Toose is considered both lovely and the future of the tribe for her ability to create Native clothing and dance to Native songs. However, it is Lulu's grandson, Lipsha Morrissey, and her youngest son, Lyman Lamartine, whose search for belonging (home) dominates the novel. Lipsha is simultaneously regarded as a gifted traditional healer but also a waste of talent.[4] Lyman, on the other hand, is everything Jack Mauser initially sets out to become:

> [He] was a man everybody knew and yet did not know, a dark-minded schemer, a bitter and yet shaman-pleasant entrepreneur who skipped money from behind the ears of Uncle Sam, who joked to pull the wool down, who carved up this reservation the way his blood father Nector Kashpaw did, who had his own interests so mingled with his people's that he couldn't tell his personal ambition from the pride of the Kashpaws. (*Bingo* 5)

While Shawnee Ray and Lulu play instrumental and, in reference to the former, catalytic roles in the *Bingo Palace*, Lyman and Lipsha's developing business and social relationship is the focus of home's significance in a contemporary world overshadowed by capitalist interests that force or tempt Native people to sacrifice their culture, heritage, and land to acquire material, monetary, and social prowess.

As John Purdy puts it in "Against All Odds," "together, Lipsha and Lyman dramatize the attractions, and ill effects, of engaging in games of chance with the wrong attitude, or without proper 'luck'" (23). Lipsha and Lyman do not seemingly fit in either the traditional Ojibway or the Western world, but both see the "potential for the generation of large sums of capital carries with it the potential for self-sufficiency and therefore self-determination" (Purdy 9). However, "change can cut many ways, [and] in any direction, as Eridich's characters often learn" (8). And "with this potential also comes the threat of reprisal and loss" (9). Therefore, only in being able to negotiate the Western and Native worlds can Lipsha and Lyman truly realize who they are in the context of community, family, and land—home. While this home space is never solidly defined or a clear alternative for identity and belonging presented to either Lipsha or Lyman, *Bingo Palace* offers a dialogue where these characters at least come to terms with the reality that Indigenous peoples can never (re)define or create home outside of Native or Western influences or demands. "Without suggesting that there is any one right answer to . . . questions of" "what does it mean to be 'Indian' at the end of the twentieth century" or "what does it mean to be 'traditional' in a postmodern consumer culture," Nancy Peterson claims

that "Erdrich's novel [*Bingo Palace*] does take a firm stance on one thing: collective discussion of these issues is vitally necessary" (177). In other words, the position of Native people in an alien capitalistic world is difficult to decipher. They must adapt, but they must not lose connection with their culture and customs. It is in the attempt to answer the question of placement of Native people—although extremely difficult to pin down and ripe for opportunities to make the wrong choices—that Lyman and Lipsha hope to create or (re) define home.

This state of influx is further exacerbated by the community, which initially perceives Lyman's Western enterprises as, at best, suspect and Lipsha as obviously disjointed from tradition, culture, and location. Upon his return to the reservation, Lipsha is again written off as "a waste, a load, one of those sad reservation statistics" (*Bingo* 7). The community's consensus is that

> going back and forth to the city weakened and confused him and now he flails in a circle with his own tail in his teeth. He shoots across the road like a coyote, dodging between the wheels, and then you see him on the playground, swinging in a swing, and again he has made himself stupid with his dope pipe. He tires us. We try to stand by him, to bring him back, give him advice. We tell him that he should ground himself, sit on the earth and bury his hands in the dirt and beg Manitous. We have done so much for him and even so, the truth is, he has done nothing yet of wide importance. (7)

As Lipsha enters his high school gymnasium during the winter powwow, the community's assessment seems to be true:

> He slid through the crowd during the middle of an Intertribal song. We [the community] saw him edge against the wall to watch the whirling bright dancers, and immediately we had to notice that there was no place this boy could fit. (9)

In agreement with their evaluation Lipsha states, "I stop as if to ask directions to a place I've always known" (11). Still, the community's opinion and Lipsha's feelings of alienation cannot deprive him of

the fact that he is nevertheless "only Lipsha, come home" (10). Here, midway through an "Intertribal song," never truly in one world or the other, Lipsha Morrissey falls hopelessly in love with Shawnee Ray Toose, who "is the best of our [Native] past, our present, [and] our hope of a future" (13). In the "hard radiance of Shawnee Ray Toose," consciously or unconsciously, Lipsha chooses a love that is more than superficial beauty: she is the all that he has forgotten, has never known, and what will become of his people (12). But even though he is captivated by Shawnee Ray, Lipsha is quick to remind himself that "coming home is never simple" (13).

Fortunately some members of the community continue to hold on to the hope that Lipsha will become more than a "reservation statistic" (7). His "mother," Marie Kashpaw, originally takes Lipsha in as an orphan "because of the way he was found in the slough, half drowned" (23). She believed "he needed more than other children. She [Marie] had tried to save his mother, June, but it had been too late to really save her. June had worn out the world with her hurt, headlong chase" (27–28). Marie and other community members hope to save Lipsha from this "headlong chase," which they believe will undoubtedly forever take him away from his culture, land, and customs—home. In an attempt to impress her belief in him, Marie presents Lipsha with the pipe of his stepfather, Nector. In Purdy's view, "Nector had been its holder, and now Lipsha has been chosen to assume that duty" (23).

Sadly, Lipsha does not carry out this charge well or at the outset make clear that Marie's confidence in him is justifiable; instead, Lipsha comes off as tongue-tied, unsure, and, at last, willing to trade the sanctity of the pipe to impress the object of his obsession, Shawnee Ray: "As he held it [the pipe] in his open palms he seemed about to speak. Once or twice he cleared his throat, shook his head, but he didn't find the words" (29). Lipsha's inability to find the right "words" is replicated only pages later, when he takes Shawnee Ray on a fateful date where Nector's pipe is confiscated by police, who desecrate its holy purpose by connecting the stem of the pipe and allowing the feathers on its body to touch the ground. Lipsha can only whisper, "Please, don't," without either force or authority (35).

While the overtones of this occurrence denote Lipsha's blind ambition to win Shawnee Ray's heart, even at the cost of placing his (and his people's) heritage in danger, Lipsha's action or inaction, in this case, is the turning point of his incorporation into a capitalist system through which he believes he can acquire Shawnee Ray and, as a corollary, place, identity, community—home. Thus, Lyman's offer to employ Lipsha at the Bingo Palace is not only a very attractive opportunity for someone who admits, "I'm kind of between places," but the proposition seems to come at just the right time, for Lipsha earnestly hopes that he too can achieve a Lyman-type financial success (39).

As Lipsha notes, "from day one, we're [Natives] loaded down. History, personal politics, tangled bloodlines. We're too preoccupied with setting things right around us to get rich. Except for Lyman, who does a whole lot of both" (17). But Lyman is not only a thriving businessman, of which Lipsha is envious; Lipsha and Lyman's "relationship is complicated by some factors over which we have no control. His [Lyman's] real father was my stepfather. His mother is my grandmother. His half-brother is my father. [And] I [Lispha] have an instant crush upon his girl [Shawnee Ray Toose]" (16). Therefore,

> the *Bingo Palace* foregrounds a classical comic plot—the romance plot—as it follows Lipsha Morrissey's uncontrollable passion for Shawnee Ray Toose, who has had a baby and an affair with his uncle Lyman Lamartine, a successful entrepreneur and respected tribal member. (Peterson 161)

Overcome by jealousy and feelings of inadequacy, Lipsha resigns himself to becoming and obtaining everything he believes Shawnee Ray wants—what Lyman has. While Lipsha's desires seem to transfer his objectives firmly into Western ideology, he does acknowledge

> [t]hat no matter what I do with my life, no matter how far away I go, or change, or grow or gain, I will never get away from here. I will always be the subject of a plan greater than myself, an order that works mechanically, so that no matter what I do it will come down to this. (*Bingo* 21)

Lipsha is forever caught between his traditional Ojibway self-identity and what Western encroachment influences him to become. While a dualistic approach to Lipsha's life is technically not possible—that is, the modern Native and Western worlds can never be truly bifurcated—the push and pull of each culture, people, and spaces/places are very real. Unable to effectively negotiate such conflicting and overlapping demands, Lipsha places all his energies "toward spaces I have never seen and no place I can name" in order to replicate Lyman's monetary and social success (22).

Lipsha readily takes his post in Lyman's casino only to realize that the Bingo Palace is nothing more than a "Disney setup, like a circus show, a space-ship, a constellation that's collapsed" (41). "But you can't see dents in the walls or rips or litter once darkness falls" (41). He knows that Lyman's monstrous "Palace" creates "a kind of magic food that leaves a man emptier and hungrier after one whiff," and he knows that "the bingo palace drives itself through wet nights according to these hungers" (42). But the tragedy is that Lipsha does not understand that he is too caught in the web the Bingo Palace represents. He slaves for meager wages to supplement his stated purpose: "to be the man who can impress Shawnee Ray" (62).

Motherless, fatherless, and with no place to fit, Lipsha does not understand that he is destined to become another statistic of Western ideology, one that he laments took his mother, June. In a drunken stupor Lipsha sees June "the way she should have if she stayed and kept the good ways and became old and graceful" (53). But he does not see himself. He must "stay" and "keep the good ways" to "support the bigger task it was to be an Indian" at home in the land and community of his people (53, 47). But like Jack Mauser, Lipsha only learns lessons the hard way and through seemingly harmless beginnings. June's ghost poses the question: "Do you play bingo?" (55). Lipsha's answer does not matter; he will. The endeavor is both Lipsha's downfall and the beginning of his eventual acknowledgment that he too cannot escape the power and pull of the Native and Western worlds.

Lipsha plays bingo with June's "lucky" cards in "pursuit of a material object," a van, which he mistakenly believes is "a starter

home, a portable den with front-wheel drive, a place where I can shack with Shawnee Ray and her little boy, if she will consent" (63). Thus, like his grandmother Fleur's choice to exact revenge on John James Mauser (Jack Mauser's grandfather) in *Four Souls*, Lipsha's decision is one of selfishness: "He wants to win money and the bingo van, not to end impoverishment on the reservation, but to impress Shawnee Ray" (Peterson 167). However, this realization comes in retrospect, when Lipsha subsequently comprehends, "because of the van, I'll have to get stupid first, then wise" (*Bingo* 62). Lipsha has no choice: he must make the long and difficult journey back to the place he is already at—home.

The first effect of the van's ownership is the loss of Lipsha's special healing power, a power inherited from his Pillager bloodline. Although he attempts to continue to treat his patients, Lipsha fails: "for each time, in the center of the cloud that comes down into my brain, in perfect focus, the van is now parked" (64). The image of the object and the possibilities he believes it represents is far too much for him. He cannot concentrate. Therefore, he cannot help people. As he confusingly and despondently states, "My hands are shocked out, useless. I am again no more than a simple nothing that I always was before" (66). Lipsha's social and capital ambitions do not place him in any position better than before; in fact, he is far worse. The little importance he felt to the community is now also gone. He has nothing but the hope for a mobile "home" and that Shawnee Ray will love him.

While the next few pages of the novel seem to imply that Shawnee Ray does care for Lipsha—she agrees to visit a local hotel with him—the circumstances of their decision suggests that an empty sexual rendezvous carries no more weight than worry over sexual protection and anxiety over a cheap room, where they do not know what to do. The hotel is just a

> modest kind of place, a clean place. You can smell the faint chemical of bug spray the moment you step inside it. You can look at the television hung on the wall, or examine the picture of golden trees and waterfall. You can take a shower for a

> long time in a cement shower stall, standing on your personal shower mat for safety. There is a little tin desk. You can sit down there and write a letter on a sheet of plain paper. You can read in the Good Book someone has placed in the drawer. (71–72)

This is not the romantic tryst or place Lipsha thought it would be. It is awkward and uncomfortable. As Lipsha finally concedes, "I don't know why we're here" (72). Still, the motel scene serves a distinct purpose in Lipsha's attempt to return to his Native people, places, and beliefs. Lipsha, similar to Jack, begins to realize that home is something more than a woman (Shawnee Ray) or satisfying his own desires.

In a new effort to discover or obtain the missing pieces of his home and identity, Lispha bestows all of his remaining bingo winnings on Shawnee Ray and returns "to the woods to sit and think," "on ground where Pillagers once walked" (73). In this sacred place, the place of his ancestors, Lipsha's healing should initiate, but instead Lipsha again is overwhelmed by images of the van. In yet another attempt to win the object of his desire, Lipsha is finally victorious: "Of all of those who stalked that bingo van over the long months, I am now the only one who has not lost money on the hope" (75). While this assessment may be true, Lipsha loses much more than money could ever buy: his vague, at best, sense of place within the world. This is not to claim that Lipsha once again laments his bifurcated, unfixed existence; in fact, quite the opposite is true: he rejects the people and places around him on a whole new level of capitalist elitism. As he states,

> it's hard to say. I change. Just one late evening of riding the reservation roads, passing cars and pickups with a swish of my tires, I start smiling at the homemade hotrods, at the clunkers below, at the old-lady sedans nosing carefully up and down gravel hills. (75)

In hindsight, Lipsha regrets how he "ride[s] high, . . . Looking down on others, even if it's only from the seat of a van that a person never really earned, [and how it] does something to the human mentality" (75).

Here Lipsha loses his entire perspective on life, his place within the community, and even his relationship with the woman he professes to love. He arrives at Shawnee Ray's home not to confess his feelings of love but to "show-off" his van (Peterson 165). Here he finds Shawnee Ray's son, Redford, ill, but instead of offering his Pillager "touch back from wherever it had left," his "van to take Redford to the HIS," or "something other than what I do," Lipsha "hit[s] the road for Hoopdance, looking for a better time" (76). What was once the object of his affection, his love, his sole preoccupation—Shawnee Ray—is simply and quickly replaced with steel, glass, and rubber—the bingo van. While Lipsha is remorseful of his choice not long after, it is too late: he cannot help Shawnee Ray, Redford, or himself.

When he arrives at a party that he mistakenly believes is a "better time" than Shawnee Ray's home and family, "several Anglos, led by a man he argued with earlier, kidnap him, humiliate him, and then dump him at Russell Kashpaw's to get an equally humiliating tattoo to commemorate their revenge and their power over him" (Purdy 25). In a fitting bit of irony, Lipsha's attempt to talk himself out of this altercation makes him realize that the "straight-edge shape [of the prospective tattoo of Montana] is not a Chippewa preference" and that "only human-made things tend toward cubes and squares—the van, for instance" (*Bingo* 80). It is only at this point that Lipsha seems to comprehend that he misguidedly placed value on an unnatural entity, one that has further disassociated him from his culture, land, community, and family. Release from the van's hold over him only comes from finding that the group of non-Natives "totaled" the vehicle over the course of the night. After crawling into the van's battered shell to relax in one of the now broken and unstuffed seats, Lipsha at last becomes conscious that he is free from the burden of the van and its influence on his value system. Lipsha states: "It makes no sense, but at this moment I feel rich. Sinking away, it seems like everything worth having is within my grasp. All I have to do is reach my hand into the emptiness" (83). While Lipsha seems to have finally embarked on a journey that at least will help him negotiate worlds, Lyman is not so lucky.

Erdrich's chapter "Lyman's Luck" opens with Lyman's desire to

obtain the pipe of his father, Nector, from Lipsha. However, Lyman's aspiration is only motivated by jealousy, greed, and pride, not familial relations or love of home, for Lyman "saw himself drawing the sacred object solemnly from his bag and also presenting it to friends, to officials, always with the implication that it had, somehow, been passed down to him by right." Lyman's "desire had something to do with his natural father," but it has everything to do with the "prestige of owing that pipe" (85). In a clear act of cultural corruption, Lyman wants to put the pipe "in a glass case . . . right at the casino entrance," making it a fixed object, rather than a ceremonial tool of culture and custom (86). Lipsha at first refuses Lyman's offer to purchase the pipe, but then Lipsha again slips: "'I'll trade you [Lyman] the pipe!' he suddenly cried out. 'For what?' 'Shawnee Ray. Here's the deal: I give you the pipe, and you lay low, step aside'" (88). 'Home' for Lyman and Lipsha at this juncture becomes unrecognizable as they readily make these exchanges to further their own social and capitalistic endeavors. Instead of Lyman or Lipsha caring about their home or the people that make it home, they agree to trade cultural artifacts and people as commodities. Sadly, Lyman and Lipsha perpetuate the system in which their ancestors were enslaved or died. Lyman's "luck" further emphasizes this point, as he compounds his mistakes, pawning the pipe during a gambling binge in Reno. As Purdy puts it, "Lyman's losses in Reno are molded by a Western model; he plays for self, and thus only the house can win" (Purdy 26). "He is of course unsuccessful, in part because he is not at home, where as the manager of 'the house' he has the power" (26). Thus, Shawnee Ray, who "is the best of our [Native] past, our present, our hope of a future," is bartered for an object, now only valued for bragging rights and, at last, its monetary value in an "all-night pawnshop" (*Bingo* 93).

Replicating Jack's preliminary mistakes in life, Lyman and Lipsha are not only guilty of objectifying a person whom they both declare they love, but they are also guilty of continually selling out their traditional home for money that Lipsha describes as "dead stuff, but I like it" (101). So regardless of their competition to acquire Shawnee Ray, Lipsha and Lyman become business partners, and instead

of realizing that placing stock in "dead stuff' is unnatural, Lipsha begs Lyman to "tell me everything you know" about money: "How it reproduces if you pile it up high enough and put it in the right circumstances" (101). In an odd moment of clarity and honesty Lyman confesses: "Success wrecks as many people as failure . . . especially Indians. We're not programmed for it" (102). Yet Lipsha does not heed Lyman's warning; he only focuses on the seemingly positive results of trading home for capital by lauding the success of the Bingo Palace: "the bingo palace that he [Lyman] so recently maneuvered to open is doing bigger business and contributing to the overall economic profile of our reservation" (103). Nancy Peterson succinctly explains the situation:

> Proponents argue that bingo and casino games are making it possible to end the terrible impoverishment that has afflicted most reservations; critics argue that this economic boon comes with hidden price tags, and they contend that native involvement with gambling is detrimental to tribal traditions and values. (166)

To return to the time and state of their ancestors is impossible. They must survive in the contemporary world, but at what cost to their identities, land, and communities? As Lyman admits, "It's a mixed bag of trouble . . . There's lots of ways to make money, and gambling is not the nicest, not the best, not the prettiest. It's just the way available right now" (103). In short, it is a necessary evil. Like Jack, the trick Lyman and Lipsha must learn is that they cannot fully invest themselves into the past or the necessity of the present; they must navigate the tortuous road ahead of them in order to keep from derailing their future. And Lipsha is on a dangerous ride.

Instead of looking toward the good of the community or Shawnee Ray, he simply wishes to astonish her with material goods. As Lipsha states, "I want to buy her a new house, a pet, a car red as the fresh blood she is bleeding from my heart" (105). Unfortunately, what Lipsha does not understand is that Shawnee Ray already has a home, and that home is literally buttressed by articles of Western construction out of necessity, but more importantly, it is solidly

build upon her and his people's traditions and culture. The structure was an

> original old log house from the way back when, a place tucked together by Resounding Sky, added to over years gone by with layer on layer of Sheetrock and plaster, which is why the walls, so thick, keep in the warmed air in winter, and the cool of night all summer. (105)

Thus, Shawnee Ray's home reflects a solid Native foundation that serves the "way back when" purpose of protection, place, and belonging, while taking on elements of the Western world, such as "Sheetrock and plaster."

This fact seems to miss its point with Lipsha. Again, he rushes headlong to explain to Shawnee Ray how he and Lyman are now business partners "on a big investment scheme." Lispha's conscience, however, makes him reluctant to divulge the location of "this big resort area that sits on an undeveloped lake" (108). The space in question is none other than his great-grandmother Fleur Pillager's land. This is the same land that Fleur was forced off, swore revenge for, and ruined her relationship with her daughter, Lulu. This is the land that Jack Mauser's grandfather stole from Lipsha's family and clan. This is the land Lipsha hopes to develop. As Shawnee Ray rightly assesses: "you got the medicine, Lipsha. But you don't got the love" (112). Lipsha's "wish [that] I was that little boy, I wish I that I was Redford," only further emphasizes his inability to love Shawnee Ray correctly (165). While these feelings are not difficult to comprehend since Lipsha was effectively abandoned by his own mother, June, as a child, the fact that Shawnee Ray represents the past, present, and future of their people implies not only that Lipsha does not know how to love her, but also that he does not know how to love his land, family, and community—home.

But Shawnee Ray is not blameless or incorruptible either. If she indeed signifies the future of her people, by unavoidable circumstance, she has a foot firmly placed in Western culture and society. Shawnee Ray knows how to keep and cultivate the old customs, but she still desires to better herself both financially and socially

in accordance to Western standards. In an argument that proceeds her leaving the safety and comfort of Zelda's home, Shawnee Ray is quick to defend the choice of Albertine, Zelda's daughter, to move to the cities to study Western medicine. Although Shawnee Ray's speech does weaken when Zelda reminds her that she does not call Albertine's visits "coming home" because Albertine "never stays" and Shawnee Ray is racked with guilt after Zelda's forceful retort, Shawnee Ray continues with her plans to leave Zelda and pursue a cash prize at the yearly traditional dance contest (18).

While it is an easy indictment to claim that Shawnee Ray is just as willing as Lyman, Lipsha, and Jack to trade culture for economic gain, not only does the crux of the situation lie in the growing influence of Western ideologies, but Shawnee Ray's monetary ability to leave home is set in motion by none other than Lipsha, who gives his remaining bingo winnings to her: "It was her freedom, her train ticket, her camping money, and Zelda didn't know about it" (152, 120). Lipsha, a man without a home, enables another one of his people to break away from a place that defines them. It would, however, be irresponsible to suggest that Shawnee Ray's existence with Zelda is anything but overbearing and prescribed. The point is that Lipsha cannot locate his own place in the world, much less advise or aid Shawnee Ray, who is touted as "the best of our [Native] past" (13). It is Lipsha who, try as he might, cannot come to terms with either world. As he puts it:

> I am waiting for a band card, trying out of boredom to prove who I am—the useless son of a criminal father and mother who died with her hands full of snow—but trying to prove myself to the authorities . . . I don't have my enrollment and entitlement stabilized, not yet, nor do I have my future figured exactly out. (128)

Lipsha's only hope is seeking out the counsel of both his grandmother, Lulu, and great-grandmother, Fleur.

While Lipsha's intentions still rigidly adhere to devising a way to convince Shawnee Ray to love him, at his meeting with Lulu the most interesting information revealed to the reader is that Lulu "is

out to reclaim the original reservation" (129). Thus, Lipsha's decision to invest himself in the world of capitalism is more destructive than simply selling out the community at large; his choice strikes at the very people and family who "poetically endow" that space or place with significance greater than a monetary value: Lipsha's intentions negate his grandmother Lulu's mission to restore the reservation to its former size, and the only goal for his seemingly impending fortune is to buy material objects for Shawnee Ray, who he has already successfully helped emancipate from her community.

The dire circumstances of these details only multiply in significance when Fleur allows Lipsha to follow her to the land of her home. In a surreal journey to the Pillager homestead Lipsha painstakingly struggles to keep pace with the ancient yet supernaturally nimble and strong Fleur. Fearing he is lost or at least in imminent danger, Lipsha debates turning back, but as he helplessly confesses: "She has me. She is drawing me forward on a magic string coughed up from her insides" (134). Their destination is, without coincidence, "the far end of Matchimanito Lake, which is right where Lyman Lamartine intends [using Lipsha's money and Jack's labor] to erect his gambler's paradise" (133). "Once more Fleur will be displaced: not by white lumber interests this time, as happens in *Tracks*, but by her own grandson" (Peterson 168). But even a moral and ethical rousing such as a visit to the Pillager homeland is not enough to change Lipsha's plans for elevated economic and social status.

Ironically, it is Lyman who second-guesses his own capitalist objectives. In a dream about playing the slot machines, Lyman encounters a very sad truth: he can picture Shawnee Ray and Redford. Sometimes he can see the faces of Zelda and Lipsha. "Sometimes [he can see] the face of the old Pillager woman [Fleur] leapt glaring from nowhere," but "his own face did not appear in the magic line along with theirs" (147). Lyman has no one and nowhere to turn because he does not have an identity that fits within the lives of those he deems closest to him. "His own reflection was lodged at the bottom of the river where his brother Henry had jumped in and drowned" (148).[5] While this lack of relation to place and community squarely pegs Lyman into a Lipsha-like and, formerly, Jack-like

existence, Lyman's dream is more obviously prophetic than Lipsha's visit from June's ghost.

"The face of Fleur Pillager appear[s] before him [Lyman]" to state:

> *Land is the only thing that lasts life to life. Money burns like tinder, flows off like water, and for the government's promises, the wind is steadier . . . This time, don't sell out for a barrel of weevil flour and mossy pork.* (148)

Unfortunately, Lyman—comparably obtuse to Lipsha's and Jack's own misunderstandings of home's power—does not put stock in the spiritual, the dreamlike, or the supernatural. He awakes, pledging that "whatever else happened, he would be a good father, this is, he would be himself—instead of trucks, he would play store. Teach value for value, pound for pound. Already he was sure, Redford had an investor's eye" (149). Thus, Lyman and Lipsha, too, simply cannot figure out what should be important to them or "where they ought to be" in life (Erdrich, "Where" 23). As Lipsha finally realizes, "I want a place where I can belong, but I end up as part of a surprising configuration" (158), and as

> it turns out he's [Lyman's] just as confused and oppressed by love as me. Lyman's such a complicated guy there's something uncanny about him, scary, like it's a disease of the spirit, a kind of saint-hood that's out of control. (169)

Lyman and Lipsha are—as Erdrich aptly names chapter 17—"Getting Nowhere Fast." Still, as with many of Erdrich's chapter headings, the meaning is not overtly ambiguous but ambivalent.

"Once again Lyman and Lipsha are tied; they both go on vision quests at the same place and time" (Purdy 28). Lipsha and Lyman seek the help of Xavier Toose to "feel that connection we must have lost," one "that hasn't a forward or backwards" (*Bingo* 193). Here Lipsha finds himself again "wandering alone looking for a place where I can spend as long as it takes for a vision to come my way" (195). What Lipsha does not realize, at the time, is that the place of his and Lyman's attempted mental and emotional metamorphoses is the place he belongs. It is Fleur's land, the land of his ancestors, the land

of his people. Humorously, these facts are made clear by a visit from a prophetic skunk who sprays Lipsha. The animal's message, "*this ain't real estate*," at last gives direction and meaning to Lipsha's life (200). Lipsha must revere and care for the land, people, and community that comprise his home. "Here the future of all the community is central" (Purdy 28). In the chapter titled "A Little Vision," the supernatural skunk returns to remind Lipsha of the land's importance, presenting him with a horrific picture of the destruction that he is about to help set in motion:

> the bulldozers scraping off wild growth from the land like a skin, raising mounds of dirt and twisted roots. Roads are built, trees shaved, tar laid onto the new and winding roads. Stones and cement blocks and wood are hauled into the woods, which is no longer woods, as the building is set up and raised. (219)

Finally acknowledging that the "damn skunk is right," Lipsha states: "The money life has got no substance, there's nothing left when the day is done but a pack of receipts. . . . Our reservation is not real estate, luck fades when sold. Attraction has no staying power, no weight, no heart" (221). Erdrich does not devote much text to Lyman's vision, but the opening of the next chapter, "Lyman Dancing," suggests that he, too, comes to a type of understanding with his position in the Native and Western worlds: "It was the first time since Henry had died that he had not danced in his brother's clothes. It was the first time, ever, that he didn't dance for money" (203). The implications here are twofold: Lyman finds his own identity by dancing for himself, and as Nancy Peterson contends, Lyman's vision "reconciles him to his brother Henry's suicide" (162). Thus, Lyman and Lipsha take clear steps toward defining themselves within the context of their circumstances and location.

Still, Erdrich does not conclude *Bingo Palace* with a classic storybook ending. "Erdrich's novel resists clear or firm resolution and strikes a kind of balance between re-birth and death that is analogous to the situation of contemporary Native Americans" (Peterson

175). Thus, Lipsha's words act as a metaphor for Indigenous peoples' often bifurcated existence:

> I am staring down, off the railings of a bridge, into a river that is treacherous, full of suck holes and underground streams. I have looked into that river once, and thought I'd crossed it for good on my way back to reservation home ground. (*Bingo* 238)

It is, then, only fitting that the final pages of *Bingo Palace* find its characters' definitions of home as equally difficult to pinpoint as the novel began. Albertine again returns to the cities; Shawnee Ray enrolls in a university; Lyman steals Lipsha's joint-invested money to pay off gambling debts; and Fleur passes over to the Native afterlife.

On the other hand, Lipsha again rekindles his relationship with his father, the escaped convict Gerry Nanapush; Lulu becomes the voice of the people against tribal injustice; and Lipsha finds purpose in saving the child, Jack's son, whom he and Gerry inadvertently kidnap.[6] Remembering his own orphaned existence, Lipsha vows that "at least this baby never was alone. At least he always had someone, even if it was just a no-account like me, a waste, a reservation load" (259).

While Lipsha's return to the reservation does not seem to be the right choice—it is eerily reminiscent of the choice of his mother, June, to continue home in a blizzard that takes her life—the problem with a full indictment of the novel's ending lies in the fact that he, Lipsha Morrissey, "a waste, a load, one of those sad reservation statistics," is bringing one of his own kind, Jack Mauser Jr., back home (7). Lipsha is once again caught in the "mobile home" of a car he and Gerry steal, but the circumstances are different from those of his van. Lipsha is not returning to the reservation to brag or belittle others on the road; Lipsha is selflessly traveling toward home to save the life of Jack Mauser Jr., who is protectively huddled in his jacket, where he remains safe from the cold. While the ending of the novel is ambiguous about whether Lipsha and the baby survive the ordeal, the reader is told that a "hostage [is] found in good condition" (268). Lipsha is no longer the selfish and arrogant owner of an object won by supernatural luck, nor is he considered an ardent

Native traditionalist, but he is a hero in both a Western and Native sense: he rescues a child, one who is pivotal to the creation or redefinition of home for the elder Jack Mauser.

As the conclusion of *Tales of Burning Love* makes clear, the return of Mauser's son begins a whole new chapter in Jack senior's life, one that, like Lipsha's and Lyman's existences, demands the traverse of both the Western and Native universes. The car that Lipsha and Gerry steal literally becomes the vehicle that forces Lipsha and Jack to (re)define or construct home. Lipsha does not want to be a "waste," and Jack does not want to be an absentee father. Jack's journey to find himself and his place is just as difficult as Lipsha's, but that fact only seems to further the novel's message that it is not easy being an Indian in a time period that appears to be ruled not as much by borders, places, people, or allegiance to home but by Western values and interests.

The focus of *Tales of Burning Love* and *Bingo Palace* on Lyman's, Lipsha's, and Jack's journeys unites and exemplifies Native peoples' struggle to define who they are, where they belong, and, most importantly, what tenets of culture, customs, and beliefs constitute their home. Reiterating critic Homi Bhabha's sentiments about hybridity, Nancy Peterson states, "Erdrich's tricksters in the *Bingo Palace* are most successful when . . . they figure out how to set in motion traditional strategies and goals adapted to contemporary conditions" (172).

Tales of Burning Love and *Bingo Palace* suggest that this lesson is not one that can be learned overnight or from a single occurrence. Instead, as Lipsha, Lyman, and Jack discover, events, situations, desires, and reactions to the world at large make the redefinition of *home* almost a moment-by-moment choice. What might constitute the return to the "old ways" one minute might conclude in tribal extinction the next, and what might constitute sustained survival in modern society might end in selling out the very people and places one initially aspires to protect. Only through a delicate balance of choices and actions can Erdrich's characters avoid falling into the abyss that is offered by one narrow choice or the other.

NOTES

1. Jack Mauser is the great-grandson of John James Mauser, who effectively steals Fleur Pillager's land in *Tracks* and who marries Fleur Pillager in *Four Souls*. See *Tracks* and *Four Souls* for reference.

2. This is the same beginning of *Love Medicine* but from Jack Mauser's point of view. See *Love Medicine* for clarity.

3. Consult *Love Medicine*'s version of June and Jack's first meeting.

4. See *Love Medicine*: Lipsha's biological and "adoptive" family is both sorted and conflicting. If any, his character represents factionalism in the clans because he is biologically equal parts of two clans that hate each other. While Lipsha's struggle for identity is tackled in this essay, the character is addressed here because he is also caught between competing economic systems that negate each other at points, adding more confusion to his life.

5. See *Love Medicine* and the short story "The Red Convertible"; Henry's suicide haunts Lyman for the rest of his life.

6. See *Tales of Burning Love*: Lipsha and Gerry accidentally kidnap John James Mauser Jr. after Mauser Sr., on the run, leaves Jack Jr. unattended in a running car.

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Book Reviews

Jeffrey P. Shepherd. *We Are an Indian Nation: A History of the Hualapai People*. Tucson: U of Arizona P, 2010.
ISBN: 978-0-8165-2828-8. 304 pp.

William A. Dodge, *Cultural Historian, Albuquerque, New Mexico*

In his foreword to Jeffrey Shepherd's book, former tribal chairman Wilfred Whatoname Sr. writes, "This book tells of what the Anglos did to my people and why my people did what they did to survive" (xiii). With the blessing of the Hualapai Tribal Council, Shepherd has fervently written a book that details the story of this once-isolated tribe in northern Arizona from its origin stories through the turmoil of the twentieth century and beyond.

The book is divided into eight chapters that relate specifically to Hualapai history, utilizing the increasingly common technique of adding Native "voice" to the historical narrative. The history chapters are framed by an introduction and conclusion that situate the Hualapai story within what Shepherd calls the "analytical lenses" of colonialism and nationhood in order to emphasize the survival and resistance of the Hualapai people (6). Shepherd critiques earlier paradigms of tribal historiography while explaining in some detail his reason for writing this work within a scope of decolonization theory. In his conclusions Shepherd discusses the significance of Hualapai history not only for the academy and the American populace, but also for the Hualapai people themselves. Although these two sections are somewhat lengthy and do not quite fit Shepherd's

goal of bringing Hualapai voice into the story, his discussions will stimulate the intellectual requirements of researchers working in New Indian History.

Chapter 1 relates Pai origin stories and sets the stage for the book's historical inquiries. This chapter covers an important period in Hualapai history: the Hualapai Wars against the US Army, their forced removal to the Colorado River near Parker, Arizona, and their escape back to their ancestral homelands in 1875. Chapter 2 discusses the arrival of Anglo-Americans into traditional Hualapai lands, which created new socioeconomic conditions and the eventual creation of the Hualapai reservation in 1883. Chapter 3 documents the tremendous social and cultural changes that took place in the early twentieth century, changes that necessitated negotiations with homesteaders, nearby town governments, and large corporations such as the Santa Fe Railway. Chapters 4 and 5 relate this ongoing story of the Hualapais' fight for self-determination, land claims, and the acceptance of neocolonial impositions such as the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. The chapter highlights a new style of Hualapai leadership that was required to fight for a modern national identity. Chapters 6 and 7 focus on the postwar era and the Hualapais' battle against the US government's termination and relocation policies. They highlight how the tribe coped with new economic development issues such as water rights and energy development. Finally, chapter 8 provides insight into contemporary issues in the post–self-determination era: globalization, federal deregulation and privatization, education, and tourism.

Shepherd's book offers particularly interesting insights into the twentieth-century sociopolitical history of the tribe. With the exception of the presentation and discussion of Hualapai origin stories provided by tribal members, the early chapters of the book provide little in the way of new insight into Hualapai history and essentially follow the scholarship of previous Hualapai researchers such as Henry Dobyns and Robert Euler (see *Walapai* and *Wauba*). A more comprehensive and in-depth historical discussion begins with Shepherd's discussion of the creation of the Hualapai reservation and its implications with regard to identity and the reconsti-

tution of a cultural landscape for the tribe. It is starting with this era—the late nineteenth century—that Shepherd begins to more effectively utilize the tribal voice in his narrative both through oral interviews and historical writings such as tribal correspondence and transcripts from congressional testimony.

As Shepherd moves his narrative through the twentieth century, contemporary issues such as water rights, energy resources, and tourism become intertwined with issues of tribal sovereignty, self-determination, and economic survival. Although their reservation is situated along the Colorado River, for more than a century the Hualapai have struggled to gain access to water. Remarkably, despite overwhelming historical and anthropological evidence, the tribe's ancestral claims to water from the Colorado River were blatantly disregarded by the National Park Service and the state of Arizona, thus causing innumerable hardships for tribal members (166–71). This marginalization of tribal concerns by governmental agencies led to a decades-long push by the tribe for construction of a dam across the Colorado River that would have flooded tribal lands and probably caused serious environmental degradation. However, such actions were deemed necessary by the tribal government to ensure dependable access to water and potential hydroelectric power. Although this venture was eventually deemed unfeasible and scrapped by the federal government, it points to the tribe's desire to ensure economic viability even though, if constructed, the Hualapai Dam would have encountered serious conflicts with traditional cultural values. This paradox of development versus a sacred landscape is further demonstrated by Shepherd's discussion of the tribe's adamant refusal to allow uranium mining within the reservation boundaries (196–97). Finally, Shepherd touches upon the controversial Skywalk project built by the tribe in 2007. This glass extension over the Grand Canyon, a technological marvel, was (and still is) a highly contentious issue, but it has reportedly been an economic boon for the tribe's economy. Shepherd starts strong with his discussion about the Skywalk project; however, rather than carrying through with a dialogue about potentially conflicted values, he shifts gears and reverts to a denunciation of the policies of Grand Canyon National Park. This

is unfortunate since the Skywalk exposes one of the most interesting cases of balancing cultural conservation against economic development in recent history.

Despite these minor shortfalls, Shepherd's work on Hualapai history successfully integrates traditional archival research with the tribal narrative and encases this package within a sound theoretical framework. *We Are an Indian Nation: A History of the Hualapai People* is an important contribution to Native American studies.

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Sy Hoahwah. *Velroy and the Madischie Mafia*. Albuquerque: West End P, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-9816693-7-3. 58 pp.

Scott Andrews, *California State University, Northridge*

The cover of Sy Hoahwah's poetry collection *Velroy and the Madischie Mafia* suggests the book's intertwined themes of violence, resistance, and cultural synthesis. Above the title is a photograph of Comanche men from the late 1800s. Their clothing and hairstyles suggest their place in the Americanization process of the Comanches. Most of them are wearing button-down shirts, vests, and coats, but their hair is long, they are draped in blankets, and at least one wears feathers in his hair. They are not young men, so perhaps they can recall periods of open warfare against Texans, Americans, Mexicans, and other American Indians of the Southwest. It is easy to imagine them as warriors fighting for their people. (Hoahwah has told me that one of the men in the photograph is an ancestor of his, a Mexican captive who was adopted into the Comanches.) Below the title are silhouettes of men in suits and ties, suggestive of the movie poster for Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*. Four of the five fig-

ures have what appear to be bullet holes where their heads should be. The center figure, though, still has his head and long hair. Like the men of the photograph above them, they are warriors. Both images suggest the synthesis of American and Comanche cultural expressions, but the bottom image problematizes the effectiveness of this warrior mentality—the image suggests death as much as resistance. This problem is explored by Hoahwah's collection of fine poems.

In an essay on Carter Revard's poetry, Janet McAdams writes that she is not interested in exploring American Indian identities that are "somehow caught or trapped in the in-between" (194). Instead, she explores in Revard's work the dialectic that emerges from the interaction of cultures. In his characters, Hoahwah explores a similar dialectic with images and events drawn from both American and Comanche cultures. Their mixed identities are enabled rather than disabled through this cultural dialectic.

The first poem, "Madischie Mafia," introduces the members of the gang at a dance club, and each is identified with this synthesis of the American and Comanche. Velroy "de-jays the séance turntables" for dancers who are "sunrise songs in reverse." Corey is in a bathroom stall using Ecstasy for "eagle medicine." Dee can "grass dance" and "bump and grind"—"Black girls love him." Stoney is selling "peyote and coke to the white boys." We do not learn the narrator's name; we are told only that he has killed a man who is identified by his tribe (Lakota) and his gang (Rollin '20). After the killing, the narrator "fancy danced."

The reader may not approve of this synthesis, and this synthesis may not prove ultimately effective for the characters, but they do not experience the synthesis as conflict; they seem at ease with the mixture and are empowered by it. For instance, in "White Clay," Stoney bravely faces a ghost who attacks him, and he is rewarded with special medicine that protects him from bullets. The medicine's power is proven in a shoot-out with a Mexican gang at Walmart. The results of this synthesis are problematized by the collection's concluding poem, "Alight." There we learn the characters have "sacrificed" something valuable, though it is ambiguous whether the loss is in exchange for or because of their outlaw identities, the "privi-

leges of shadows": Corey lost an unborn child, Dee lost his mentor, and Stoney lost his ghost medicine. The narrator claims that no one knows what Velroy sacrificed, and he states that his sacrifice was Velroy, with the implication that he has killed Velroy: "As for me, I sacrificed Velroy. / I was warlike with soft eyes."

In works that do participate in the trope of being "trapped in the in-between," the dissonance between a character's cultural identities is the source of psychic pain or practical failure. For Hoahwah's characters, the problems are not so easily defined. They do perceive themselves as outsiders to America—the parts of American culture they appropriate are outside its mainstream, are outlaw elements—but the cultural conflicts they may feel do not paralyze them. For instance, the narrator expresses continuity between a Comanche past and a mixed present. In "White Clay," for example, the historic rivalry between Comanches and Mexicans takes place in the modern American setting of Walmart.

Despite the poems' synthesis of American and Comanche cultures, the narrator expresses a Comanche nationalism and an ambivalence about the mixture of cultures. Both sentiments can be seen in "Handwritten Notes in a Bible Thick as Buffalo Meat" when he travels with Velroy to bury his son's placenta at the base of Mt. Scott, where Comanches had buried their dead among the crevices: "Despite all other / uncertainties, my son will know where to end." "Uncertainties" could be caused by a cultural confusion, but an ultimate certainty is expressed in determining where his son's spirit will rest. However, the poems also express ambivalence about Comanche culture, at least about the vestiges of it expressed by Velroy's mafia. Although the characters take action through their mixed-culture identities, the poems suggest some actions may not be that effective, particularly the action based on the Comanche warrior code embodied in those nineteenth-century men depicted on the book's cover. The narrator killed a rival Lakota gang member, and Stoney killed a Mexican rival, but was the Comanche community helped by these actions? Were the characters helped, beyond their standing in the gang? Are Mexicans and other American Indians the true obstacle for the Comanches now? Are they fighting the right battles?

The final poem, "Alight," ends with the narrator waiting for signs of a Comanche revival: "But in the dark, at night, I quietly listen / for our language, hungry to answer."

I have used Hoahwah's book in the classroom a few times already, and young, predominantly non-Indian students identify with the contemporary cultural references and are rewardingly challenged by the Comanche references. I have found the book useful in disrupting the "over-worked trope" (194) that McAdams describes, an understanding of cultural dynamics with which many students are already familiar and upon which they can too easily rely.

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Beth Rose Middleton. *Trust in the Land: New Directions in Tribal Conservation*. Tucson: U of Arizona P, 2011.
ISBN: 978-0-8165-2928-5. 324 pp.

Clint Carroll, *University of Minnesota*

Beth Rose Middleton's *Trust in the Land* is an exemplary study on the indigenization of private land conservation institutions. The book highlights and contextualizes the work of Native American and Alaska Native leaders and communities toward regaining access to and ownership of their traditional lands. Pulling together fourteen cases from across the United States, Middleton illuminates a new and exciting avenue for advancing tribal sovereignty and environmental justice in Indian country.

The book provides a thorough look at the theoretical context and history of private conservation, while simultaneously offering an invaluable practical resource for Native communities and resource managers who seek to use the tools of private conservation as means to reassert their role as the original stewards of the land. Middleton

notes that the field of private land conservation, represented by land trusts (e.g., the Nature Conservancy) and conservation easements (the legal tools that land trusts use to protect specific lands from development), has historically excluded the knowledge and interests of local stakeholders. *Conservation* itself originated as an ideology that refused to acknowledge humans—specifically indigenous peoples—as key components of "natural" systems. *Trust in the Land* describes the influence that Native communities have been able to exert on the conservation movement with regard to recognizing sustainable indigenous activities on the land that may not only enhance local ecosystem health but also restore indigenous connections to the land and thus result in environmental justice and spiritual and psychological healing for Native communities.

The book is organized into three sections, which look at Native-led conservation organizations, collaborations between tribes and non-Native conservation groups (the largest section), and tribal use of federal conservation programs (specifically the Natural Resources Conservation Service). In each, Middleton details the history and social dynamics of numerous, geographically diverse initiatives, leaving the reader with clear ideas of how individual tribal nations can apply private conservation tools to their unique situations. In his own chapter, guest author Dr. Kurt Russo, executive director of the Native American Land Conservancy, explains the fine details of developing a Native land trust—an excellent resource for those who seek to get out and *do* this work in their communities. As such, Middleton's work as a whole bridges the divide between creating rigorous scholarly work and contributing in a practical way to the families and communities from whom the research has drawn.

Middleton situates the study in the context of environmental justice, augmented by a heavy emphasis on tribal sovereignty. The tenets of environmental justice advocate the ability of underrepresented communities (often communities of color) to have a seat at the table in environmental planning ("procedural justice"), and the recognition of disproportionate exposure to environmental contaminants by such communities in the planning process ("distributive justice"). Thus, Middleton's approach fuses together the *moral* imperative of her work (she writes: "private transactions that lock

up lands in perpetuity should never proceed without the participation of tribes and Native families with ties to the land" [35]) with the *political* imperative of recognizing that through their distinct relationship with the federal government Native nations are more than ordinary stakeholders—they are sovereign entities with corresponding political rights. The coupling of environmental justice and tribal sovereignty in Middleton's approach is commendable. It leaves space for nonfederally recognized tribes (e.g., the Mountain Maidu in northern California), who may not be able to wield the term *sovereignty* in the same manner as federally recognized tribes (hence her inclusion of Native *families*, as in the above quotation). It also works in favor of removed Native nations (e.g., many tribes in Oklahoma), who, while they cannot claim to be the "original" peoples of the land, have sovereign jurisdictional rights and the responsibility to honor the spirit of the land they inhabit.

Middleton also highlights that Native land reacquisition in the context of private conservation is not always adversarial. Collaboration between Native governments and communities and non-Native conservation organizations is a promising endeavor for healing relationships between groups. Some of the most encouraging language I have read on this topic comes from the Trust for Public Land, a non-Native entity: "Returning ancestral lands to Native people has power: Power to educate about historical injustices that still affect us all, whether Native or non-Native. Power to inform non-Natives about how Native people live today, on or off reservation. Power to teach why a landscape is important—not just for its beauty but also for its history, culture, and ability to sustain and transform lives" (Blair). Middleton's book embodies this perspective and provides a reference for how private conservation tools can contribute to a "liberating movement of Native-led conservation in Indian country" (246).

Key to this "liberating movement" is the recognition of sustainable indigenous practices on the land. Such recognition has resulted in the formation of *cultural* conservation easements. Middleton notes that a typical conservation easement protects a parcel of land from development (through the procurement of the rights to develop the land from a private landowner in exchange for tax

incentives) and often restricts human use to prescribed recreational activities. "In contrast," she writes, "cultural conservation easements place greater emphasis on the stewardship and use of a property in order to perpetuate cultural practices and enhance culturally important plant and animal species" (17). As relatively new formations in the field of private conservation, cultural conservation easements as used by Native tribes and communities represent alternative visions of *conservation* and *environment* and are transforming how such policies are designed and implemented (251).

From my own perspective as a researcher working with my tribal nation on issues of conservation and cultural revitalization, the book comes at a critical time when tribal governments and communities are seeking to create space for the continuation of traditional environmental knowledge and practices. Often the upfront purchase of former tribal lands is impractical due to budgetary constraints or bureaucratic red tape. Middleton presents the formation of Native land trusts and the strategic use of conservation easements as other possible paths toward achieving the goal of full restitution of culturally important tribal lands. Through this engagement with private conservation tools, Native tribes and communities are using dominant institutional forms in ways that successfully articulate their goals and needs and that, in the process, are transforming these institutions and creating "new legal mechanisms" (4) for the reacquisition and consolidation of former Native lands.

Anyone involved in the field of conservation would greatly benefit from Middleton's in-depth treatment of this cutting-edge topic. Teachers and students of Native American and indigenous studies or environmental studies will appreciate this glimpse into on-the-ground environmental work in Indian country. Finally, as stated above, the book is an excellent resource for Native community leaders and resource managers who wish to explore such possibilities within their own communities.

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Craig Womack. *Art as Performance, Story as Criticism: Reflections on Native Literary Aesthetics*. Norman: U of Oklahoma P, 2010.
ISBN: 978-0-8061-4065-0. 406+ pp.

Jarrett Chapin, *University of Wisconsin–Madison*

Presenting original fiction next to bold literary criticism, Craig Womack, associate professor of English at Emory University, has adopted an exceptional approach to the problem of tribal sovereignty. *Art as Performance, Story as Criticism: Reflections on Native Literary Aesthetics* is divided into fifteen "mus(e)ing"s, which break often with the form of much scholarly work on literature in any academic jurisdiction. Riffing on jazz in order to convey the methodological aim of his project, Womack in one "mus(e)ing" discusses the evolution of jazz under a master like Miles Davis, who, fearing the stagnation of a less accessible and unfashionable bebop jazz, experimented with fusion. The result of this controlled fusion was a more accessible though nonetheless complex musical experience for listeners. Getting to the point, Womack writes that both literary criticism and theory, similarly, "have enough problems without writing them in such a fashion that no one wants to read them. If we want readers to seriously consider our ideas, they better groove, man" (77). This playful and grooving use of language enriches *Art as Performance*.

Jazz-like things in *Art as Performance* include the merging of fiction and criticism in one critical work, and Womack's vague articulation of a tribal sovereignty in his fifth section, "Caught in the Current, Clinging to a Twig," wherein he aligns with Robert Warrior's definition of the concept as an open-ended, process-based metaphysic. In his too-brief discussion of sovereignty, Womack seems to call for more inclusivity. Yet, some of his readers may fail to form any coherent appreciation of this concept due, as I've noted, to his vagueness. For Womack, sovereignty seems to be something like jazz, harmonizing a plurality of deviations under a single melody, or a story. Sovereignty, writes Womack, "that fails to interact across borders would be no sovereignty at all. Tribal nationalism should be seen as central to any mature understanding of globalism and

the fluidity of borders rather than some kind of obstacle blocking a superior postmodern enlightenment" (88). His discussion of Creek citizenship issues and the 1979 disenfranchisement of freedmen may not sit well with some readers who hold a different philosophy. Yet, he notes, such exceptions may pose problems for tribal sovereignty. Apparently arbitrary exclusions should lead some to question the rationale behind such decisions that seem to turn merely on the blackness of a person's skin. Womack urges artists and critics to see the content of a court trial through a literary or aesthetic lens. In this way he reimages literary scholars and artists as frontline participants in the legal decisions of their communities: "what if we consider the trial as art?" (110). Womack asks for vigilance from "novelists, literary critics, and musicians" and a greater feeling of responsibility for the affairs of the world, "not solely with mysticism regarding love of earth and respect for all relations. One must also evaluate," he writes, "whether or not such philosophies are ever enacted" (114).

Applying his critical lens in "Lynn Riggs's Other Indian Plays," Womack turns to the Cherokee writer who spent his adult life avoiding the Oklahoma community where he was raised. Womack adds that Riggs went to great lengths to avoid the complexities of home and had a system worked out with his agent, who would call the writer out of the state with urgent business during prolonged visits. For Riggs, as it was for another Native writer, D'Arcy McNickle, "home represents lack of intellectual opportunities and the inability to grow as an artist—and much more threateningly a gloomy oppression that kills off all forms of human liberation" (122). In his reading of Riggs's work, Womack places critical stress on social dynamics, which may have worked to disconnect Riggs from a coherent feeling of community and to create points of "indirection, deflection [and] substitution" (297) in his plays wherever content suggests sexual deviance. According to Womack, Riggs silences, redirects, and sometimes drowns his representations of figures that are too complex or, perhaps, too disturbing to render completely.

A number of pages in *Art as Performance* are spent detailing and reconciling redirection and indirection with the society in which they were produced.

Womack has written a good portion of *Art as Performance* with his previous work, *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism*, in mind. Particularly, Womack seems interested in answering his critics, "who have argued about too much separation in my work, [and] have imagined a kind of utopia where people don't have to delineate one thing from another and decide which ones they want to study . . ." (362). Indeed, the choice of a subject on which to turn our cameras and the delineation of things and persons as tribal or not remains a difficulty for Native literary criticism. Womack attempts to work through this difficulty in two works of short fiction, a play and his sometimes enjoyable reading of deviance in some lesser-read Native literary works.

Womack's most recent book of criticism is a celebration of deviance through which he discusses the broader concept of sovereignty as something other than a mere threshold of tradition. However, given the length of this book, it would have been nice if Womack had given his readers more points of traction. In his engagement with the issue of tribal citizenship for freedmen, gay marriage, and his exploration of the less examined work of Native authors such as Pauline Johnson, Alexander Poesy, Durango Mendoza, and others, Womack shows himself to be an engaging critic with unique ideas about how criticism ought to be done. His pleasant style makes this work accessible for students at any level. And though his sections of fiction make this work long, perhaps unnecessarily long, they also make this a very teachable work.

Gordon D. Henry Jr., Nieves Pascual Soler, and Silvia Martínez-Falquina, eds. *Stories through Theories/Theories through Stories: North American Indian Writing, Storytelling and Critique*. American Indian Studies Series. East Lansing: Michigan State UP, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-87013-841-6. 327 pp.

Jill Doerfler, *University of Minnesota–Duluth*

This collection explores the relationship between American Indian literature and contemporary critical theory. As acknowledged by

Henry in his introductory essay "Allegories of Engagement: Stories/Theories—A Few Remarks," this relationship has at times been contentious. Some American Indian writers and scholars have expressed resistance to Western theory and its possible applications to American Indian literature. Yet other American Indian writers and scholars, including Leslie Marmon Silko and Sherman Alexie, have utilized Western methodologies, terminologies, and theories. Henry goes on to note that the editors' interest in the relationship between American Indian literature and contemporary critical theory was "fueled" by the works of Gerald Vizenor. In fact, several of the essays in the collection utilize Vizenor's large body of work. Henry does an excellent job delineating the context from which the collection emerged and the variety of ways in which the essays engage with the intertwined relationship between stories and theories. He notes:

> We could never write enough to say what stories are, how they function, or what methodologies might be best for considering them as primary critical tools, in a sort of meta-stories critical process. In fact stories may lead to, may have already led us to, theories and then back again to stories (18).

This wonderfully diverse collection includes essays by Native and non-Native scholars from the United States, Canada, and Europe. This book is divided into three sections: "Living to Tell," "Critical Traces," and "Of Good Listeners."

The first section, "Living to Tell," contains five individual essays that examine how theory emerges from stories. In her essay "Living to Tell Stories," P. Jane Hafen argues that we should seek out and employ literary criticism that does not perpetuate colonization. She resists several of the standard labels utilized in Western theory by asserting: "we are not postmodern or modern, we are not postcolonial. We are not trapped between two worlds. As twenty-first-century indigenous peoples, we are survivors" (39). Rob Appleford asks: "How is it possible to be at once a cultural conservationist and an artistic experimenter?" (44). Appleford uses Ray A. Young Bear's experimental autobiography *Black Eagle Child* to examine this seeming paradox. In "Uncomprehended Mysteries: Language

and Legend in the Writing of Zitkala-Sa and Mourning Dove," Harry Brown argues that by combining legend and autobiography Mourning Dove and Zitkala-Sa create a practical means to address the issues surrounding translatability and make intercultural connections. Like Appleford, Elvira Pulitano addresses issues related to autobiography. She uses Gerald Vizenor's autobiography and poetry within the context of current debates related to interaction between the creative writer and the critic, suggesting that his work is autocritical. In her essay "Ignatia Broker's Lived Feminism: Toward a Native Women's Theory," Molly McGlennen examines the deficiencies of Western feminist theory in relation to American Indian literature. She argues that an empowering and useful theory of "lived feminism" emerges from Ignatia Broker's *Night Flying Woman*.

The second section "Critical Traces" contains five individual essays. In "A Sovereignty of Transmotion: Imagination and the 'Real,' Gerald Vizenor, and Native Literary Nationalism," Niigonwedom (now Niigaanwewidam) James Sinclair breaks new ground with his argument that Gerald Vizenor's work, specifically *Heirs of Columbus*, "can be applied to current material struggles of Indigenous (and specifically Anishinaabeg) sovereignty and self-determination" (128). Susan Berry Brill de Ramírez uses the poetry of Simon J. Ortiz to answer several critical questions relating to community, place, "home," and relationships to land. Silvia Martínez-Falquina draws upon Gordon Henry Jr.'s fictional and autobiographical narratives to show that reading the texts for the theories they offer can lead to the transformation of the reader. In his essay "*Bearheart*: Gerald Vizenor's Compassionate Novel," Michael Wilson argues that *Bearheart* is the embodiment of a hybrid space and discusses the value of Vizenor's concept of a compassionate trickster. Jane Haladay astutely examines how the theory of fluidity within Okanagan writer and activist Jeanette C. Armstrong's *Whispering Shadows* can pull or weave people together and also blur a range of boundaries between people, animals, land, language, and artistic expression.

The third and final section "Of Good Listeners" contains four individual essays. In her essay "Stories Are All We Are: Thomas King's Theory and Practice and Storytelling," Teresa Gibert illumi-

nates the ways in which King defies dichotomies such as "theory versus practice, myth versus history, stories versus histories," and "seriousness versus humor" (259). Nieves Pascual Soler draws upon a range of important theories to give new insights into the well-known imposture Grey Owl. Gordon D. Henry Jr. interrogates the process of making a text, delving to the complexities that exist with regard to the transmission of a text. Drawing upon his experience writing a book about Turtle Mountain elder Frances Cree (Eagle-heart), he asserts "story/life may transcend certain fixed assumptions and tend from experiences of varied transmission to create new contexts for itself, through affiliation and multiple sites of cultural transmission" (303–04). The collection ends with Patrick R. LeBeau's powerful essay "Origin-of-Poem Story: Origin and Ownership of an Indian Poem, 'Earth Death.'" LeBeau uses story to explain the ways in which poetry can derive from memory and imagination as well as place and politics.

The contributors of this collection are not afraid to ask the tough questions, and they avoid simplistic solutions in favor of exploring a range of multifaceted answers. Taken together, these essays provide scholars with a useful breadth and depth of stories and theories. As we work to consider the variety of ways in which theory is both created and best employed, those of us who teach courses in American Indian studies, Native literary studies, and theory will find this volume valuable.

Emma LaRocque. *When the Other Is Me: Native Resistance Discourse, 1850–1990*. Winnipeg: U of Manitoba P, 2010. IBSN: 978-0887557033. 218 pp.

James Jenkins, *University of Texas at Austin*

What constitutes Native resistance writing, and why do Native writers engage in resistance? Emma LaRocque argues that Native peoples have been so debased and misrepresented, both historically and in today's popular culture, that the most productive forms of literary resistance attempt to restore the humanity of Native peoples

(65). LaRocque is Cree-Métis from northern Alberta and professor in the Department of Native Studies at the University of Manitoba. She contends that the Canadian experience of colonization has differed from that of the United States, and *When the Other Is Me* represents an attempt to treat Canadian literature on its own terms (10). LaRocque also remains theoretically engaged throughout her book, expanding on postcolonial theory even as she challenges its applicability to Native peoples in settler states. LaRocque makes a conscious effort to avoid the abstract when she deals with theory, and she frequently references her own subjectivity by writing in the first person. Confrontational and even angry at times, LaRocque's theoretical contributions are as important as her sweeping treatment of Native Canadian texts.

LaRocque spends the first two chapters of the book demonstrating that Native peoples have been and continue to be profoundly dehumanized in scholarship and popular culture. She refers to the Native experience of academia to argue that discourses of bias and objectivity reflect "a tool in the politics of power." In other words, the Western voice in mainstream intellectual thought is subterraneous or absent, and this voice serves to discredit Native authors who are often accused of bias (28). LaRocque offers several "vignettes" of her own life experience to illustrate how the debasement of Native peoples has become institutionalized in Canadian education. LaRocque then goes on to show how colonial writers systematically dehumanized Native peoples through what she calls the "civ/sav dichotomy." The idea that Native peoples represented the lowest level of human development informed encounters between Euro-Canadians and Natives throughout the early stages of colonization (39).

LaRocque argues that rather than embrace colonial literature that reinforces the civ/sav dichotomy, the Canadian educational system should recognize literary sources like John Richardson's *Wacousta* as hate literature (55, 62). Furthermore, LaRocque contends that non-Native scholars who have tried to contextualize the racial ideologies that pervade exploration literature have effectively legitimized racism (60). She identifies strains of this racism in Hollywood movies, textbooks, and the reception of Native resistance writers as opposi-

tional or "bitter" (70). Although LaRocque generally employs secondary sources to make her claims, she draws a convincing connection between the mainstream acceptance of blatantly racist material and the tendency for non-Native scholars to overlook or discredit Native authors.

LaRocque's middle chapters address the Native literature of the mid-nineteenth century, especially the widely published works by Pauline Johnson and George Copway, and Native literature from the 1970s and 1980s. LaRocque addresses Aboriginal authors who challenged Euro-Canadian invasion and their own systematic dehumanization. In the excerpts from Native authors that LaRocque chooses, one can always identify a claim of humanity, as when Shinguaconse writes to Lord Elgin in 1849 that "we are men like you, we have the limbs of men, we have the hearts of men" (79). LaRocque argues that Native peoples have responded to dehumanization in two different ways, either by arguing that "we are civilized" or by revealing the ways in which whites are savage (100). LaRocque is careful to explain that these moves represent satirical forms of resistance and should not be read as "reverse racism." For example, Native authors have pointed out that Europeans practiced scalping as much or perhaps more so than Native peoples. But this represents a counterdiscourse that acts against the widespread links between Indian scalping and savagery. It is not racism against whites.

LaRocque goes on to deal with several theoretical challenges concerning Native literature. She discusses how white audiences have demanded stereotypical performances by Natives, which helps explain the costumes and rhetorical devices of Pauline Johnson and, more recently, Chief Dan George (125). LaRocque argues that the construction of the noble savage, the flip side of the wild savage, demands authenticity and can have a discernibly negative effect on Native peoples. Yet she is careful to show how Johnson, Chief Dan George, and others used their limited positions as "authentic" Indians to talk back to white audiences (131). LaRocque also admits her skepticism toward the politics of difference, which has manifested itself in academic disciplines like ethnography and cultural studies.

She argues that these techniques tend to "lump" Native individuals together, further dehumanizing them (142).

LaRocque notes that although Native literature experienced a resurgence in the 1970s, neither white nor Native audiences have paid much attention. LaRocque attempts to address Native literature's lack of critical reception in Canada by offering her own method of analysis. She looks closely at Jeannette Armstrong's *Slash* and Ruby Slipperjack's *Honour the Sun*. LaRocque argues that these two works represent attempts to restore the humanity of Native peoples. Although each book deals with very different settings, Native groups, characters, and themes, they move past the pressure to write "authentically" by establishing the humanity and individuality of experience among Native peoples.

LaRocque ends by explaining how her own childhood is the source for much of her own consciousness. However, she is careful to avoid referring to "traditions" and other markers that she believes dehumanize Native peoples. She argues that Native literature that focuses on humanity does not necessarily stem from Western culture, and that reestablishing shared humanity is one way of escaping the pressures to return to "pre-Columbian nativism" or "post-Columbian stereotypes" (157). In her postscript, LaRocque attempts to show the limits of various theoretical trends that have embraced Native studies. She concedes that some postcolonial studies and other subfields like healing studies have embraced Aboriginal concepts. But she emphasizes that they have not been entirely welcome to Native authors and have relegated Native studies to the margins of academia. The challenge for Native scholarship and literature, LaRocque maintains, is to dethrone the stereotypes that have marginalized Native peoples (169).

LaRocque's study represents an important intervention, both theoretically and as an overview, in the study of Native literature in Canada. However, LaRocque raises some questions that she does not fully answer. She has nothing to say, for instance, about the century between 1870 and 1970, which she refers to as "a time of voicelessness" for Native peoples (83). Although a comprehensive study of Native writings during this period is presently lacking, Aborigi-

nal people were indeed writing. LaRocque could have looked at a number of archival sources, including diaries, letters, and even published local newspapers to find Native voices after 1870. Admittedly, the period of Native history from 1870 and 1970 is still poorly understood, and Native voices are far less accessible. But one hundred years is a very large gap in an overview of Native resistance discourse, to say the least. *When the Other Is Me* would have benefited from some discussion of why Native writers could not or did not publish literature during this period. Moreover, this elision begs another question: If Natives were writing and resisting in other forums, does it matter that there was no Native "literature" coming out of Canada?

LaRocque also falls short of justifying her decision to focus only on Canada rather than to incorporate some US literature. She refers to Native American experiences in the United States only sparingly and in comparative contexts. For this reason, US scholars who have little background in Native literature from Canada will find *When the Other Is Me* to be an excellent source for broadening their understanding of Native North American literature. At the same time, LaRocque never offers a compelling reason for focusing solely on Canada. She implies that Canada and the United States experienced different processes of colonization, but I am not entirely convinced that they were so different. At one point LaRocque states that "Whites crushed the Natives" in the United States, whereas they "dispossessed them largely through legal means" in Canada (43). But despite the prominent place of the US military in historical memory, the United States dispossessed Native Americans mostly through legal means as well. The US government signed treaties, created reservations, subdivided reserved land into private lots, and made a number of legal maneuvers that closely paralleled Canadian policies. I have no doubt that the state of Aboriginal politics has differed from Native American politics in the United States since the 1970s. But LaRocque tends to emphasize differences in colonization during the mid-nineteenth century without ever clearly stating what these differences were.

It is difficult to criticize LaRocque for what she doesn't do

because she does so much. *When the Other Is Me* reviews a broad range of Native resistance literature and makes several valuable theoretical interventions. LaRocque's bold acknowledgment and defense of her own positionality is especially notable. This book will interest scholars of Native literature as well as those wresting with the challenges of producing Native-centered scholarship.

A. Irving Hallowell. *Contributions to Ojibwe Studies: Essays, 1934–1972*. Ed. Jennifer S. H. Brown and Susan Elaine Gray. Critical Studies in the History of Anthropology series. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 2010. ISBN: 978-0-8032-23912. 634 pp.

Margaret Noori, *University of Michigan*

Between any two cultures, between any two people, are common networks of understanding and vast chasms of difference. Between A. Irving Hallowell and William Berens was an exploration of anthropology and *ezhi-Anishinaabenibwaakaawaad* that spanned two decades, three nations, and still invites critical inquiry in many directions today.

A. Irving Hallowell, who lived from 1892 to 1974, grew up in what he called "a protected environment" during what is known as "the gilded age" in US history (1). Theodore Roosevelt was president, and the United States was expanding physically and economically. Hallowell was trained to study business at the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce of the University of Pennsylvania in the early 1910s. When he met Professor Frank Speck, he discovered an interest in social science, ethnography, anthropology, and psychology. Hallowell acknowledged that Speck engaged in "salvage anthropology" and thought of the aboriginal people as "his pets," but Speck "was always extolling the sovereign virtues of the Indians and proclaiming the intrinsic value of their culture" (3). Hallowell followed Speck, who was a follower of Boas, and they, along with others of their day, cleared a path for ethnohistory in academia. One of the virtues of the new volume, *Contributions to Ojibwe Studies*, is its publication as part of Nebraska's Critical Studies in the His-

tory of Anthropology series, which reveals how scientific inquiry in the discipline has developed. In this case it illuminates the story of sometimes socially disconnected, seasonally nomadic academics who shaped the way humans write and think about one another.

William "Willie" Berens, also known as Tabasigizikweas, was Moose clan and lived from 1866 to 1947. For much of his adult life he was treaty chief of the Berens River community in Manitoba. On the one hand his knowledge of political leadership came through his father, Jacob Berens, who was a treaty chief before him. On the other hand his knowledge of Midewiwin teaching traditions were passed on to him by his grandfather, Ozaawashkogaad, a spiritual leader in the community. Berens was also a member of the Methodist church. During his lifetime he saw the advent of commercial fishing on Lake Winnipeg, an increase in agriculture, and the pervasive influence of industry and Christianity on Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) culture. He was a man of many professions—practical, political, and cultural. He could engage in traditional hunting as competently as he could *recount* encounters with nonhuman beings. It is likely that his interest in other cultures and desire to accurately represent his people led him to spend time contributing to the work of Irving "Pete" Hallowell, a junior scholar from another world of cultural studies.

From 1930 to 1947, Hallowell and Berens collaborated to document and define the central themes, as well as the blurred edges, of Anishinaabe culture. Their work resulted in essays published by Hallowell and now gathered and arranged in *Contributions to Ojibwe Studies*. From early conversations to later recombinations, their journals, stories, interviews, debates, and explanations provide a comprehensive review of an ancient culture in a changing world. Editors Jennifer S. H. Brown and Susan Elaine Gray have connected the heirs of both academic and Anishinaabe intellectual traditions, working both with a wide range of scholars influenced by Hallowell's work as well as fluent speakers of Anishinaabemowin and Berens's descendants as they prepared the text for publication. They provided footnotes when modern understanding differs from the original text and artfully arranged two lifetimes of thinking into seven logical sections that proceed chronologically so that readers

can follow the intellectual journey of Berens and Hallowell. To read these essays is to portage across a rich terrain.

The first section of the book focuses on the material life of the Anishinaabe and contains a previously unpublished essay, "Rocks and Stones." Emblematic of Hallowell's careful insight, this piece interrogates all angles of a single idea, ultimately making the point that no single viewpoint is possible. Hallowell reports, "When I bluntly asked old Alec Keeper whether all the rocks one could see were alive, he quietly replied, 'Some are.'" The Anishinaabeg people drawn into the Hallowell-Berens conversation reveal an alternate reality where complex relationships shift and are not always bound by the parameters of the physical universe. Some rocks are silent parts of the land, some rocks speak. These insights and explanations can be referenced by teachers and students of language, history, and culture as they contemplate the ways Anishinaabe language, narrative, and practical knowledge are related.

Several other sections explore various personal and social systems including kinship, life balance, and psychology. The essays are interwoven with stories that explain the practical, highly individualized, value system of the people. Sometimes Hallowell critiques the critics and the human condition itself as he responds to the work of his peers on these topics. For example, in his essay on polygyny he mentions the work of nine other writers on the same subject and wonders about the gullibility of A. Skinner, who was told "about by-gone days" by an informant who may have tangled fantasy with memory (92). Hallowell frequently acknowledges the range of ever-changing norms in any group of people. His work does not strive to make definitive statements about a distant past, but rather to translate the beliefs of one culture into the language and context of another, which is exactly what history had forced William Berens and his community to do.

The remaining sections sketch the complex systems used by the Anishinaabe to understand time, space, and spirit. Moving from spoken stories to remembered dreams, the essays explore connections between the waking world and the dimensions beyond physical perception. These are the places of the *pawaganak*, the places

where a soul might be left if one is not careful, places where a guide is important. In fact, the lesson of genuine listening and humbly observing is an underlying theme of Hallowell's career. He was a perceptive synthesist who recognized the historic quality of the intellect he encountered. "Chief William Berens, my interpreter and mentor during the course of my inquiries, proved to be such a spontaneous and reliable source of information in regard to all events and personalities during his lifetime, and even before, that I felt impelled to record as much as I was able" (382). For this we are thankful in all directions and disciplines: ethnohistory, anthropology, mideology, Anishinaabe linguistics, cultural psychology, and most likely new rubrics of understanding yet to be mapped.

David Delgado Shorter. *We Will Dance Our Truth: Yaqui History in Yoeme Performances*. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-8032-1733-1. 390 pp.

Jeffrey P. Shepherd, *University of Texas at El Paso*

In the opening pages to *We Will Dance Our Truth*, David Delgado Shorter introduces us to Ignacio Sombra, who recounts the Yoeme ceremonial practices of *animam miika*, the feeding the souls of deceased ancestors. Ignacio, who is from Potam Pueblo, distills in his account key elements of Yoeme identity: religion as a form of "work," the convergence of place and notions of "the people," and the holiness of the relationship between place, people, and cultural identity. In one of his many eloquent and insightful sets of journal entries that intersperse the book's ethnographic analysis and individual interviews, Shorter reflects on the significance of Ignacio's gift: "Although I hadn't asked him for a 'formal' presentation, Ignacio clearly gave me a gift tonight, not just in his description of *animam miika*. His talk evidenced a distinctly Yoeme way of thinking about, historicizing, and continuing tribal religious identity" (3). In short, Ignacio had provided an "essential" set of concepts that embodied the integral facets of Yoeme identity, but he implicitly hinted at an alternative conceptualization of historical consciousness.

We Will Dance Our Truth is one of those rare books that is delightfully impervious to easy categorization. At first blush it strikes one as an ethnographic study of Mexican Yoeme (Yaqui) constructions of identity, religion, and history. Delgado lived among and conducted interviews with dozens of Yoemem for more than a decade and a half. He kept copious notes on their cultural practices, memories, stories, and perceptions of the world. And, like a good ethnographer, he demonstrates a keen eye for the cultural performances that evidenced the complex interplay between social change and religious continuity. However, the reader will quickly realize that this book is much more than a standard ethnographic study of an Indigenous community. It is an insightful and in many ways personal account of Yoeme views on *religion* as a state of being that is deeply imbricated throughout individual and collective life. Specifically, *We Will Dance Our Truth* seeks to "express the spatial, performative, and religious ways that many Yoemem sustain their collective identity" (4). Moreover, Shorter proposes to "remap the boundary between the ethnological categories oral and literate and expand Western notions of historical expression to include nonliterate representations of 'local' history through various oral and ritual practices" (4).

A key dimension of this study is Shorter's ethnocultural eye for the significance of place, place-making, and geography for group identity. He draws upon key Yoeme myths, stories, folktales, symbols, cultural practices, and prophecies to contribute to broader ethnographic and scholarly discussions on historical consciousness and its discursive relationship with specific landscapes and locations. The ties between history, narrative, and place-making have been central subjects of much scholarly inquiry, but few authors have approached these issues with such an intellectual breadth and vigor. Moreover, few have chosen Shorter's commendable inductive and deductive approach: rather than applying extant theories and concepts to "reveal" the secrets of Indigenous cultural practices, this study posits an interactive model that draws upon Yoeme intellectual and religious principles to contribute to ongoing global discussions about place and identity. Not only is this an important effort

to decolonize ethnographic studies of Indigenous peoples, but it also repositions the politics of cross-cultural research by taking seriously the modes of consciousness that characterize "the subject of study." The "intellectual" articulations of Yoeme thinkers and cultural practitioners take center stage with the anthropological and ethnographic "canon" to help us understand more broadly the tropes of identity, religion, and geography.

David Delgado Shorter disrupts standard organizational and thematic frameworks by interspersing and interweaving oral interviews, personal stories, ethnographic journal entries, and standard scholarly analysis. The resulting layout refuses to privilege one form of knowledge—Western or Indigenous—over another. He begins with a brief overview of the main themes and turning points in Yoeme history to provide the reader with a "scholarly" basis for situating Yoeme narratives about the past and their relationship to it. He shifts into an insightful deconstruction of scholarship by Edward H. Spicer, the premier scholar of Yoeme culture history, and later in the book compares his work to that of Evelyn Hu-DeHart. Through his analysis of Spicer, Shorter discusses the main precepts of the field of ethnohistory and examines methodologies of ethnographic research that have dominated the literature since Spicer's work with the Yoemem began in the 1950s. One is especially struck by Shorter's arguments on mythology, prophecy, and religion, which he claims are more important for explaining Yoeme worldviews than Western notions of history. The introduction of the book continues with an elaboration upon the notion of the Testamento as a key trope in Yoeme storytelling and oral traditions. The Testamento is tied to the "talking tree," which is an expression of Yoeme understanding about how the "past and present" interact to mutually reinforce and explain each other, which in turn, help Yoemem make sense of their place in the world. He argues that prophetic discourse, drawing upon Michel Foucault, reveals more about "Yoeme social praxis within specific temporal and spatial contexts" than many linear stories about the past (17). These prophecies are typically "religious" in tone and content, but they are also performative concerns based on epistemological truths that reveal Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Following this trenchant introduction are two sections of the book that address different components of Yoeme identity, interspersed with chapters that vary between scholarly analysis, journal reflection, and oral interview. Chapter 1 begins with an overview of the Yoeme cosmology and its basis in the notion of *aniam*, or "worlds of being." The bulk of this chapter—and the rest of the book—is based on Shorter's extensive "fieldwork" in Potam Pueblo, Las Guasimas, and Mariana Pueblo, Mexico, which he began in the early 1990s. Chapter 2 offers a focused analysis of the "Testamento as a primary corpus of Yoeme myth and history" (21). In particular, the Testamento serves as a central form of "evidence" for Yoeme land rights, expressed in a ritual and performative fashion. Shorter places the Testamento "in conversation" with Yoeme myths and the extant literature on their pre- and postcontact history to demonstrate how writing can be broadly defined to include "inscriptions" of many kinds, beyond the textual word. Chapter 3 builds upon the Testamento to evaluate how nine versions of the talking tree stories "are ways of historicizing Yoeme agency in early contact zones." Talking Tree stories help Yoemem historicize the arrival of Europeans and provide a challenge to Western constructions of linear time through the stories' use of prophecy and myth, both of which constitute a "native historiographic practice" (22). Chapter 4, the last chapter of the first section of the book, offers a fascinating "comparison" between Yoeme versions of history and the scholarly contributions of Spicer and Hu-DeHart.

The second half of *We Will Dance Our Truth* engages the contemporary ethnographic contexts of Yoeme identity. In the book's "theoretical interlude" Shorter offers an "interchapter" where he expounds on different notions of "writing" in non-Western historiographies and considers the implications of exclusionary framings of knowledge for Indigenous claims to land in Western courts. By translating Yoeme discourses on history and sense of place within a colonial space such as the courts, Shorter offers a transition away from absolutist and "objective" representations of the past. This provides valuable leverage in present-day legal disputes that frequently hinge on Native peoples' ability to document their aboriginal terri-

tory in the colonial lexicon of "evidence and fact." The interchapter also serves as a useful intellectual segue into the ensuing chapters. Chapter 5 centers on how the well-known Yaqui deer dances, one of the most iconic borderlands tropes, expresses Yoeme ties to the land and space around them through ritualized hunting performances. The dances also exemplify Yoeme notions of gender, through the nearly all-male reenactments of "the hunt" and the gendered dimensions of Indigenous-Catholic religious syncretism. Chapter 6 elaborates on the spatial themes of the book with an explicit discussion on Yoeme place-making and ethnic boundary enforcement through funerary practices and maintenance of cemeteries. The rituals associated with the upkeep of *campo santos* highlight Indigenous conversations with ancestors manifested upon an explicitly physical cultural geography of these landscapes of the dead.

The unique organization of the book is a textual manifestation of Shorter's intellectual acumen and scholarly creativity. The rhythmic exchange between Western ethnographic analysis, reflexive journal entries, and "ethnographic dialogue" offers a breathtaking alternative to the formulaic monographs that tend to dominate the literature. One minute we are swept away to the intimate conversations between the author and Felipe Molina, the Yoeme intellectual and mentor who helped Shorter navigate his community, and a few pages later we are engaged in a stimulating discussion about the boundaries of history, memory, and myth. When reading the author's riveting journal notebooks, we feel as if we are looking over the shoulder of a first-rate ethnographer and a creative and eminently humane scholar who has profound respect for the people with whom he works. The honesty with which he challenges his own preconceptions and engages his own dogmas makes Shorter a "genuine" intellectual because he refuses to veer away from the hard questions, the difficult topics, and the sacred taboos of the academy. He is not afraid to listen to his "subjects" not as "subjects" but as authorities on their own history, religion, culture, and cosmology. He learns from them and places their theoretical constructions on par with the "great thinkers" of the contemporary world. Indeed, if David Delgado Shorter admits that he has learned a lot from nearly two decades working with the

Yoemem, I heartily affirm that I have learned a lot from reading this uniquely passionate and brilliant book.

If it is not already obvious, I strongly recommend this book. It will break new ground and revive old ways of viewing narrative, religion, performance, and ethnography. It is a wonderful contribution to the literature of Native American and Indigenous studies and should prove incredibly useful in graduate (and some undergraduate) courses everywhere. I for one cannot wait to introduce my students to *We Will Dance Our Truth*.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Association for the Study of American Indian Literatures announces the ASAIL Emerging Scholars Professional Development Fellowship, which provides travel assistance honoraria of $300 (US) for graduate students and advanced undergraduates to attend and present at professional conferences. Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis. Applicants must provide the following information: a cover letter, CV, and acceptance letter confirming acceptance to present at a professional conference on a topic relating to the study of Indigenous literatures or languages. Awards will be distributed at the discretion of the ASAIL President and Treasurer based on funding availability. Send applications and queries to the current ASAIL President, Jodi Byrd, at jabyrd@illinois.edu.

CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES

ADRIENNE AKINS is an assistant professor of English at Mars Hill College in Mars Hill, North Carolina. Her articles have appeared in journals including *Crítica Hispánica*, *Journal of the Short Story in English*, *Notes on Contemporary Literature*, *Southern Literary Journal*, and others.

SCOTT ANDREWS is an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. He teaches American and American Indian literatures at California State University, Northridge. He has published reviews, essays, poetry, and fiction in a variety of journals.

CLINT CARROLL is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation and received a PhD in environmental science, policy and management from the University of California, Berkeley, in May 2011. He is currently a postdoctoral associate in the Department of American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota, where he is working on a book manuscript on Cherokee Nation environmental governance in the context of contemporary Cherokee cultural revitalization efforts.

JARRETT CHAPIN is a doctoral student in the English Department at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

JILL DOERFLER (WHITE EARTH ANISHINAABE) is an assistant professor of American Indian studies at the University of Minnesota–Duluth. Her research draws upon both historical documents and literature to delineate Anishinaabe conceptions of identity in the twentieth century. She is especially interested in the ways in which Anishinaabeg resisted pseudoscientific measures of blood (race/blood quantum) as a means to define identity. She

has published "An Anishinaabe Tribalography: Investigating and Interweaving Conceptions of Identity during the 1910s on the White Earth Reservation" in *American Indian Quarterly* (2009). She coauthored *The White Earth Nation: Ratification of a Native Democratic Constitution* with Gerald Vizenor, which is forthcoming from the University of Nebraska Press.

WILLIAM A. DODGE is a cultural historian living in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He received his BA and MA degrees from the University of Arizona and University of Chicago, respectively, and his PhD in American studies from the University of New Mexico. He has over thirty-five years experience in historical, archaeological, and anthropological research with emphasis on the American Southwest. He is author of *Black Rock: A Zuni Cultural Landscape and the Meaning of Place* (2007).

AUBREY JEAN HANSON is a Métis scholar and educator living in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, where she currently teaches in public high schools and at Mount Royal University. She has a master's degree in sociology and equity studies in education from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, a bachelor of education, also from OISE/UT, and a bachelor of arts (honors) in English from the University of Victoria. Her research interests include Aboriginal studies, Aboriginal literatures, social justice education, and gender studies.

JAMES JENKINS is a Ford Foundation fellow and doctoral student in the Department of History at the University of Texas at Austin. His dissertation research deals with Anishinaabe responses to industrialization and national borders in the Great Lakes region during the twentieth century. He has also written about international indigenous activism, including North American Indian involvement in the 1980s Nicaraguan Revolution and counterrevolution. He is a band member of Walpole Island First Nation, where he is currently employed as a research archivist.

MARGARET NOORI / GIIWEDINOODIN (ANISHINAABE HERITAGE, WAABZHESHIINH DOODEM) received an MFA in creative writing and a PhD in English and linguistics from the University of Minnesota. She is director of the Comprehensive Studies Program and teaches American Indian literature at the University of Michigan. Her work focuses on the recovery and maintenance of Anishinaabe language and literature. Current research includes language proficiency and assessment and the study of indigenous

literary aesthetics. To see and hear current projects visit www.ojibwe.net, where she and her colleague, Howard Kimewon, have created a space for language shared by academics and the Native community.

JEFFREY P. SHEPHERD is an associate professor and director of the doctoral program in the Department of History at the University of Texas at El Paso. He received his PhD from Arizona State University in 2002 and is interested in the histories of Indigenous people, especially in the American Southwest and northern Mexico. His book, *We Are an Indian Nation: A History of the Hualapai People* (2010) focuses on the relationships between Indigenous nation-building and American colonialism. He has received grants or fellowships from the American Philosophical Society, the Max Millett Research Fund, the Ft. McDowell Indian Nation, Texas Tech University, and the Charles Redd Center at Brigham Young University. He has been a research fellow at the Newberry Library and with the National Endowment for the Humanities. He holds a contract from the National Park Service to write an environmental history of the Guadalupe Mountains in west Texas and southern New Mexico, which he plans to publish as a book. He is beginning a history of Indigenous peoples along the Mexico-US and US-Canada borders, tentatively titled "Creating Homelands, Contesting Borders: Sovereignty, Race, and Citizenship in Indigenous America." He is coeditor with Myla Vicenti Carpio of the series Critical Issues in Indigenous Studies, contracted by the University of Arizona Press. He teaches graduate and undergraduate courses on Indigenous, Western, border, and public history, and for the past six years he has been managing editor for *H-Borderlands*.

JONATHAN WILSON is an assistant professor of English. He holds a specialization in Native American literature(s) and emphases in nineteenth- and twentieth-century American fiction. He completed his PhD at the University of Texas at Arlington in 2008. His dissertation, "Spaces of Continuation, Preservation, and Belonging: Louise Erdrich's Concepts of Home," was chaired by professor, critic, and scholar Kenneth Roemer. He teaches a variety of traditional American and ethnic literature courses, including such titles as Louise Erdrich's North Dakota Saga, Writers of the Southwest, and Outlaw Literature. He was awarded the Hall-Kohfeldt Endowment for Southwestern Native American Studies from the Center for Greater Southwestern Studies and Cartography by the University of Texas at Arlington in 2007–08 and the O'Neill Graduate Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2005–06.

MAJOR TRIBAL NATIONS AND BANDS

This list is provided as a service to those readers interested in further communications with the tribal communities and governments of American Indian and Native nations. Inclusion of a government in this list does not imply endorsement of or by SAIL in any regard, nor does it imply the enrollment or citizenship status of any writer mentioned. Some communities have alternative governments and leadership that are not affiliated with the United States, Canada, or Mexico, while others are not currently recognized by colonial governments. We have limited the list to those most relevant to the essays published in this issue; thus, not all bands, towns, or communities of a particular nation are listed.

We make every effort to provide the most accurate and up-to-date tribal contact information available, a task that is sometimes quite complicated. Please send any corrections or suggestions to SAIL Editorial Assistant, Studies in American Indian Literatures, Department of English, 1 University Station, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712, or send an email to Laine Perez, editorial assistant, at leperez@mail.utexas.edu.

United Métis Tribe
8206 Rockville Rd #207
Indianapolis, IN 46214
Website: http://unitedmetis.org/leaves/

Ojibway of the Wabaseemoong Independent Nations
Wabaseemoong Band Office
General Delivery
Whitedog, ON P0X 1P0
Canada
Phone: 807-927-2000
Website: http://firstnation.ca/wabaseemoong-whitedog

Pueblo of Laguna
PO Box 194
Laguna, NM 87026
Phone: 505-552-6654
Website: http://www.lagunapueblo.org/

Shawnee Tribe
PO Box 189
29 S. Hwy. 69A
Miami, OK 74355
Phone: 918-542-2441
Website: http://www.shawnee-tribe.com/