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Studies in American Indian Literatures

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FROM THE EDITOR

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This issue marks a major change for the Association for the Study of American Indian Literatures/Studies in American Indian Literatures (ASAIL/*SAIL*) members and readers—it's our first issue produced by the University of Nebraska Press. By now many of you will have seen *SAIL* prominently included in the press's Native studies catalog, so I hope that you are as excited about holding this issue as I am!

This moment has been a long time in coming. It began in 1972 when ASAIL was founded at the MLA Convention as an organization whose purpose was to promote study, criticism, and research on the oral traditions and literatures of Native Americans; to promote the teaching of such traditions and literatures; and to support and encourage contemporary Native American writers and the continuity of Native American oral traditions. As Bob Nelson's history of *SAIL* (available on the website) tells us, *SAIL* first came to fruition in 1973 under the editorial eye of Wayne Franklin, but Karl Kroeber quickly took over editorship of the journal and began the quarterly publication of series 1 in the spring of 1977. Kroeber edited *SAIL* for ten years; when he stepped out of the editor's chair, the journal had a slight interruption in publication for about two years. Series 2, a quarterly publication, began under the watchful eye of Helen Jaskowski in 1989. Daniel Littlefield Jr., James Parins, and Robert Nelson assisted her on the first issues of that series. In 1992 Rodney Simard took over the editorship of *SAIL*; when he became ill in 1994, John Purdy took the helm and kept the journal's course

steady until 2000 when Malea Powell (that's me) became the general editor.

Once a stapled booklet of thirty-six pages with around forty subscribers, *SAIL* is now much, much more. As in all things, I am grateful to those elders/editors who had the foresight to make the gradual improvements to the journal that over the past twenty-one years have made all the difference. I hope that the issue you hold in your hands today will show that I am at least an adequate replacement for those editors who came before me. *SAIL* now has a much larger and more diverse readership than those initial forty subscribers, and the journal is managed by an entire team of editors and assistants. Each issue of the journal takes the editors, editorial board, editorial assistant, and a bevy of experienced manuscript reviewers plus the ever-watchful Bob Nelson (for whom no title would be broad enough) to come into being. Leaving us, though, in this move to the press is our copy/layout editor, Mark Wojcik, a valuable member of the *SAIL* community for several years. His presence will be missed in the office here at MSU.

Although I am especially excited about the content of this issue, I want to take a textual moment and say a bit about the new cover image. After an initial conversation with the staff at the University of Nebraska Press, the editorial board had the job of selecting the image that would represent *SAIL* for at least the next few years. We selected this photograph of Bonita Bent-Nelson's quillwork cardinal for many reasons. The bird recalls, I hope, the original *SAIL* birds—still visible on the website—but takes those initial markings and offers an innovation both in terms of appearance and scope. The Northern Cardinal represented here is one of the most common and popular birds in the United States, and I wanted an image that could connect many of our daily lives and lived experiences. Quillwork, too, was once a popular and common decorative clothing form for the indigenous peoples of North America. Beads frequently replaced quills during the early trade years of contact with European culture, but the animals who give their quills for our expression still roam the land. Overall, this quillwork cardinal is a beautiful piece of art and, I would argue, an important Native text which carries the traditions of the past into the present in a way that

honors tradition but also honors the innovation that has enabled Native peoples to survive for thousands of years on this continent.

Bent-Nelson is a Cherokee-Scottish quillworker who lives in northcentral Indiana; she learned her art in the traditional way from the late Ganda-Gija-I, a Cherokee elder and teacher. All of her quillwork is done on hand, brain-tanned hides, frequently using quills that she's gathered herself or that have been given to her by hunters, elders, family, and friends. She uses natural dyes made from nuts, berries, roots, leaves, and flowers to dye the quills she uses in her work. Bent-Nelson feels strongly that the title "quillworker" comes with the responsibility of teaching the art form responsibly and honorably to future generations. "A quillworker," she says, "is different from someone who sews quills; it's a name you're given, not one you take for yourself." Such an art form takes an ethical orientation to the materials being used and attention to the art form itself—to its history and its future—as well as hard-earned skill in persuading the materials to work together to become a whole, a text, a piece of art.

As always, anything I have done well in my position as general editor can be attributed to my elders and teachers; anything I have done badly or any errors that I have made are mine. As always, let me know what you're thinking as we embark on this next stage of *SAIL*'s long and important life.

Newii,
Malea Powell

Behind the Shadows of Wounded Knee

The Slippage of Imagination in *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*

LISA TATONETTI

What did it mean to be the first generation to hear the stories of the past, bear the horrors of the moment, and write to the future? What were tribal identities at the turn of the last century?

Gerald Vizenor, *Manifest Manners*

Muskogee Creek author Sophia Alice Callahan's novel, *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*, the first known novel by an American Indian woman, is remarkable on a number of levels.[1] Of particular interest is her attention to the 1890 Lakota Ghost Dance and the Wounded Knee massacre that took place less than six months before the novel's spring 1891 publication.[2] Callahan's text offers the first fictional re-creation of both the messianic religious movement that reached the Pine Ridge Reservation in the spring of 1890 and the infamous slaughter of Lakota men, women, and children that occurred on December 29 of that same year.[3] Historically, these two events have been melded together in innumerable tragic retellings that have transformed two separate historical moments into a singular symbol of loss in which allusion to Ghost Dancing and/or to the massacre always equals a mythic "end" of Native cultures.[4] With an investigation of Callahan's as-yet-unexamined representation of the massacre, I juxtapose such a limited and limiting version of such dominant histories with one of the earliest Native responses. This essay will show that *Wynema* presents a multivalent, though conflicted, series of messages about the 1890 Lakota Ghost Dance and the Wounded Knee massacre: while Callahan at times repre-

sents Wounded Knee as a signifier of loss, thus participating in the creation of a Wounded Knee trope, she also represents the Ghost Dance in ways that challenge the single cause-and-effect narrative that continues to dominate stories of the massacre. Ultimately, I contend that despite the novel's undeniable narrative failures, *Wynema*'s depiction of the 1890 Ghost Dance and the Wounded Knee massacre has the potential to expand our understanding of both the tensions and possibilities that underlie Native visions of American Indian identities in the late nineteenth century.

Callahan's *Wynema* spans approximately twenty years, from the 1870s to the early 1890s, as it follows the title character, Wynema, a young Muskogee girl, from early childhood to the first years of her marriage. In many ways Wynema presents a case study in assimilation. When readers first encounter her, she lives in an unnamed Native community, "an obscure place, miles from the nearest trading point" and sixteen miles from the nearest mission while, by the time the novel closes, she has become a teacher at Hope Seminary, a Christian mission school. During this time Wynema, as Dakota author Charles Eastman might have said, moves "from the deep woods to civilization," becoming fluent in English, embracing dominant dress and attitudes, adopting Christianity, and, ultimately, marrying a white husband. She is, in the end, a Native heroine made in Callahan's own image, since Callahan herself was a teacher in Muskogee, Oklahoma, at the Harrell International Institute, a private Methodist high school for both Indian and white children, where she taught classes and edited Harrell's journal, *Our Brother in Red* (Ruoff xvi).[5]

Though Wynema's story serves as the text's title and narrative frame, she is arguably not the novel's central character, an honor that goes instead to Genevieve Weir, a young, white Methodist teacher who sets up a school on Wynema's reservation. Genevieve, who Oklahoma Creek-Cherokee scholar Craig Womack dryly calls "civilization made flesh," arrives in Indian Territory at some point in the 1870s (112). The narrator explains that following Wynema's petition for a school: "[T]he cry rang out in the great Methodist assembly; 'A woman to teach among the Indians in the territory. Who will go?' " (Callahan 4). This call, both a request from Wynema and a summons from a decidedly Christian

god, is answered by Genevieve, "one from the sunny Southland—a young lady, intelligent and pretty, endowed with the graces of heart and head, and surrounded by the luxuries of a Southern home" (Callahan 4). After founding a school in Wynema's village, Genevieve becomes not only Wynema's teacher, but also her role model and confidant. The ensuing events follow a conventionally romantic plot, leading Genevieve into the arms of the superintendent of a nearby Methodist mission, Gerald Keithly (another of the book's "saintly" white folks), and Wynema into the arms of Genevieve's brother, Robin Weir. Romantic entanglements do not, however, preclude social involvement in Callahan's text. And so the author, who was herself a member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union in Muskogee, laces her love stories with the ongoing debates of the day, including the issues of allotment, suffrage, temperance, and, by the end of the text, the massacre at Wounded Knee (Ruoff xxxvii).

Such issues are not apparent, however, in the thickly romantic descriptions with which Callahan opens her novel. Most striking about *Wynema*'s initial passage is that Callahan's depiction of her heroine's village, which places Wynema and her tribe in "teepees," bears no resemblance to any past or present Muskogee community. Essentially, even though many other cultural references in the book—such as the busk or Green Corn Dance, the making of traditional foods such as *sofki*, and the healing and purifying rituals—are clear allusions to specifically Muskogee traditions, Callahan's introduction hearkens back, in terms of Muskogee history, to a precontact past that exists only in her imagination. As both Ruoff and Womack point out, the Muskogee never lived in teepees and by this time in history, which according to the events in the book would have been the 1870s, had established thriving towns that would have been similar to or more developed than those of the white readers at whom *Wynema* was undoubtedly aimed.

Ruoff situates *Wynema*'s opening and Callahan's generally "melodramatic style" as typical of the nineteenth-century romantic tradition (xxvii). Womack, on the other hand, finds little to laud in *Wynema*, which he terms "a decidedly 'un-Creek' novel" (111). Of the first passage, Womack says:

> What interests me here is not merely that Callahan's depiction is grossly inaccurate, not that she gets it wrong. I am struck by *how*

> wrong she gets it, and by the fact that she has to be purposefully, not accidentally, misrepresenting culture. [. . .] This has to be intentional misrepresentation. What do we make of this author, then, who is purposefully writing to satisfy white stereotypes? (115–16)

Womack does not leave his audience hanging with this rhetorical question; instead he provides a fairly concrete answer: "Creek authors, like authors from any other nation, are capable of writing lousy books" (116). And while I greatly admire Womack's work, I must say that in the case of *Wynema*, I disagree—not in terms of his aesthetic judgment, as I doubt if even the kindest critic would call *Wynema* a beautifully written book—but in terms of his quick and limiting answer to his own compelling question.

Womack's response to *Wynema* is based on a literary nationalism like that called for by noted Dakota theorist Elizabeth Cook-Lynn—contextualized, tribally specific criticism to be undertaken by Native writers about Native literature.[6] When speaking of his own position as a Muskogee Creek scholar examining Creek authors from and for a tribal perspective, Womack explains that such "literary analysis [. . .] pays attention to nationalism" asking, among other important questions: "In what ways does the novel record Creek history, create a sense of place on Creek land, advance Creek culture, or strengthen Creek autonomy? How deeply is it engaged in things Creek?" (120-21). These grounded, tribally specific concerns represent some of the most significant questions that can and should be asked of Native literature today; but, as Womack acknowledges, they are not the *only* questions that can be asked of a piece. And in the case of *Wynema*, I would venture to say that while the novel undoubtedly fails such a litmus test it nevertheless has much to offer studies of Native literature.

To think further about *Wynema*'s value as a historical text, I suggest we turn briefly to Anishinaabe theorist Gerald Vizenor, who asks the following set of questions about writers who, like Callahan, lived through the era of Wounded Knee: "What did it mean to be the first generation to hear the stories of the past, bear the horrors of the moment, and write to the future? What were tribal identities at the turn of the last century?" (51). *Wynema* offers answers to these questions by virtue of the moment in which it was written: the text is a window into the way the only known Native female novelist of the period imagined tribal identities. And while

there are numerous historical narratives and accounts from the popular press about the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee, Callahan's representations are especially significant as they are, to my knowledge, the only Native-authored fictional depictions of the events written in the nineteenth-century. Despite my belief in *Wynema*'s value as a historical document, my intent is not to dismiss Womack's criticism out of hand—Callahan's assimilationist rhetoric and overt Christian ideology are troubling. Although I acknowledge this problem, I suggest that an examination of Callahan's descriptions of the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee can illuminate the complicated nature of her own subject position. While Callahan's depictions of the Ghost Dance actually challenge the staunchly conservative rhetoric of *Wynema*'s earlier chapters, her subsequent depictions of Wounded Knee, at the same time, reinscribe dominant discourses surrounding the "vanishing Indian." Before analyzing Callahan's representations of the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee, we must first briefly examine a representative moment from the initial half of the text in order to fully understand the extent of Callahan's narrative vacillations.

A PEDAGOGY OF CONVERSION

Intrinsic to Callahan's Christian proselytizing is her character Genevieve Weir, the white heroine whose views and actions exemplify some of the more disturbing aspects of Christianity and who, to some degree, seems to be more Callahan's alter ego than is Wynema. Genevieve's first days in Wynema's community are consumed, not by the struggle of a non-Muskogee speaker trying to teach reading, writing, or arithmetic to Muskogee children, but, instead, by her personal struggle over how to introduce and eventually convert her students to her faith:

> [S]he uttered a simple prayer to the "all-Father," asking that he open the hearts of the children, that they might be enabled to understand His word; and that He give her such great love for her dusky pupils, that her only desire be in dividing this Word among them. The pupils understood no word of it, but the tone went straight to each one's heart and found lodgment there. (Callahan 6)

Passages like this suggest that Womack is correct when he claims, "Callahan's novel is more interesting as an assimilationist and Christian supremacist tract than it is as a Creek novel" (116). These overtones are undeniable; even with limited awareness of her own cultural biases, Genevieve—and by extension Callahan—clearly comprehends the fundamental connection between language and culture. "The Word," which in this scene is alternately both the English language and Christian doctrine, is *the* means by which Genevieve plans to inculcate not just academic lessons, but an entire cosmology. With these plans, Genevieve engages in perhaps the most classic form of colonization, which theorists like Ashis Nandy describe as the process of "coloniz[ing] minds in addition to bodies" by "releas[ing] forces within colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once and for all" (qtd. in Gandhi 15-16). As the embodiment of such a force, Genevieve effects a pedagogy not of education, but rather, as Nandy suggests, of indoctrination. And given that she is undoubtedly the character with whom readers are meant to empathize, vignettes of this sort suggest that Callahan invites or, indeed, even *expects* her audience to identify with Genevieve's goals and, correspondingly, with the aims of the colonial project (e.g., assimilation, Christianization, and deracination).[7]

Although evangelistic zeal such as this permeates *Wynema*, Callahan's Christianity is challenged and at times even undermined by her attempts to address the U.S. government's oppression of Native peoples in the final section of her novel. Thus *Wynema* serves as both a reflection of Callahan's Christian ideals *and* a vehicle through which those ideals can be shown to fail. And that failure is nowhere more apparent than when the narrative unexpectedly shifts to the events surrounding the Wounded Knee massacre, which, as Ruoff notes, "is such an abrupt departure from the earlier romance plot that it was probably added to an almost complete novel" (xxvi).

CHALLENGING CHRISTIANITY: REPRESENTATIONS OF THE GHOST DANCE AS NARRATIVE GAPS IN *WYNEMA*

By the time Callahan introduces the problems in the Dakotas, most of *Wynema*'s narrative tensions have been resolved: Genevieve has left her

conservative, antifeminist, Indian-hating beau, Maurice Mauran, and recognized her feelings for fellow missionary and teacher Gerald Keithly, and Wynema has agreed to marry Genevieve's brother, Robin Weir. And just when the requisite "Dear reader, I married him," is expected, attention shifts to the then-current events in South Dakota.

Callahan's narrative jump is an interesting one, and while no letters or journals provide concrete explanations for the change in her storyline, we can make some educated guesses. The first and clearest rationale for tacking what amounts to a new story onto an already resolved novel is timing. Big Foot's band was massacred on December 29, 1890, and while *Wynema*'s exact publication date is uncertain, the extant evidence—the publisher's preface, dated April 1, 1891, and *Our Brother in Red*'s June 6, 1891 announcement of the text's publication—leaves a period of, at most, only four to five months between the massacre and *Wynema*'s debut. Given the brief space of time between the date of the massacre and the novel's publication, it is safe to say that the first section of *Wynema* must have been either complete or near completion when the events on Pine Ridge spurred Callahan to expand her novel. During the spring and winter of 1891, Callahan was teaching at the Harrell International Institute. At the same time, like millions of others across the country, she was undoubtedly reading reports about the incidents at Pine Ridge. Wounded Knee was, after all, a media event.[8] With news accounts of the Ghost Dance flying and white anxieties running high, the press was in place and ready when the massacre occurred; Callahan could hardly have avoided news of the massacre if she had tried. On one hand then, Callahan's fictional account of the events, which would have been composed in the scant hours during which she was not teaching, grading, editing, or caring for children, is a response to writing and living at a certain historical moment. But while Callahan's depiction of the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee is undoubtedly a *re*action to the disturbing events on Pine Ridge, it is also a moment of significant narrative *action*, a moment when Callahan, as author and Native writer, fleetingly steps away from the prescriptive conventions of the Western romance and assimilation narratives to tell a different story, one in which Native rather than white characters ultimately narrate Native history. And within that history, I find the passages describ-

ing the Ghost Dance of particular interest, contending that these descriptions mark specific instances where Callahan's attempt to criticize U.S. Indian policy causes her to undermine the Christian belief system that circumscribes the rest of her text.

Callahan introduces the subject of the 1890 Lakota Ghost Dance by addressing the media reports surrounding the new belief. Ever aware of her white audience, her approach to the religious movement is careful: she puts her defense of the Lakota people into the mouths of characters other than her heroines, Wynema and Genevieve. This narrative strategy is evident in the first chapter on the massacre, "Turmoil with the Indians," that finds Wynema and Genevieve, who had been in the initial stages of their respective courtships at the end of the previous chapter, suddenly married with young children. The chapter begins with the entrance of Genevieve's husband, Gerald Keithly, who brings up the unsettling possibility that "the Indians living on the reservation in Dakota are in trouble" (Callahan 71). However, his subsequent comment, "I fear, if their requests are not granted, the white settlers will have to suffer for it," mediates an initial suggestion of sympathy by implying that the ultimate victims of Indian problems are not the Indians themselves, but whites (Callahan 71). Under the guise of concern, Gerald's observation invokes the specter of Indian hostility that was the dominant discourse in the press of the period. But Gerald's fears, and by extension the fears of all those who invoked such a specter in the months before and after Wounded Knee, are immediately challenged by Genevieve's mother, Mrs. Weir, who has joined her children in Oklahoma in the intervening years. She asks, "But what is the cause of the disturbance. I know there must be some serious cause, for the Indians have never gone on the war-path, or even troubled their white neighbors, without abundant cause" (Callahan 71). Mrs. Weir's query undercuts Gerald's suggestion of Indian hostility by intimating, instead, that *whites* rather than Indians are the actual hostile parties not only in this instance but also in the entire history of Indian-white conflicts in the United States.

This then-radical criticism—one of the first unambiguous defenses of Native people that Callahan presents—is reinforced a few lines later when Gerald reads the papers aloud:

> A dispatch from Sisseton, South Dakota, says that the twelve thousand Indians on the Sisseton and Wahpeton reservations are on the verge of starving at the opening of winter, because of the Government's failure to furnish subsistence. The Interior Department has authorized the expenditure of $2,000 for the relief of the red men, but on this small sum of money over two thousand men, women, and children must live for a period of over six months of rigorous weather. Their chiefs and most able-bodied men have petitioned the government to send them aid; for, they say, if they do not get some help there will be great suffering and actual starvation. [and Gerald continues]
>
> Another paper says, the Indians of the Northwest have the Messiah craze and are dancing themselves to death—dancing the ghost dance. [. . .] If the United States army would kill a few thousand or so of the dancing Indians there would be no more trouble. (Callahan 72–73)

The two excerpts that Gerald reads present two very different rationales for the problems between the U.S. government and the Lakotas: the first lays culpability squarely at the feet of the U.S. government, while the second identifies the dance itself as the cause of the here-unspecified trouble by invoking the Ghost Dance as a signifier of Native "savagery." In addition, the second editorial with its suggestion that the Lakotas are "dancing themselves to death" also effectively eliminates U.S. government accountability for *future* Indian deaths by implying that such an end is inevitable. Ultimately, however, the factual detail in the first article, with its specific account of the Lakotas' problems and its reference to the presence of women and children, serves to bring the callous hostility of the second into stark relief. This reading would have been especially true for contemporary audiences of the time who, given the recent headlines about the Wounded Knee massacre, would have been well aware that the hostile editorial foreshadows the later events of the novel. With this scene, Callahan constructs a very different story about the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee than might be expected given the conservative rhetoric of the earlier sections of *Wynema*. By pairing the article on the severity of the Lakotas' difficulties with the editorial illus-

trating the rabid nature of dominant calls for bloodshed, Callahan invalidates any suggestion that the Lakota Ghost Dance "caused" the deaths of 300 Miniconjous at Wounded Knee. Thus, with her first turn to the events in the Dakotas, Callahan unsutures the Ghost Dance from Wounded Knee and refutes the simplistic narrative of cause and effect that comes to dominate later histories.

In an unusual move for a text largely given over to white voices, Callahan follows these first articles with a Native-authored defense of the Ghost Dance. After Gerald finishes reading the newspapers aloud, Genevieve appeals, "Some one [sic] should answer that, Gerald" (Callahan 73). Previously in Callahan's text the "someone" who steps up to bat in such instances has always been white (usually either Genevieve herself or, more frequently, Gerald, who seems to have every answer in the case of "the Indian question"). But in an about face the response of, "And some one has, dear," in regards to the oppression of Native peoples is finally given by an Indian, "Old Masse Hadjo" (Callahan 73).

Hadjo responds quite differently than any other Native person in Callahan's book up to this point. While hotly contested issues, such as the misallocation of Native annuities and allotment, are addressed in earlier sections of *Wynema*, their intricacy, prior to the inclusion of Hadjo's voice, has been portrayed as beyond the ken of Native people. In a conversation surrounding funds' misallocation, for example, Wynema's father, Choe Harjo, says to Gerald Keithly, a merchant "gave Mihia [Genevieve] some papers, and she tried to explain it all to me but I cannot understand it exactly" (Callahan 30).[9] Choe's childlike puzzlement and difficulty comprehending the mishandling of tribal monies is matched by his daughter's naiveté when she and Genevieve discuss allotment. Within this scene, Genevieve, rather than Gerald Keithly, embodies the voice of wisdom in the allotment debate. Wynema, in contrast, parrots the dominant pro-allotment rhetoric (Callahan 50–53). Upon listening to Genevieve, Wynema recognizes the error of her position exclaiming: "Oh, I am so sorry, dear Mihia—so sorry I was so foolish! Pray, forgive me! It is always the way with me, and I dare say I should be one of the first to sell myself out of house and home" (Callahan 52–53). Both Choe and Wynema are infantilized in these

passages, but Choe's character—no doubt, in the logic of the text, because of his full-blood, non-Christian identity—seems entirely incapable of sophisticated thought. Wynema, on the other hand, redeemed by her Christianity, her quick grasp of English, and her allegiance to assimilation, eventually comprehends the explanations of her white patroness. But regardless of their differences, the conversations are classic examples of the paternalistic rhetoric of the day since, in each case, Callahan portrays the politics of Indian life as better understood by whites. The editorial attributed to Hadjo, however, temporarily breaks this unsettling narrative pattern.

Gerald reads Masse Hadjo's letter from an unnamed newspaper and, whether the piece was written or, as is more likely, quoted verbatim by Callahan, Hadjo's letter represents one of the few moments in the text where a Native person takes a strong and reasoned stance on Native issues. To ground his critique, Hadjo uses Christianity as a point of reference for an audience obviously assumed to be both white and Christian. He first berates the editorialist who suggests that "the United States army [should] kill a few thousand or so of the dancing Indians," and then goes on, in a noteworthy move, to contest the general legitimacy of Christian practices (Callahan 73). Hadjo's response is worth quoting at length:

> The Indians have never taken kindly to the Christian religion as preached and practiced by the whites. Do you know why this is the case? Because the Good Father of all has given us a better religion—a religion that is all good and no bad—a religion that is adapted to our wants. You say if we are good, obey the ten commandments and never sin any more, we may be permitted eventually to sit upon a white rock and sing praises to God forevermore, and look down upon our heavenly fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers in hell. It won't do. The code of morals practiced by the white race will not compare with the morals of the Indians. We pay no lawyers or preachers, but we have not one-tenth part of the crime that you do. If our Messiah does come, we will not try to force you into our belief. We will never burn innocent women at the stake, or pull men to pieces with horses because they refuse to join with us in our ghost dances.

> [. . .] You are anxious to get hold of our Messiah so you can put him in irons. This you may do—in fact you may crucify him as you did that other one—but you cannot convert the Indians to the Christian religion until you contaminate them with the blood of the white man. The white man's hell is repulsive to the Indian nature, and if the white man's hell suits you, keep it. I think there will be white rogues enough to fill it. (Callahan 73-74)

Writing scant months after Wounded Knee, Callahan makes many significant authorial decisions and among them is her inclusion of this polemic attack on her own religion. While Hadjo's rhetoric is less bloodthirsty than that of the white editorialist he confronts, his opinions challenge the very core of the Christian cosmology that undergirds most of *Wynema*.[10]

I contend that Hadjo's claim marks one of the key moments in which the assimilationist narrative of the text fractures. While better-known accounts of the period, such as Charles Eastman's *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* (1916), attempt to validate the Ghost Dance by comparing it to Christianity, Callahan, with her inclusion of Hadjo's vehement speech, presents not only an attack on the history and foundation of Christian beliefs, but a claim for the Ghost Dance as a "better religion." Better in aim, better in outcome, better suited for Indian wants and needs, the Ghost Dance, according to Hadjo, has no parallel in Western religious history—quite a radical commentary for a nineteenth-century Christian Muskogee woman to include in a book so obviously aimed at dominant audiences of the period. Speaking of Eastman, Vizenor sympathetically describes Native authors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as "carrying the burdens of the manifest manners of discoveries, the presence of antiselves, and the duplicities of assimilation policies, tribal ironies and counter simulations" (48). I place Callahan among those who carry such burdens, and suggest that if Wynema and Genevieve, with their dominant-identified lives, represent Callahan's public self as Christian teacher, then perhaps Hadjo represents what Vizenor would call her "antiself," the repressed Native voice that compels Callahan to authorize a denunciation of her own religion so that she might tell the story of Wounded Knee.

Though Hadjo's indictment of Christianity is glossed over by

Genevieve—whose response to his article is "Just think, the poor things are starving to death and are praying to their Messiah to relieve them, as nobody on earth will. And because of this white people want to kill them"—the fact remains that Callahan, despite her allegiance to Christianity, never questions the legitimacy of the Ghost Dance in her text (74). Instead, *Wynema* validates the Native religion and emphasizes the threat of *white* hostility, turning dominant rhetoric on its head and thereby extricating the Ghost Dance from the violence to follow.

TURMOIL WITH THE INDIANS : SHADOWS OF REPRESENTATION IN SOPHIA ALICE CALLAHAN'S WOUNDED KNEE

Following Hadjo's surprising defense of the Ghost Dance, conversations about Native religion fall away, and for the remainder of *Wynema*, as Stijaati Thlaako, (one of Womack's alter egos), points out humorously, "No matter how you figger it, there's more white Methodist talk than Indian talk or Creek talk" (126). Thus, the text returns to a Christian conservatism as the story leaps awkwardly forward to the days just before the Wounded Knee massacre.

Once the stage has been set by the discussion of the newspaper editorials, *Wynema* moves from Oklahoma to South Dakota with a very thin and obviously hurriedly added explanation: Carl Peterson, a minor white character courting one of Genevieve's sisters, has at some point in the past, "toiled five years among the Sioux Indians [. . .] spreading the gospel" (Callahan 35). Thus, upon hearing the news of the tensions, Carl feels compelled to journey to Pine Ridge in order to dissuade his "people, the Sioux, [who] are about to go on the war path" (Callahan 74). Callahan's subsequent descriptions of the events surrounding the Wounded Knee massacre resonate with inevitability, and the massacre of the "hostiles" who align themselves with Wildfire, a Lakota leader and a friend of Carl's, and his unflinching stance that "cowards alone surrender," seems to be assured (Callahan 83). And such is nearly the case in Callahan's version of the account that, although sympathetic to the Lakotas, mirrors the inaccuracies of the popular press. Louis Owens points out that such an inevitable demise is the lot of textual American Indians, who are "the epic and tragic

hero[es]" of American literature (18). Nowhere is this more apparent than in the latter chapters of *Wynema*, where Callahan, despite her own Native heritage, can imagine for the Lakotas, as Owens would say, "no other destiny, no other plot."

Callahan's retreat from the kind of radical condemnation of dominant culture that Hadjo's Ghost Dance defense represented is illustrated by the fact that neither the Ghost Dance nor more traditional Lakota spirituality appears to exist among the Lakotas she depicts. In fact, by the time Carl and Robin arrive on the (unspecified) reservation in Dakota, every echo of Masse Hadjo's voice seems to have faded away. Thus, after Wildfire renounces U.S. government oppression, instead of invoking the Ghost Dance or *Wakantanka*, the Lakotas' higher power, he asks Carl to "[P]ray to your Father that He look mercifully down on His poor savages and guide them out of their troubles" (Callahan 85). Wildfire's use of the word "your" implies a recognized difference between the two men's belief systems, but such difference collapses when "the Indians with one accord joined [Carl] and closed with a fervent 'Amen' " (Callahan 85). The Christian rhetoric continues as, in an exchange heavy with symbolism, Wildfire gives Carl a precious belt that had been made for him by his mother, and Carl gives Wildfire a final quote from "the Bible you love to hear so well. [. . .] 'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay' " (Callahan 85–86). When Wildfire willingly presents "his best friend," the white missionary, with his most treasured possession—(another obvious suggestion of eminent cultural demise) and Carl calls for divine retribution, Callahan, to use a colloquial phrase, "gets to have it both ways" (86). Through Carl, the "friend of the Indian," Callahan and the majority of her readers can both sympathize with the plight of the Lakotas and keep their allegiances to Christianity, to dominant culture, and to "progress and civilization" intact. And if the figure of Carl offers dominant readers a point of identification, his words offer them something even more valuable—the promise of absolution—by placing the onus of retribution not on the individual reader, but squarely in the hands of the Christian god. Carl does not get the novel's last word, however, and, in a turn that makes the question of identification especially visible, the narrative shifts from Carl and Robin's perspective to the perspective of two Lakotas, Wildfire and his wife

Miscona, as they prepare for and then die in the Wounded Knee massacre.

Although historically inaccurate, *Wynema*'s subsequent Wounded Knee narrative is radically different from the majority of other stories about the massacre because of its focus on gender—women are central to both the overall plot and the outcome of the massacre. Despite the fact that a large number of the victims at Wounded Knee were female, written histories of the massacre focus primarily on the actions of white soldiers and Lakota men. The women, who were breaking camp when the shooting began in the council circle, are merely sidebars in most dominant chronicles of the event. Unlike Sitting Bull, Kicking Bear, and Big Foot, or later, Charles Eastman, Luther Standing Bear, and Nicholas Black Elk, the Miniconjou women at Wounded Knee Creek are the subjects of few stories beyond the tales of flight and death that circumscribe their histories. In the narratives that circulate about the massacre, women are most often invoked, like the specter of Wounded Knee itself, as symbols of loss, described more fully in death—bodies bloodied, cold, and wrapped around children—than in life. Callahan's narrative, which presents Lakota women outside of the limited representational patterns that would come to characterize later Wounded Knee narratives, has the potential to offer a refreshingly different perspective. But while Callahan's impulse towards inclusion is laudable, her depictions ultimately show a great deal more about the boundaries of her own understanding of Plains peoples than they do of actual Lakota women.

In the initial scenes of the chapter on Wounded Knee, entitled "Civilization or Savage Barbarity," a group of "about forty" Lakota women leave the reservation to rejoin their husbands among the "defiant Indians" only to be killed at Wounded Knee the very next day (Callahan 88). Callahan's description of the massacre, which is almost entirely inaccurate, is as follows:

> It was reported by scouts sent for that purpose, to the commander of the troops stationed on the reservation, that the Indians were plotting war and were planning to surround them on the following day. So the general sent a detachment to meet the "hostiles," and surprise them, and to capture all unharmed if

> possible. But, instead of this, the Indians were slaughtered like cattle, shot down like dogs. Surprised at the sudden apparition of white soldiers drawn up in a line of battle, when they supposed the soldiers to be in their camps miles distant, their presence of mind deserted them, and it was with difficulty that Wildfire rallied his forces. To add to this consternation, on turning about toward his camps, he beheld the women who had followed them to battle. [. . .] It was useless to motion them back, for on they came, their faces speaking with noiseless eloquence. "We have lived with you; we will die with you." Up they rushed into the line of battle where they more unfitted the men for fighting.
>
> "Good and Gracious Father, Miscona! You have lost the battle for me," groaned the chieftain.
>
> "It is a lost cause. You will die and I will die by your side, my husband," she replied resolutely. [. . .]
>
> "Indians, I command you to go into the reservation quietly or, by God, you die here in your tracks!" shouted the commander.
>
> "We shall die, then" shouted Wildfire in return; "but we will never enter the reservation alive!" [. . .]
>
> The command was, "No quarter! Kill them every one." (Callahan 89)

From a modern perspective, Callahan's Wounded Knee narrative is rather horrifying; it revives the specter of Indian hostility that the novel earlier laid to rest, paints the soldiers' attack as well-disciplined, the Lakotas' defense as incompetent, and Lakota women as mitigating factors in the outcome of the massacre. My questions about this penultimate textual moment mirror Womack's commentary on *Wynema*'s opening scene: "What interests me here is not merely that Callahan's depiction is grossly inaccurate, not that she gets it wrong. I am struck by *how* wrong she gets it. [. . .] What do we make of this author, then, who is purposefully writing to satisfy white stereotypes?" (Womack 115–16). And just what *are* we to make of Callahan's account? The pattern of events is almost unrecognizable to anyone who knows the history of Wounded Knee. But writing only a few months after the massacre amidst a welter of wildly contradictory

news reports, Callahan would not have known the full details of the massacre. So the question then becomes, why tell *this* story? Why offer *these* depictions of tribal identities?

In at least one case the answer seems obvious: Callahan's emphasis on the women's presence at the battle no doubt connects to her own feminism that is foregrounded in the discussions of suffrage that occur throughout the text. But Callahan's feminism tends to erase the cultural differences of women's experiences by having them "waiting for [their] more civilized white sisters to gain liberty" (45). Womack points out that Wynema's espousal of women's rights, with its commentary about Muskogee women and lack of initiative in pursuing liberty, indicates that Wynema "has been so thoroughly brainwashed that she fails to see she has erased at least half [her] culture. Creek traditional culture involves a delicate balance of women and men wherein clan is based on matrilineal descent and town membership of one's mother's town. [. . .] [Wynema] is simply reliant on white women to formulate her consciousness" (117–18).

Callahan's subsequent representation of Lakota women suggests that she continues to have difficulty representing Native women in her text. Even as, in the second half of *Wynema*, Callahan attempts to give her female Native characters agency, she seems to be unable to imagine them as fully realized human beings.

The first images of the Lakotas arise when Carl and Robin meet with the group of warriors who are "dressed in their savage costumes, with war-paint and feathers in abundance" (Callahan 80). Wildfire, with his "dark eyes," "stalwart frame," and "attitude and expression [that] betokened the greatest determination and earnestness," is the only character depicted in any detail (Callahan 81). While these descriptions are admittedly both stereotypical and vague, they seem strikingly detailed in comparison to later depictions of the women. Wildfire's wife, "the fair Miscona, [who] cl[ings] to her husband with the tenderness of despair" at the conclusion of his conversation with Carl, is the first Lakota woman to enter the narrative (Callahan 86). Distraught over Wildfire's decision to resist the whites, Miscona pleads:

> Oh, Wildfire, my dear husband, go with me to the reservation. Here we can live happily and peacefully with our children and

> among our people. If you stay here you will be killed, and what happiness could your devoted wife ever expect to have? When I left my father's tepee [sic] to go with you, you promised to love me and take care of me always, but you will not be fulfilling your promise if you leave me to make my way to the reservation while you remain here. (Callahan 86–87)

Miscona's tragic speech—that of a classic Anglo romantic heroine—bears little resemblance to what one might expect from a nineteenth-century Lakota woman. To name only a few discrepancies, the wife of a Lakota warrior would hardly argue publicly against his fulfilling his tribal duty and would have left her *mother's*, rather than her father's teepee, to join her husband, since within Lakota tradition the familial lodge is a woman's possession. Moreover, the implicit patriarchal dynamic of Miscona's tearful appeal is based on a white, rather than Lakota view of marriage. As M. Annette Jaimes and Theresa Halsey explain:

> [T]he context of native social life was radically different from that which prevailed (and prevails) in European and Euro-derived cultures. [. . .] Among the Lakota, men owned nothing but their clothing, a horse for hunting, weapons and spiritual items; homes, furnishings, and the like were the property of their wives. All a Lakota woman needed to do in order to divorce her husband was to set his meager personal possessions outside the door of their lodge, an action against which he had no appeal under traditional law. (318)

But despite whatever power she may have held in a conventional Lakota relationship, in the context of Callahan's novel, Miscona fails to sway Wildfire from his decision; he takes her to the reservation and departs for the "hostile" camp. (Whether his adamancy is due to Miscona's clear breech of Lakota etiquette or to the saccharine nature of her entreaties, we shall never know.) The next chapter opens as Miscona and the other women secretly leave the reservation to rejoin their husbands.

The women's flight from the reservation to the "rebel" camp and their subsequent presence at the massacre undoubtedly fulfills Callahan's need to disrupt a narrative of war that likely seemed to her, to quote an

earlier description, "too masculinely one-sided" (Callahan 75). But of what does such a disruption consist? And in the end, do these women function as anything other than one-dimensional manifestations of Callahan's rather whitewashed feminism? Neither Ruoff nor Womack, in the only two substantial commentaries on *Wynema* to date, address these questions in their work. Ruoff admires Callahan's feminist concerns, calling her a "woman word warrior," but does not interrogate, or even allude to the presence of these Lakota women in the narrative (xliii). And Womack, in usual forthright style, declares that he has decided "not even to mention the god-awful depictions of Sioux people in the book's artificially tacked-on ending," which he leaves to the mercy of Lakota scholars (121). But to ignore these women is to miss the full story that Callahan's depiction of Wounded Knee tells about her understanding of American Indian identities.

The chapter on Wounded Knee begins with a description of an unnamed woman who appears to be Miscona: a "dark figure with a babe in her arms [. . .] creeps stealthily from a tent into the dark night" as she takes the road to the rebel camp (Callahan 88).[11] The women who slip out to follow her are, similarly, "dark figures, some with papoose, some without" (Callahan 88). After meeting at "the outskirts of the reservation," the women band together, and become, finally, a group of "dark figures, running, sliding, and falling along the dark road [. . .] [who] will not be known to the world" (Callahan 88). Despite the central role that Callahan claims the Lakota women play in the battle, these few images are the only descriptions that appear in the text. By their actions, these women no doubt speak to Callahan's beliefs about female agency. Instead of docilely accepting their husbands' orders, the Lakota women in Callahan's text come together to choose their own destinies.[12] But what is *excluded* from Callahan's narrative—the women's physical descriptions—is equally if not more compelling than what is included—their escape from the reservation and eventual deaths.

I am struck by the lack of descriptive images of these women and, ultimately, by the unknowable absence they represent in *Wynema*. The narrator's claim that the women "will not be known to the world," highlights this absence in a number of ways (Callahan 88). First and most obviously, the comment foreshadows the women's impending

demise, suggesting that their deaths will silence their stories. At the same time though, Callahan's act of storytelling self-consciously proves that reading incorrect; she is in the process of telling the very tale that is ostensibly lost to the world. These first two implications are, I would argue, overt, but another implication lies just beneath the surface of this comment: Callahan's claim for the inaccessibility, for the erasure of the women's stories actually describes her own narrative failure. Callahan, in the end, is the one who finds it impossible, even in a fiction of her own creation, to tell these Native women's stories to the world. Sans faces, sans personalities, and except for Miscona's hyperbolic entreaties, sans voice, Lakota women are doubly other in the mythic terrain of Callahan's Dakota. Their only trait is darkness, which as an undifferentiated and slightly ominous marker of race, subsumes every other facet of their identity. Unrecognizable in face and in body, and animalistic in movement, the traditional Lakota women of Callahan's text are, finally, unimaginable to her. Callahan's depictions (or lack thereof) of the men and women at Wounded Knee speak not of the Lakota, but of her own politics and social status as an assimilated, Christian, mixed-blood woman from the Muskogee aristocracy, so far removed from the lifestyles of the Lakotas that she apparently finds their representation impossible. Thus, she transforms the men, who she initially marks as "savage," into Christians, and the women, who, as we have seen, are entirely obscured by race, into faceless actresses in the drama of her imagination.

Only two Lakota women in any way break out of this narrative abyss—Miscona and Chikena, an old woman found wandering the field after the battle. Miscona, as we have already seen, epitomizes the classic romantic heroine by following her husband into battle where, predictably, the two die in each other's arms, "free at last" (Callahan 90). Chikena, an old Lakota woman who survives the battle, is a remnant of the living past, a veritable Ishi who deems herself "the only one left of my tribe" (Callahan 91). Despite such tragic implications, however, all do not die on the battlefield and Chikena becomes a savior of sorts, rescuing a "little papoose sleeping sweetly between" the dead bodies of Wildfire and Miscona, and two other babies (Callahan 91). When Carl Peterson arrives the day after the battle, he discovers Chikena

guarding both the babies and the dead. Wraithlike, Chikena, much like the other women in Callahan's narrative, is a "dark form," who "glid[es]" over the battlefield, "administering to the wants of the dying" and "watch[ing] to see that nothing came near her beloved dead" (Callahan 90). She stresses the fact that she is "all alone in the world" and recounts a litany of deaths before making any mention of the babies' survival (Callahan 91). Chikena's account of the babies' discovery is also heavy with overtones of cultural loss. She says: "On my rounds I found three papooses, about three months old, all wrapped up snugly in their dead mothers' bosoms. I took them, wrapped them in the blankets of the ones they will never know, and yonder they lie, sleeping sweetly" (Callahan 92). According to Chikena, the babies are bound for a future outside the boundaries of their own culture.[13] Rather than symbolizing Lakota survival they seem, for Callahan, to bolster Chikena's mournful claim to be the last of her tribe. The "inevitability" of the Lakotas' disappearance is thus writ large in the novel, marking *Wynema* as one of the earliest literary representations that weds Wounded Knee to the myth of the vanishing Indian.

THE END OF THE TRAIL OR RETURN OF THE NATIVE?: THE INDETERMINANCY OF *WYNEMA*'S CONCLUSION

Not all Indians vanish in *Wynema*, and while the Lakotas' futures are bleak, Wynema, her child, and the three adopted babies flourish. And it is in the image of these children that I find the novel's final, and undoubtedly most interesting commentary. Were I to be completely optimistic I would say that Callahan encodes a story of cultural survival into her account of the massacre. While I do not entirely believe that claim, I will say that Callahan's outrage over Wounded Knee ultimately turns the perfect picture of assimilation into something decidedly more complicated. Such an argument rests on the commonly acknowledged fissure between (what seems to have been) the originally intended conclusion of *Wynema* and the present ending. The first "ending" occurs after the dénouement represented by Wynema and Genevieve's return from their visit to Genevieve's home. At this point in the text, Wynema is engaged to Genevieve's brother and Genevieve is free of attachments,

having broken off her relationship with the distastefully conservative Maurice Mauran during the trip. Before leaving, Genevieve rejects Gerald's suit, but upon her return, in what has all the earmarks of a final scene, she accepts his proposal of marriage. And with the words, "and so Gerald Keithly won his heart's desire," the section, and I would argue the original draft of the text, ends (Callahan 70). So to what degree then, one might ask, could the awkwardly appended addition of an elegiac Wounded Knee narrative change the argument of the text? The answer, I believe, is by a great deal.

In what I mark as the initial ending of *Wynema*, Genevieve and Gerald loom largest in the narrative, and Wynema, with her impending marriage to Robin Weir, who Womack's twentieth-century Wynema calls "a white geek [. . .] who later would be Tonto to Batman," fades into the background (128). The easy containment of Wynema in this first version no doubt relates to the complete success of Genevieve's and Gerald's attempts to assimilate her, which her impending marriage to Robin, with its inherent promise of mixed-blood children, epitomizes.[14] The appended ending, however, ruptures the neat progression of "civilization" by giving Wynema what her union with Robin could never bear: a full-blood child. This twist brings Masse Hadjo's comment to mind: "[Y]ou cannot convert the Indians to the Christian religion until you contaminate them with the blood of the white man," since the "contamination" of Indian blood as represented by Wynema's marriage, is temporarily nullified (Callahan 74).[15] And, although the realities of Indian adoption loom large in this scenario, they are (somewhat) mediated in Callahan's fictional world by Wynema's knowledge of the Lakota language and Chikena's presence in Wynema's household, which extend the possibility, however unintended, for Wynema's adopted child to retain a connection to her Lakota culture. By implication then, the vanishing Indian of the first ending, as represented by Wynema, is, with the second, succeeded by another generation of full-blood children who have the potential to reclaim their culture.

Callahan also reasserts Wynema's own Native identity in the additional section of the novel. While Genevieve and Gerald vow their love just before the introduction of the problems in South Dakota, Wynema, having apparently forgotten all issues of annuities and allotments, thinks

only of Robin, her husband-to-be, with "sentimental sighs and [suggestively] pale cheeks" (Callahan 67). At the end of the appended section on Wounded Knee, however, Wynema's interest in Native issues returns and she becomes recognizably Indian. One example of this shift lies in Wynema's aforementioned, and rather amusingly sudden, ability to speak Lakota, that enables her to translate for Chikena and, thus, to both hear and voice the Indians' side of Wounded Knee. Wynema's Native identity is further underlined by Chikena's strong affinity for Wynema, which is seen in a strange little exchange that occurs in the penultimate chapter of the book:

> "When are you coming to Keithly College, to see the papoose?" Carl asked Chikena one day, as the family had all collected in the pleasant parlor of Hope Seminary. [. . .]
>
> "Not yet," she replied. "I love Wynema, for she seems like my own people to me. You are all very kind to me, but you are not Indian. We are coming to see the papoose, for Wynema wants one of her own." (Callahan 99)

Chikena's circuitous answer to Carl's question is made almost incomprehensible by the inclusion of the total non sequitur about Wynema. Since Chikena's question opens the chapter, there is no prior material to explain her comment and neither is there context in the following passage where Carl parcels out the three rescued babies like so many pieces of candy: "Gerald Keithly wants one, and I shall keep one, and if she wishes [Wynema] may have one" (Callahan 99). While it makes perfect sense that Chikena, as a Lakota who lived through Wounded Knee, would not be comfortable among whites, her bond with Wynema is unexpected in a novel that has so strongly associated Wynema with dominant mores. Chikena's claim to kinship serves, then, as a necessary reminder that Wynema is, after all, not white. And her words are timely since, prior to the section on Wounded Knee, the reading audience may have been hard put to differentiate Wynema from Genevieve.

Chikena's insistence on Wynema's Indian identity is reiterated in her deathbed speech, which occurs in the novel's concluding chapter:

> I see the prosperous, happy land of the Indians. Ah, Sitting Bull, beloved chief, it is the land to which you promised to lead us.

> There, wandering through the cool forests or beside the running streams we may rest our wearied bodies and feast our hungry souls. Farewell! Wynema, thou child of the forest, make haste and seek with me the happy-hunting grounds of our fathers, for not many years of oppression can your people stand. Not many years will elapse until the Indian will be a people of the past. Ah, my people! My people! God give us rest and peace! (Callahan 104–5)

To contextualize Chikena's final speech, however, we must consider it in conjunction with the prophecy that Wildfire's "good friend" Carl Peterson presents at the conclusion of the previous chapter. He says:

> I often think with a shudder [. . .] of the terrible retribution in store for our Government on account of its treachery and cruelty to the Indians. [. . .] It will surely be visited with troubles and sorrows and afflictions, as it has afflicted and troubled the poor, untutored savage. There will be wars and pestilence, anarchies and open rebellions. The subjects of the Government will rise up in defiance of the "authorities that be." Oh, it will be trouble—trouble! Let us pray, my brothers and sisters, that God will open the eyes of the Congress and people of the United States that they change their conduct toward the despised red race, and thus avert the evil sure to come upon us if they persist in their present treatment of the Indians. (Callahan 102)

Together, these descriptions paint a picture of the future that strongly resembles the Lakota Ghost Dance, the same religious movement whose depiction previously disrupted the easy linearity of the text's Christian rhetoric. Carl's vision, with its potential for an apocalyptic overthrow of the U.S. government, recalls the prophecy foretelling the violent destruction of whites—although Carl, of course, exempts sympathetic whites such as himself, Genevieve, and Gerald from such an equation by placing the onus of responsibility on the legislative structure rather than on specific people or groups—while Chikena's final words evoke the trances of the Ghost dancers, in which they would visit the promised land of plenty and see their dead relatives. But the last few sentences of Chikena's speech are far from Ghost Dance prophecy, since she pre-

dicts the ultimate devastation rather than renewal of Native people. And amid all of this confusion stands Wynema, who, as we are reminded twice by Chikena, is, despite her education, Christianity, and white husband, still Indian, and if we are to believe Chikena, still bound to the destiny of all Native people.

So, where then are we left at the end of *Wynema*? The narrator offers a glimpse into the future of the three Lakota orphans after Chikena's death: the two boys, adopted by Genevieve and Carl, become, respectively, a doctor and missionary with white names—(Methven Keithly and Clark Peterson) and appropriately assimilated aims; Wynema's charge, named Miscona after her dead mother, becomes, more opaquely, a "famous musician and wise woman" (Callahan 104), offering at least the possibility of an Indian-identified life. And the question of Native futures as a whole is raised and dropped with a coy, "why prolong this book into the future, when the present is so fair?"(Callahan 104). What can we learn from this account, which vacillates from erroneous nostalgia, to Christian propaganda, to a polemic defense of Native people, to a prediction of their demise? Perhaps the only definite is that, unsurprisingly for a woman of her era and situation, Callahan wrote a book full of contradictions: she details Muskogee traditions while depicting the Muskogee in teepees; elides the intelligence and activism of Native people while calling for their just treatment; defends Native religious traditions while professing Christianity; recognizes the presence of Lakota women at Wounded Knee while erasing their humanity; and calls for Native insurrection while foretelling the cultural annihilation of the entire Native population. As the first novel written by an American Indian woman, *Wynema* is clearly not the ground-breaking work that many might want it to be, but it is rather, like so many firsts in a genre, a beginning. Janice Acoose (Cree-Métis) suggests, "[an] author's first act of resistance manifests itself in the construction of her text. As so many previously colonized writers [. . .] maintain, the act of writing is a political act that can encourage de-colonization" (qtd. in Angus 29); and such, I would argue, is the case with Callahan's text. But Acoose speaks of late twentieth-century writers; in applying her claim to *Wynema*, I would emphasize her use of the term "encourage" and thus suggest an *emerging possibility* of resistance in the text, a possibil-

ity stretched and expanded by Callahan's strong reaction to the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee. And it is Callahan's depiction of the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee that, after all, brought me to study *Wynema* in the context of my larger project, which examines the incredibly diverse ways Native writers employ the imagery associated with these two over-determined historical events. Most significant to such a study and to this essay is the fact that Callahan, even within her romantic stereotypes, stilted plot lines, and vanishing ("now you see 'em, now you don't") Lakotas, still presents the story of the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee differently than do most dominant accounts. Callahan debunks the cause and effect narrative that ties the Ghost Dance to the Wounded Knee massacre, confronting and dismissing any suggestion that Ghost Dance–induced hostility played a part in the violence. She also, in a very unusual move, foregrounds the living presence of women at the massacre, something few of the more canonical accounts represent.

But not all aspects of *Wynema* are cause for celebration. The tensions inherent in Callahan's narrative, such as those highlighted by Womack, are the tensions inherent in her life as a mixed-blood, acculturated Muskogee woman whose identification with dominant cultural mores seems to impede her understanding of the rich and complex nature of Indian identities. In light of those tensions, I would argue that her turn to Wounded Knee evinces a personal struggle to balance the injustice of the massacre with the romance of her original story and the privileged narrative of her life, which, like Wynema's, was a picture of "successful" assimilation. So Callahan weaves a tale that relies heavily on the repressive myth of the "vanishing Indian," that characterizes so many Wounded Knee accounts, in order to reconcile the irreconcilable—that the dominant Western cosmology to which she ascribes is responsible for the dehumanization and subsequent murder of people who are "like" her, as Chikena's final claim on Wynema underlines. The myth of inevitability offers Callahan indispensable distance from such a frightening possibility, allowing her to differentiate between her own life as an acculturated, successful, nineteenth-century Muskogee woman, and the lives of the "savage" Indians of the Plains, who were soon, according to Callahan, to be "a people of the past." Thus, as we see,

Callahan's depictions of the 1890 Ghost Dance and the Wounded Knee massacre demonstrate not just her outrage and fear over the events at Pine Ridge, but also her struggle to imagine other aspects of Native identities. It is my hope that such a recognition can lead us to approach this lesser-studied tribal narrative with eyes open not just to its failures, which I admit are many, but also to the ways in which it illuminates the complexity of tribal identities at the turn of the last century.

NOTES

1. In this essay, I follow Oklahoma Creek-Cherokee scholar Craig Womack's lead in the spelling of the term Muskogee. The Creek Nation now officially uses the name Muscogee (Creek) Nation. The term Creek was a name that English traders applied to most Native peoples living along the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers in what is now central Georgia and Alabama. The Muskogee constituted a large portion, but not all, of the peoples who fell under the designation of "Creek." Joel Martin offers an excellent overview of the history and politics of these names in *Sacred Revolt: The Muskogees' Struggle for a New World* (6–13).

2. *Wynema*'s exact publication date is unknown, and the novel was only recently republished after having been lost from the public eye for more than a hundred years. According to A. Lavonne Brown Ruoff, who was instrumental in bringing *Wynema* back into print, one of the only known publication announcements was printed on June 6, 1891, in *Our Brother in Red*, a Methodist journal associated with the high school where Callahan taught.

3. Historians most often recognize at least two such Ghost Dance religions: the 1870 Ghost Dance and the better-known 1890 Ghost Dance that the Lakotas adopted in the months before the Wounded Knee massacre. Both of these movements originated among the Paiute on the Walker River Reservation in Nevada where two different Paiute healers—Wodziwob (Fish Lake Joe, died c.1920) in the late 1860s and Wovoka (Jack Wilson, c.1858–1932) in 1889—had visions in which they were instructed to bring dance ceremonies back to their people. The 1890 Ghost Dance has attracted a great deal more attention than the 1870 movement. While this dearth of critical notice may be due, in part, to the lack of documentation surrounding the 1870 dances, it is also undoubtedly connected to the false melding of the 1890 Ghost Dance and the Wounded Knee massacre.

In the 1890 Ghost Dance, Wovoka described a new religion that included

specific performances of dance and prayer, which were to bring about the whites' disappearance, the return of the dancers' dead relatives, and the restoration of decimated buffalo herds. The religion gained adherents from members of many different Native nations, among them the Lakota, to whom such a promise sounded especially appealing in the wake of the disease, drought, and widespread starvation that had plagued their nation in recent years. An increasing number of Lakota embraced Wovoka's teachings in the summer and fall of 1890 and performances of Ghost Dance ceremonies proliferated. These gatherings of Native people terrified several inexperienced government agents including Pine Ridge Reservation Agent Daniel Royer whose panicked missives to Washington were, in part, responsible for the subsequent congregation of the largest number of troops since the Civil War. On December 29, 1890, this escalation of panic culminated in the 1890 Wounded Knee massacre in South Dakota. During the attack more than 300 Lakota were killed by U.S. troops. A large number of books offer in-depth studies of the 1890 Ghost Dance and the Wounded Knee massacre. Among them: Michael Hittman's biography of the Ghost Dance prophet, *Wovoka and the Ghost Dance* (1990); Richard Jenson, R. Eli Paul, and John E. Carter's *Eyewitness at Wounded Knee* (1991); Alice Beck Kehoe's *The Ghost Dance: Ethnohistory and Revitalization* (1989); James H. McGregor's *The Wounded Knee Massacre from the Viewpoint of the Sioux* (1940), which contains some lesser-known eye-witness accounts; James Mooney's seminal text *The Ghost Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890* (1896; 1990), a detailed ethnographic government report written just after the massacre; and, most recently, William E. Coleman's *The Voices of Wounded Knee* (2000), an excellent compilation of nearly all the textual sources on the events of the period.

4. The myth of inevitability that surrounds Wounded Knee, with its mantra of cause (the Ghost Dance) and effect (Wounded Knee), is one of many in a long line of cultural fictions that the self-proclaimed "American" population—U.S. settlers who at one point or another were all immigrants—employed to authorize the young country's genocidal colonial practices. By fixing the "Battle" of Wounded Knee as an unfortunate, Ghost Dance-induced (read self-induced) conclusion to the ugly history of broken treaties, relocation, and starvation that characterized U.S. Indian policy, blame was not only deflected from the U.S. government but was made entirely unnecessary.

For evidence of Wounded Knee's status as marker for the "end" of Native history, see the many books on American Indian or Lakota history that conclude either with the 1890 massacre or in the year that follows. To name only a few here: Charles W. Allen's *From Fort Laramie to Wounded Knee: In the West That Was* (1997 [1938]); Ralph Andrist's *The Long Death: The Last Days*

of the Plains Indians (1964); Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (1972); George Hyde's *A Sioux Chronicle* (1956); John G. Neihardt's *Black Elk Speaks* (1974); Doane Robinson's *A History of the Dakota Sioux Indians* (1967); Robert Utley's *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (1963) and *The Indian Frontier of the American West, 1846–1890*; and Stanley Vestal's *New Sources of Indian History, 1850–1891: The Ghost Dance and the Prairie Sioux* (1934).

5. Callahan grew up in what has been called the "Muscogee aristocracy," a contingent of mixed-blood Muscogee families whose wealth and political power gave them status in both Native and non-Native communities (Ruoff xv). As one of eight children born to prosperous parents, Alice undoubtedly lived a life of comparative privilege. This affluence was, to some degree, a product of the long history of Muscogee-white relations.

6. For an example of Cook-Lynn's arguments about nationalism, sovereignty, and American Indian literature, see "The American Indian Fiction Writers: Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism, the Third World, and First Nation Sovereignty" found in *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays*.

7. Callahan's missionary mentality is not entirely surprising considering that Christianity has a long history among the Muskogee. In 1874, for example, Baptist missionary Rev. John McIntosh went on an expedition to preach to the Native peoples of the Southwest and, according to historian Angie Debo, at least until the time of her study in 1941, the Muskogee "never ceased their missionary work among the southwestern tribes" (208–9). See Womack's brief discussion of the history of Muscogee Christianity (121–22) and Homer Noley's *First White Frost: Native Americans and United Methodism*.

8. For more on the role of the press at Wounded Knee see Elmo Scott Watson's "The Last Indian War, 1890–91—A Study of Newspaper Jingoism."

9. Choe no doubt refers to the 1889 scandal over land payments in which the Muskogee were paid $10,000 out of a $2,280,857 dollar settlement from the U.S. government for land that had been ceded in error (Debo 348–50; Ruoff xxxvii–xxxviii). Tribal reaction was strong and immediate and throughout the summer and fall of that year the *Muskogee Daily Phoenix* carried daily coverage of the issues (Ruoff xxxix). The Muskogee worked through both the tribal and the U.S. government systems to try to reach a solution, and while the truth did not unfold immediately, the barrage of press suggests that most Muskogee, unlike Callahan's Choe, were well aware of the nuances of the situation.

10. Hadjo's editorial is also the only direct textual reference to mixed-blood identity. His argument, which naturalizes a connection between full-blood identity and Native religion, is belied by the character of Wynema who is both Christian and full blood.

11. This scene forms the basis for the drawing of a fleeing woman with a baby that was adjacent to the title page in the original version of the text, which I viewed when I discovered two copies of *Wynema* in the Ohio State University archives. To my knowledge, Ohio State has the only extant versions of the complete text.

12. As with all of Callahan's heroines, though, their choices reinscribe a conventional domestic ideal that the women disobey their husbands only because they would rather die than live without them.

13. See Renée Samson Flood's *Lost Bird of Wounded Knee* (1995) for an account of the difficult life of one such adopted child.

14. I want to clarify that when I invoke the troubled and troubling rhetoric of blood quantum here, I am doing so in relation to the text's own rhetoric rather than reifying a connection between blood quantum and indigenous identity.

15. Talking about Kiowa author N. Scott Momaday's concept of blood memory, Chadwick Allen discusses the ways in which American Indian writers "defy attempts by legislatures and others to quantify contemporary indigenous identities for their own ends, to inscribe indigenous identities as a number always *less than* that of the generations that came safely before, as a number moving inevitably toward zero" (111). Callahan's narrative, however imperfectly, presents one such imaginative act.

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An Ensemble Performance of Indians in the Act

Native Theater Past and Present

THE CAST

Harvey Markowitz, Ceyakton Institute
Craig Howe, Ceyakton Institute
Dean Rader, University of San Francisco
LeAnne Howe, Choctaw, author, playwright

AN INTRODUCTION

"Indians in the Act," a panel presentation was conceived as a theatrical moment, an academic play in four acts beginning with historical essays on Lakota performance and culminating with discourse on contemporary Native theater. Our panel performed at the Native American Literature Symposium on November 30, 2000, at 7 P.M. in the all-inclusive resort, Inter-Continental Hotel, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. What is presented here—for the page—is not accurate in the sense in which "performance" is used by academics. The title has been slightly altered. Edits made. The performance, while relevant to the conference, may not at first be obvious to a reader.

Translating the oral tradition, or a Native performance has always proved difficult. Oral stories seem stilted on the page and often require a great deal of teacher preparation for students to become fully engaged in the material. We encountered similar difficulties in reproducing "Indians in the Act" for *SAIL*. We had to remove most of the humorous asides and the singing by certain members of the cast (panel presenters). We also recognize that readers will just have to imagine our *big finale* when the entire audience on November 30 broke out into song: a parody of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." Our purpose was to create

an interactive experience so scholars of American Indian literature could become "framed" as active participants in an oral event. During the performance the cast could sense that our audience was responding emotionally, spiritually (read psychologically, if you must), physically, and intellectually. Admittedly, by 9 P.M. many conference attendees were smashed, but the cast of "Indians in the Act" continues to revel in the belief that the audience's euphoria was a result of the performance.

Our unconventional panel performance tried to demonstrate how much "insider knowledge" is necessary to engage an audience in an oral event. We also wanted our audience to consider that within tribal cultures, there are many "performative acts" that can be thought of as historical antecedents of contemporary Native theater. Finally we suggest that a great deal of cultural engagement has been sustained by American Indian communities and passed on to contemporary tribal storytellers. Just how signals and codes are passed on, and whether they indeed bind a particular tribal culture over time became part of the continuing dialogue after our panel presentation. What follows is our presentation on historic Native acts and their contemporary counterpart, Native theater.

We wish to thank Gwen Griffin, English professor at Mankato State University for her improvisation in bringing Dorothyhontas to life in our staged reading of a scene from the play *The Shaman of* OK, at the end of "Indians in the Act."

STAGING NOTES

It is the last day of November 2000. The smell of the ocean hangs heavily in the conference room at the all-inclusive resort, the Inter-Continental Hotel in Puerto Vallarta. The audience wants to leave and walk along the beach and feel the warm sand and water between their toes. For some reason they stay. The performance benefits from a pared-down style of presentation. Scene changes are done rapidly, (no blackouts) forcing the panel to be actor-driven. More precisely, academic-driven.

OVERTURE

LEANNE HOWE: It is my pleasure to introduce Harvey Markowitz, singer, actor, and performer, born in Tupelo, Mississippi, on January 8, 1935.

He graduated from high school in Memphis, Tennessee; drove a truck for Crown Electric Company. His first commercial recordings were "That's All Right, Mama," and "Blue Moon of Kentucky" for Sun Records. He appeared in several films including *Jailhouse Rock*, 1957, and in 1963, *Girls, Girls, Girls*. *(Audience laughs and realizes—at last—that Harvey Markowitz's biography sounds suspiciously like Elvis Presley's. They intuit the cultural cues and quickly adapt to the rhythm of the banter.)*

Next Craig Howe, former star and director of *Indians on Ice*, a musical comedy about reincarnated European fur traders. *(Audience guffaws.)* Craig left a perfectly good career in show business to teach postcolonial theory at Princeton University. *(Audience rolls with laughter.)*

Next Dean Rader. *(Long pause for dramatic effect. Audience reads cue and grows quiet.)* Where to begin? When I first met Dean, he was going by the name of Deanna and working as a cocktail waitress at the Red River Lounge in downtown Austin. It's amazing what you can do with the money from a National Endowment for the Humanities grant these days, huh? *(Audience spits up. Their laughter momentarily stops the show.)*

One last comment about Dean. Because his undergraduate university in Waco was bought by the Moonies, he has been forced to relocate to New York to finish his Ph.D. *(Audience slaps knees. Howls with laughter. With no break in the action, narrator continues.)*

My name is LeAnne Howe, and today I come before you to announce my candidacy for President of the United States. I plan to give George W. Bush a run for his money! *(Audience roars. Applause rocks the conference room at the all-inclusive resort, Inter-Continental Hotel, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Howe takes a bow and exits, stage right.)*

SCENE I: LAKOTA WINTER COUNTS AND PERFORMANCE

Harvey Markowitz takes center stage and grasps the microphone. He sings the opening lines of "Love Me Tender." Audience applauds. Harvey suddenly stops singing and begins lecturing in a serious tone. Audience reads their cue and becomes thoughtful and quiet.

HARVEY MARKOWITZ: In his seminal 1988 essay, "The Native Voice," Kiowa author N. Scott Momaday paid tribute to humanity's first great

literary master. He invited the reader to "Imagine: somewhere in the prehistoric distance a man holds up in his hand a crude instrument—a brand, perhaps, or something like a daub or a broom bearing pigment—and fixed the wonderful image in his mind's eye to a wall or rock. [. . .] In our modern, sophisticated terms, [that man] is primitive and preliterate, and in the long reach of time he is utterly without distinction, except: he draws. And his contribution to posterity is inestimable; he makes a profound difference in our lives who succeed him by millennia. For all the stories of all the world proceed from the moment in which he makes his mark. All literatures issues from his hand" (5).

Now, it might seem ironic, even perverse, that Momaday, the quintessential "man-made-of words," would trace the origin of literature to the imagination and craft of a prehistoric cave dweller. However, his mythopoeic reconstruction teases us with the irony that, with regard to world literature, in the beginning it was the picture, not word, that told stories.

In fact, there was probably never a time when pictures alone told stories. Rather, from the outset, they were necessarily complemented by the spoken language of oral tradition. Remarking on the paramount importance of oral tradition among non-Western peoples, Michael Dorris once observed that it is "the cornerstone of every tribal society [. . .] the vehicle through which wisdom is passed from one generation to the next and by which sense is made of a confusing world. It is responsible in large part," he continued, "for the education, entertainment, and inspiration of the community" (156–57).

As part of their function of "making sense of the world," the literary traditions of tribal societies create stories that are place and event centered: here something happened and a particular person was present. The trigger for the recollection of traditional oral narratives might be a place in the landscape, or a particular word, the mention of someone's name, even a picture or song. Often, as the storyteller recites history, another trigger is tripped and another narrative begins. No pre-established sequence determines the recitation. Rather, using their imaginations and creativity, narrators make connections between stories on the spot, incorporating a wide array of information that pertains to an

incident and that tailors the presentation of this information to the particular circumstances of each recitation.

The tribal histories of peoples of the Great Plains were originally a recounting of events that in some fundamental sense related tribal communities to their surroundings—to other humans, to plants and animals, to landmarks and constellations. Such histories recognized and reinforced circles and webs of relationships that connected all entities of a spatial domain and then related those entities and that domain to the cosmos. These events were communicated in both pictographs and speech, with the pictographs serving as mnemonic devices for recounting the stories pertaining to each incident.

During the seventeenth century, at least five peoples of the Great Plains—the Blackfeet, Kiowas, Mandans, Poncas, and Lakotas—developed a unique method for organizing such pictographic-oral (or, if you will excuse the shorthand, "pict-oral") representations. The Lakotas called such representations waniyetu iyawapi or "winter counts." Annually the council of each Lakota extended family band or t'iyospaye would convene to select the outstanding event of the recently concluded waniyetu, or year, that would henceforth serve as the group's name for that period of time. Following this decision, an individual who was respected for his wisdom and artistic abilities would create a pictograph symbolizing the event and then sketch or paint it on a tanned animal skin to accompany those images that he or former winter count keepers had drawn for previous years. By this method, winter counts established a chronology of community-specific events which simultaneously enabled t'iyospaye members to organize, remember, and recount stories of their past.

Among the Lakotas, the oral traditions associated with winter counts were part of the wider cultural category woyakapi, or "things told." Within this category, Lakotas identified a sub-category comprising stories that they considered to be true. These they called ehani woyakapi, a term commonly translated into English as "histories." Such histories the Lakotas again considered of two sorts. The first of those were of a cosmological character, dealing with the origins of the wakantankapi, or Lakota deities, animals, plants, and human beings, and first and foremost the Lakota people. The emergence of the Lakotas from under the earth, as many believe, through wind cave is one such story.

The second type of history included stories of incidents from more recent times. While some of these narratives were the common legacy of all the Lakota bands, for example, the White Buffalo Calf Woman's gift of the sacred pipe (of which more shall be said later), most centered on events peculiar to the remembered past of particular t'iyospayes. Stories belonging to this second sort predominated in the oral-literary traditions associated with winter counts.

What qualified events for inclusion in a t'iyospaye's remembered past was their expression of values, themes, and concerns of central importance to the group. The death of important leaders, epidemics, the triumphs and failures of t'iyospaye warriors in battle and horse-raiding parties, periods of starvation and plenty, treaty negotiations, the origin and celebration of rituals, and mysterious and awesome occurrences, such as giant meteor showers or the discovery of an old woman in a buffalo stomach, comprise merely a small sample of the myriad of subjects treated by Lakota historians.

The essential role of social values and interests in Lakota historiography sets it apart from the Euro-American, post-Enlightenment historical tradition which is centered on generating reputedly objective, chronological descriptions and analyses. Although, as already stated, chronology was not absent from Lakota histories, it cannot be said to have been a major principle of their structure and content. Neither was it the aim of Lakota historians to describe or explain events. Rather, their goal was to create among their listeners a sense of participation, empathy, and personal stake in the stories they told. As one astute student of western Sioux culture has observed, for the Lakotas, "historical fact was valued not according to its chronological accuracy but according to its relevance to the people" (DeMallie, *Lakota Society* 113).

Beginning with one event—perhaps captured in a winter count pictograph and its accompanying story—a t'iyospaye historian might pass it on to another and then to another, selecting and linking them into an extended oral performance by means of a calculus that matched group situation, Lakota values, and stories. Given the great quantity of narratives available to a t'iyospaye historian and their possible combination and recombination in relation to changing needs and situations of the group, the number of possible histories was infinite. It would

have been inconceivable for a Lakota to think of his or her band's history, let alone the histories of the Lakota people or the American Indian in the singular, as Western historians commonly do. It was only because history was constantly changing and sensitive to the situation and needs of a t'iyospaye that it remained relevant and could perform its intended function.

Unless one is aware of this function, a t'iyospaye's decision to include particular incidents on its winter count may at times seem perplexing. In order to be properly understood, these pict-oral representations of remembered past must be interpreted within the context of Lakota lifeways, values, and circumstances.

In essence, the Lakota historical tradition, including its winter counts, may be considered an aspect of the great Lakota custom of wowahunkukiya through which respected elders instructed members of their t'iyospayes on the wicohan or life affirming values and customs of society. Lakota historians performed a similar role by disclosing the values embedded in past events so that the members of their bands might achieve a lived experience of what it meant to belong to those t'iyospayes and what made the Lakotas a great, enduring people. It is here we arrive at the fundamental significance of the Lakota maxim that "a people without history is like wind on the buffalo grass." The Lakotas recognized that in the acts of recording and telling histories, values were reinforced and transmitted that imbued their lives with meaning and purpose. Given the important function of history, it is hardly surprising that, according to Oglala holy man Nicholas Black Elk, many of the history tellers were medicine men. "They have," he observed, "the power and they know" (DeMallie, *Sixth Grandfather* 334).

From our knowledge of Lakota oral tradition, there is good reason to trace the origins of wowahunkukiya to the story of ptesanwin, White Buffalo Calf Woman, an incarnation of wohpe, beautiful woman, one of the sixteen Lakota wankatankapi or sacred beings. Among the loveliest and most detailed versions of this story was that told by the Hunkpapa elder, Loneman, and that anthropologist Frances Densmore incorporated in her monumental work, *Teton Sioux Music*. The narrative begins with the mysterious appearance of ptesanwin to a pair of Lakota scouts to whom she announces that she comes bearing a gift

from her nation, the buffalo people. The story's climax arrives with her presentation of this gift, a sacred pipe, to the assembled band of Sans Arc Lakotas whose leader had been chosen to receive it in the name of the whole Sioux tribe. "Your tribe," she tells him "has the distinction of being always very faithful to promises, and of possessing great respect and reverence toward sacred things" (Densmore 66).

While much of Loneman's narrative is concerned with reporting ptesanwin's instructions on the functions and appropriate use of the pipe, an even greater portion memorializes her loving exhortation to the band's men, women, children, and leader that they adhere to the prescribed patterns of behavior for their place in Lakota society. As is fitting, she delivers her wowahunkukiya, as a relative, a sister, who is possessed with a deep and abiding concern for the welfare of her family. She states, "my relatives, brothers and sisters: Wakantanka (the Great Spirit) has looked down, and smiles upon us this day because we have met as belonging to one family. The best thing in a family is good feeling toward every member of the family. I am proud to become a member of your family—a sister to you all. The sun is your grandfather, and he is the same to me" (Densmore 66).

By her act of hunkaye, adoption or the making of kin, White Buffalo Calf Woman not only established her own ties of kinship with the Lakotas, but served as a mediator, extending these ties to the entire buffalo nation and, still further, to all of the gods. In order to remain on good terms with the buffalos and their other spirit relations, it was imperative the Lakotas comport themselves in ways pleasing to the gods and that had been instituted by these deities—again as good relatives—to give the Lakotas life. White Buffalo Calf Woman's counsel provided the Lakotas with a model of how respected members of the band, especially Lakota historians and winter count keepers, could help to instill and encourage the practice of these wicohan, these life-giving traditions and standards.

SCENE II: COUNTING COUP LAKOTA STYLE: BRAVE ACTS AND DRAMATIC REENACTMENTS

Harvey Markowitz exits stage right. Craig Howe enters. He looks closely at his paper, as if he's never seen it before, then begins speaking in a serious tone. The audience remains silent and respectful.

CRAIG HOWE: Thank you LeAnne for organizing tonight's panel, "Indians in the Act: Native Theater Past and Present." This paper glances at six scenes from the Native American Old World that perhaps represent examples of early Native theater. Drawn from a limited corpus of Lakota literature, they are suggestive analogs to contemporary theatrical performances. So tonight we will catch a couple Indians in the act. Not THAT act, but rather the act of counting coup Lakota style.

Act One
Bravery on the Battlefield

In this act, a Sioux warrior named Spotted Horse recounts to his son how he achieved his first brave deed, and also how the Sioux acknowledged the bravery of an enemy Pawnee warrior.

Act one. In his book, *My People the Sioux*, Luther Standing Bear recites a story told to him by his father about a time when Pawnees came into Sioux country and hunted buffalo. While the Pawnees were scattered about butchering their kills, Standing Bear's father, Spotted Horse, and his comrades rushed at them headlong on their horses and surprised them into a hasty retreat. One of the foreign hunters had not, however, time to escape:

> When I got there, the [Lakotas] were all in a circle around one Pawnee. His horse had got away from him in the excitement and he was left on foot. But he had a bow and arrow in his hand and was defying any of the [Lakotas] to come near. He was a big man and very brave. When our men would shoot an arrow at him and it struck, he would break the arrow off and throw it away. If they shot at him and missed, he would pick up the arrows and defy the [Lakotas] to come on.
>
> Then I asked the men if anyone had yet touched this enemy. They said no; that the man appeared to have such strength and power that they were afraid of him. I then said that I was going to touch this enemy. So I fixed my shield in front of me, carrying only my lance.
>
> The Pawnee stood all ready for me with his arrow fixed in his

bow, but I rode right up to him and touched him with my lance. The man did not appear excited as I rode up, but he shot an arrow at me, which struck my shield and glanced off into the muscles of my left arm.

Behind me rode Black Crow. The third man was Crow Dog, and the fourth man was One Ear Horse. We four men touched this enemy with our lances, but I was the first. After the Pawnee had wounded me, the other men expected to see him get excited, but he did not lose his nerve. As soon as I had passed him with an arrow through my arm, the Pawnee had a second arrow all ready for the next man.

The second man was shot in the shoulder, and the third man in the hip. As the last man touched the enemy, he received an arrow in the back. In this manner the Pawnee shot all four men who had touched him with their lances. We had all gained an honor, but we were all wounded. Now that four of our men had touched the enemy, he was so brave that we withdrew from the field, sparing his life. (*My People the Sioux* 4–5)

Act Two
Becoming Brave

This act examines how young Lakota boys such as Luther Standing Bear and Bull-Standing-with-Cow were constantly encouraged to comport themselves in a brave manner. Even when in the womb, their mothers would sing songs of courage and praise in their name. Thus, when on the battlefield, they were eager to demonstrate their bravery.

Act two. When Lakota communities still exercised traditional decision-making authority within their homelands, young men had four paths to follow in their quest for honors: the healer, the hunter, the scout, or the warrior. Luther Standing Bear in his work, *Land of the Spotted Eagle*, wrote that "most young men at some time in their lives tried to become medicine-men, [but] to become a great brave was, however, the highest aspiration" (39). In choosing the warpath, Lakota warriors sought to garner honors by performing one of three categories of courageous acts on the battlefield: namely, loyalty to their fellow

warriors, bravery by touching or couping an enemy, and generosity by sparing the life of an enemy warrior.

When just boys, young Lakotas were admonished to be brave and thereby bring honor to themselves, their relatives, and their tribe. They also witnessed sisters, mothers, and fathers of warriors praising their brothers and sons on certain occasions. Standing Bear noted that

> at these ceremonies, praises were sung for all our braves and it was there that the boys determined to be braves themselves some day. They wanted to be men of courage and to merit praise and honor. [. . .] Mother further interested me by sometimes talking about the braves. She would tell me what they had done and why they were honored. (*Land of the Spotted Eagle* 25)

Bull-Standing-with-Cow's father told him: "When you go on the warpath, look out for the enemy and do something brave. Do not make me ashamed of you" (Vestal 8). In the summer of 1865, Bull-Standing-with-Cow was sixteen years old and began his distinguished career as a warrior. In August of that year he again joined a war party and went on the warpath a second time. Concealing themselves in the hills surrounding Pumpkin Buttes in what is now Wyoming, the war party watched a portion of the Bozeman Trail south of what would later become Fort Reno. Bull-Standing-with-Cow told the story of his second warpath to Stanley Vestal who recorded it this way:

> Hiding there, the [Lakotas] soon saw enemies riding south along the trail—seven mounted scouts in blue uniforms, driving four spare horses. When they came near, the Sioux mounted and swept from their covert [hideout] at a run, whipping their horses on both sides. Bull-Standing-with-Cow was riding his fast gray [horse], "Swift Hawk." He got a good start and dashed far ahead of the main party, riding with the foremost. At first the scouts did not see the [Lakotas] coming. When they did, they halted, turned tail, and raced back toward the tents and buildings of their camp with the blood-curdling war-cry of the [Lakotas] loud in their frightened ears.
>
> By the time the foremost [Lakotas] drew near the scouts, the

latter had become considerably strung out. They galloped along as fast as they could, with the frightened spare horses plunging through the dust at their sides. Charging-Bear was first to overtake the last of the scouts. He struck the man smartly across the shoulders with his bow, then wheeled away, veering from the threat of the bluecoat's gun. Bull-Standing-with-Cow, plunging through the dust right at his friend's heels, counted the second coup on that scout with his lance . . . [and then] dashed on to attack the other [scouts]. He was now the foremost of the [Lakotas].

As the boy plunged forward, yelling, he raised his lance to strike the blue back before him. But the second scout heard him coming, turned in his saddle and raised his revolver, firing point-blank at the boy behind. Tchow! The white smoke almost concealed the scout for an instant. But Bull-Standing-with-Cow did not turn back. The bullet had missed him. He was unhurt, and plunged on. The scout, riding half-turned around, kept threatening his pursuer with the gun. But Bull-Standing-with-Cow was too eager to be scared away. His blood was up, his horse was fast, he was right on the tail of his enemy. At any moment now he might count his first "first" coup and win the coveted right to wear an upright eagle-feather in his hair.

The scout, finding that he could not run away from, or bluff his enemy with the revolver, fired again; but at the same instant the boy stabbed him with his lance in the shoulder, shoving him from his saddle. With a cry he fell from his horse into the dust. The riderless horse plunged on after the others with swinging stirrups. Thus Bull-Standing-with-Cow was the first to strike this enemy, Cloud Man struck second. (43–45)

Act Three
Where's Your Feather?

This act examines the relationship between counting coup and wearing feathers. In Lakota society, feathers symbolized with a considerable degree of precision how brave their wearers were on the battlefield.

Only those who had preformed brave deeds were entitled to wear a feather, and they did so in a conventionalized manner.

Act three. Warriors were entitled to wear an eagle tail feather in a manner corresponding to the type of coup they counted. In counting coup, Lakotas recognized the first four individuals to touch the same enemy with their hands or something held in their hands. Individuals attained honors that corresponded to the order of their coup. The coups were ranked; the first person to strike an enemy achieved the highest honor and was entitled to wear an eagle feather upright at the back of his head. The second person to strike could wear his feather slanting upward to the right. The third to count coup wore his feather parallel to his right shoulder, while the fourth man's feather sloped downward to the right. Thus the position of feathers indicated at a glance to all Lakotas which warriors were bravest in battle. Counting coup was rated higher in bravery than stealing horses and killing, scalping, or taking personal possessions of an enemy.

Act Four
Dramatic Reenactments

Whereas brave acts were preformed on battlefields in front of enemy and friendly warriors, those same deeds were subsequently reenacted within the warriors' home community and included the participation of their families, friends, relatives, and horses. Black Elk and Standing Bear describe these dramatic theatrical performances.

Act four. When warriors returned triumphant from the warpath, there immediately began preparations for the victory dance, called either waktegli wacipi or iwakiciwacipi.[1] If an enemy scalp was taken, this is how Black Elk described the prelude to the victory—or kill come back—dance:

> When [the warriors] come back, they stop near the camp and all blacken their faces with charcoal. [. . .] Then [those that had made a kill or coup] get together and the rest stay behind. They gallop into camp and circle around the camp [saying what they had done . . .] and then rode back to where the others were, and

> then they all came back, with the women first and the scalps. [. . .] The second time they came they sang. They paraded around with the women in the lead, then the braves with their scalps. Then over and over again, they sang the[ir] songs.
>
> The relatives of the men in the party, after the first group went around the first time, blackened their faces, too. As soon as they came to the place prepared for that, they had the victory dance. (DeMallie, *Sixth Grandfather* 369-70)

Standing Bear witnessed a number of these dances and described them as

> very dramatic performance[s] given by the braves who took this opportunity to display strength, bravery, war skill, and to decorate themselves a great deal. Some of them used their favorite war horses in order to give a faithful and dramatic picture of what took place on the battlefield. The animals, too, seemed to sense the meaning and glamour of the occasion and I have seen them prance, snort, and act with their masters in a most marvelous way. The acting in these dances was sometimes very fine—the receiving of a wound, the rescue of a friend, an escape with the assistance of a friend, all being enacted with realism. (*Land of the Spotted Eagle* 220)

Standing Bear continued:

> All the men who had been in the battle took part, each man dressed in the clothing he had worn in the fight. Those who had been wounded painted the spot a bright red, to represent blood. [. . .] If a horse had been wounded, the animal was brought into the dance and painted where it had been struck by a bullet. Even the horses received praise for the part they had taken in the battle.
>
> Those who had worn war-bonnets in the fight also wore them in the dance. Some carried scalps. There were no false credits given at this dance, but every warrior received his just merits. One could easily tell just what the standing was of those who participated in the dance. Several days were consumed before the victory dance was finished. (*My People the Sioux* 57)

These dramatic reenactments were staged in the hocoka of a Lakota village, witnessed by the entire community and encircled by their lodges. Young warriors who had counted their first coup were given an adult name at this time, their boyhood name being put aside. Scalps often were given to a warrior's sisters or mother, or sometimes to the relatives of a warrior killed by enemies. If a warrior captured horses, he distributed them to relatives, but foremost to his sisters.

Act Five
Oh Sister, Where Art Thou?

Upon returning from the warpath with captured horses, a warrior distributed them to relatives, but foremost to his sisters. This act is a song that was composed and sung by a man named Two Shields upon returning from the warpath (Densmore 362–63). Act five.

tanke'	older sister
hina'pa yo	come outside
sunka'wakan	horses
awa'kuwe	I am bringing home
tanke'	older sister
hina'pin	come outside
na	and
wanzi' oyus'payo	you may catch one of them

Act Six
Count Coup Lakota Style

Act six. Lakota coups were recorded in many media. Brave deeds were dramatically danced by warriors who simultaneously scripted a descriptive narrative. Feathers were affixed to their hair and colored to indicate the order of coup and whether or not the wearer was wounded. Songs were composed and sung in praise of brave warriors, both by themselves and by their relatives. And some warriors depicted their daring deeds in drawings.

In the Native American Old World, the intended audience for these

multimedia accounts was the warriors' own community. As much as the accounts praised the exploits of individual warriors, a primary purpose of recording the perilous acts was to perpetuate the people. The exemplary behavior ensured that the community continued, but moreover validated the virtues of the Lakota way of life:

wo'ohitika	bravery
wo'wacintanka	fortitude
wacan'tognaka	generosity
wo'ksape	wisdom

A warrior's highest calling was to contribute to his community's act of being and becoming on its own terms. In some sense, those brave acts and dramatic reenactments were unique community-based, theatrical expressions, setting the stage, perhaps, for contemporary Native theater. And that is . . . counting coup Lakota style.

SCENE THREE: POETRY AS PERFORMANCE

Craig Howe exits. Dean Rader enters, stage left. Fuming, he covers the microphone and says something to Harvey Markowitz. The audience shifts in their seats. Given his reputation, it is clear they think the speaker may be cueing them for a humorous scene. There is tension. When he begins to recite poetry, the audience again reads his cue and listens.

DEAN RADER:

The October night is warm and clear.
We are standing on a small hill and in all directions,
around us, the flat land listens to the songs rising.
The holy ones are here dancing.
The Yeis are here.

In the west, Shiprock looms above the desert.
Tsé bit'a'í, old bird-shaped rock. She watches us.
Tsé bit'a'í, our mother who brought the people here on her back.
Our refuge from the floods long ago. It was worlds and centuries

ago,
Yet she remains here. Nihimá, our mother.

This is the center of the night
and right in front of us, the holy ones dance.
They dance, surrounded by hundreds of Navajos.
Diné t'óó àhayói.
Diné t'óó àhayói.
We listen and watch the holy ones dance.
Yeibicheii.
Yeibicheii.
Grandfather of the holy ones.

They dance, moving back and forth.
Their bodies are covered with white clay
and they wave evergreen branches.
They wear hides of varying color,
their coyote tails swinging as they sway back and forth.
All of them dancing ancient steps.
They dance precise steps, our own emergence onto this land.

They dance again, the formulation of this world.
They dance for us now—one precise swaying motion.
They dance back and forth, back and forth.
As they are singing, we watch ourselves recreated.

Éí álts'íísígíí shil nizóní. The little clown must be about six years old. He skips lightly about waving his branches around. He teases people in the audience, tickling their faces if they look too serious or
too sleepy. At the beginning of each dance, when the woman walks by to
bless the Yeis, he runs from her. Finally, after the third time, she sprinkles him with corn pollen and he skips off happily. 'éí shil nizóní.

They Yeis are dancing again, each step, our own strong bodies.
They are dancing the same dance, thousands of years old. They are here
for us now, grateful for another harvest and our own good health.
The roasted corn I had this morning was fresh,
cooked all night and taken out of the ground this
morning. It was steamed and browned just right.

They are dancing and in the motion of songs rising,
our breathing becomes the morning moonlit air.
The fires are burning below as always.
We are restored.
We are restored.

You have just heard a poem entitled "Motion of Songs Rising" by Luci Tapahonso, a Navajo writer living in Arizona.[2]

This piece is a short musing not only on Luci's poem but also on the act of reading the poem—both the act of reading the poem as you just did and also the act of reading the poem aloud, as you might do in front of your class, or, if we were actually with each other, as I might do at a conference presentation. More precisely, I am interested in questions surrounding what happens when we enact performative texts by American Indian writers. For instance, let's say I made a visit to your class and read this poem aloud to you and your students. To what degree is my reading of the poem a performance? And, more importantly, how would the performance be different if Luci were in your class to read the poem instead of me? Perhaps even more interestingly, what would happen if LeAnne Howe or Craig Howe (both of whom are and perhaps even look "Indian" but are not Navajo) magically appeared in your classroom and read Luci's poem? These simple but plausible scenarios dramatize some critical issues that attend the questions of this collaborative essay in particular and both Native studies in general. In the conference version of this essay, I began my presentation by reading this poem—both in Mexico at the Native American Literature Symposium and later in Washington DC at the American Studies Association meeting. The simple act of reading Luci Tapahonso's poem

at a Native studies conference and then again at an American studies conference foregrounds provocative questions about what is at stake in our work and in our classes when we enact or reenact Native texts, especially those texts in which something magical or sacred transpires. So for the next few pages, I'd like to explore these questions of authenticity, performance, and poetry.

Let's begin with Luci's poem. If Ms. Tapahonso were in your classroom or in your home or in your office, if she had read or *performed* this text, I am willing to bet that the experience of hearing the poem would have been considerably different for you than if I read you the poem. No doubt, you would have found her presentation of the text not only more authentic but more powerful than my own performance. Certainly, she would not have butchered the Navajo; certainly, the immediacy, the poignancy of her poem would feel more palpable; certainly there would be moments—perhaps extended moments—in which the boundary between Luci and her poem was invisible; certainly, you would feel as though the poem were part and parcel of the author who spoke it, before you, to you. Perhaps you would have felt as if something tribal, something magical, something wholly "Indian" was happening before you, to you.

On the other hand, I suspect that all of you would have felt weird if Adam Sandler read this poem, and something altogether different if I did. In this scenario, I doubt you would have felt as though something genuinely "Indian" was unfolding in your presence. Where you may have participated in the poetic if Luci were with you, you now might feel as though you were given the academic. As I struggled to pronounce "ei alts iisigii shil nizhoni," as I read as opposed to enacted Luci's poem, a notable incongruity may have emerged. If you were not thinking about your own work or wondering what the hell I was doing in your home or office reading this poem, you may have been puzzling over a *seemingly* Anglo male reading a poem by a Navajo woman. Imagine now that I am reading this poem at a conference on American Indian literature in Mexico. There are many Indian writers and scholars in the audience. How might my "performance" of Luci's poem appear to them? Now imagine that I am, as I was, reading this poem very early on a Saturday morning as part of a panel on performance at a conference

on American studies in Washington DC, a city in which many decisions about Indian removal and murder were set into motion. Of the possible incongruities in this moment, which is the most puzzling? And do these incongruities create a kind of distance between the poem, the performer, and the audience that would otherwise be minimized or entirely absent if Luci Tapahonso read her poem instead of me? In short, what happens to the poem, to the moment, when someone who is *not* Luci reads it? If there are satisfactory answers to these questions, I don't know them.

What I do know: Luci Tapahonso's poem was written in the early 90s, probably in long hand, mostly in English, partly in Navajo. It was published in 1993 in a book entitled *Sáani Dahataał: The Women Are Singing* by the University of Arizona Press. The book is ninety-five pages and 0-8165-1351-1 is the ISBN for the hardback edition, and 0-8165-1361-9 for the soft cover. The poem appears on pages 67–68. The book was printed on acid-free paper in what appears to be a Palatino font. Even reduced to this tedious level, I would argue that the poem is still a performance—though, one could argue, as much from the University of Arizona Press as from Luci Tapahonso. When read though, silently or aloud, something happens. The poem ceases to be merely an impressed two-dimensional document and becomes something altogether different, a heightened performance that transports the reader and/or the listener out of one world and into the world of the poem, the world of the *Dine*—metaphorically this happens merely by engaging the poem, literally this happens when the Yeis are sung into being.

Indeed, "The Motion of Songs Rising" links the motion of life and language with the motion of the Yeis's dance. Here, the Yeis literally dance the world into existence through the performance of ritual. For the speaker and the "hundreds of Navajo" surrounding the dancers, their participation in ceremony transforms the experience into participatory truth. My hope is that my reading of this poem transforms the typical distancing conference setting into an atypical, even uncanny moment. If this is the case, then what can happen in our classes and in our work? What are the real differences between?

reading the poem silently to yourself?
reading the poem aloud to yourself?

watching another Native writer read the poem?
experiencing another Native writer *perform* the poem?
watching Luci read and sing her poem on television?
listening to a tape of Luci performing her poem?
having Luci visit your class and perform the poem to you and your students?
watching me read the poem to no one in particular as we stand outside a Hogan in the middle of Navajo?
Listening to me recite the poem to Luci as you, she, and I walk to Starbucks?

Of course, the possibilities are endless, and in each scenario, we can imagine a different poetic experience with varying levels of authenticity, immediacy, and immanence. What's more, we would probably not experience these nuances of performance and ritual if we were talking about Adrienne Rich or, say, John Ashberry. So, again, what is at stake when we perform Luci's poem? What does this experience say about Luci, us, the poem, and the world? How does the poem engage those not participating in the act of reading the poem?

In the world of the poem, one finds no distinction between the *Dine* watching and those participating. Perhaps, as I moved through the poem something similar happens here. Perhaps my reading of Luci's poem is what I would call a mediated performance—an interlocutory act in which a text's immediacy gets mediated through another performer. But to a certain degree, every book, every website, is a mediated performer; they stand in for the poet, the author, the original speaker. Perhaps, then, it is inaccurate to think of "The Motions of Songs Rising" as entirely Luci's poem. Perhaps if Luci were to sing her poem to you, then it would no longer have been hers but yours. Perhaps now, after reading the poem, it is your responsibility to make out of the poem your own performance. I think Tapahonso would agree. In her introduction to the book, she writes:

> Many of the poems and stories have a song that accompanies the work. [. . .] When I read these in public, the song is also a part of the reading. [. . .] The combination of song, prayer, and poetry is a natural form of expression for many Navajo people. [. . .] It is

> with this perspective that I share the following stories, poetry, and prayers. Once, my older brother said about my nálí, my paternal grandmother, who died decades ago: "She was a walking storybook. She was full of wisdom." Like many other relatives, she had a profound understanding of the function of language. (xi–xii).

The function of language in the poem is performative. More than any other poet I know, Tapahonso remains keenly aware of the authority of language, whether it is written on the page or spoken from the human body, and she knows that if one speaks correctly and powerfully, the world responds. This type of speech is performative because it makes things happen. As Jonathan Culler notes, "[p]erformative utterances [. . .] are statements which themselves accomplish the acts to which they refer" (108). Thus, in "The Motion of Songs Rising," Tapahonso and her act of poetic performance, not only speaks the ritual into being; the poems *become* the ritual just as the ritual becomes that to which *it* refers. As an actual performance itself, the poem personifies the dance, and the shared rhythms and pulsations of these expressions with the pulsations of the body reinforce the manifestation of the word. So, when David Biespel claims that Tapahonso "speaks the observed and spiritual world into existence," he is not exaggerating (40). Tapahonso—whether she or I read—revitalizes language and experience through a ritualization of the poetic endeavor and restores the site of the poem to its most ancient energies—even in a room in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, even at an academic conference, even in an academic journal.

At least that is what I believe. Other things I believe: Luci's poem works regardless of who reads it, and the forces that make it work—connection, relation, enaction—are the forces that draw both Natives and non-Natives to Indian literature. Simon Ortiz claims "the narrative style and technique of oral tradition can be expressed as written narrative and that it would have the same participatory force and validity as words spoken and listened to" (9). In a rare moment when Tapahonso and Ortiz would find themselves in agreement with Jonathan Culler, what emerges is a kind of cross-cultural consensus that on some level even a mediated performance can make things happen.

Of course, it would be ideal if Luci could always magically appear to give us her poem, but for the time being, you are stuck with me, and for the most part, you are stuck with yourselves. And while this may not be the best of all possible worlds, thankfully you are not stuck with me only. You have the eternal performance of Luci's poem, and in that, we are all restored.

SCENE IV: CIRCLING THE WAGONS: CONFESSIONS OF A NATIVE AMERICAN THEATER TROOP

Dean Rader exits. LeAnne Howe takes center stage. Because she has a reputation for being a comic—in certain circles—and because of her wild introductions, the audience is prepared for action. She breaks the "fourth wall" and mingles among the audience passing out song lyrics for a group sing-a-long. When she tells the audience they are the evening's big finale, they cheer.

LEANNE HOWE: Before we begin the final portion of our evening's program, I want to say that our panel can be thought of as an ensemble performance; like a play, one thing has led to another. Winter Counts, *things told*, as Harvey Markowitz points out is a Lakota performance involving pictures and words about events in the Lakota past. Craig Howe has shown how counting coup, a dramatic reenactment by Lakota warriors, persuaded their tribal audiences of their future abilities in warfare. Dean Rader has given examples from Native poets who conflate poetry, prayer, song and ritual, into one powerful performance that enacts language, stirs the emotions, and engages an audience. For my part, I'm going to talk about contemporary Native theater and the processes American Indians use to create plays and perform them.

First however, I want to say something about the way I was taught to tell stories. It wasn't by studying a speech or rehearsing a performance, but by practicing the art of listening. My grandmother taught me to listen intently when an elder was speaking. I listened to the narrative rhythm embedded in a particular story, like the refrain of a song. I also learned to anticipate the rise of drama or comedy by the sound of a narrator's voice.

By the time I am six, maybe seven years old, I know Grandmother's routine. The phrases she used to cue me go something like this:

"Listen! Did you hear something?"

"No," I would answer.

"Listen, Listen, Listen!" she'd coaxed.

What follows are some of the stories I remember well. "Aunt Sally and the Comanches who stole her cow in Fitztown and butchered it right before her eyes." "The Jewel-T man who killed a red bird, and shortly afterwards got himself run over by a reckless Nazarene preacher." "Our grandmother who walked on the Trail of Tears." "Why we came to Oklahoma."

As you can see by my grandmother's stories one thing leads to another. Concerning the first story, she wanted me to know that we were newcomers to Indian Territory. Analogs were endless. "Locals" she would say, "always extract a toll." Regarding the second story the lesson was like a headline. "Nature Fights Back; Uses Christian To Get Even." The last two stories, the Trail of Tears, and why the government forced us to move from our homelands were very popular and repeated often, generally after she'd read the Saturday afternoon newspaper and some politician had made her mad. In other words, my grandmother was a kind of political commentator and quirky storyteller. She always connected the past with the present. I can still hear her speaking through my own stories—whether they are plays, prose, poetry, or essays—I am a carrier of her voice.

All tribes have storytellers and performers. My historical contribution to tonight's discussion comes from the Choctaw anoli(s). The anoli would perform a story for an audience, and eventually call on their listeners to interact with what was being said. At large Choctaw gatherings dramatic oratory tended to have a specific political function: to inform the audience about injustices and the action that must be taken. A dramatic Choctaw oratory reported in Cyrus Byington's diary, dated 1865, serves as an historical example:

> There was a well-known, solemn style appropriate to all speeches delivered in public by captains, councilors, and Chiefs. It abounded in serious words, called by some, "speech-terms." One part of a sentence was nicely balanced by another. It was poetic in style and manner of delivery. At the close of his paragraphs that

> orator would invite the people to listen to him, and to consider what he had said, pausing a moment. The audience would give loud responses of appropriate sayings, Yummah, "that is it"; alhpesah, "it is right." (8)

What I believe Byington is trying to describe are tribal performance stories. He describes the men as political leaders but it should be noted that the Mississippi Provincial Archives, French Dominion, Vols. I–V dating from 1701-1763 are replete with examples of speechmakers. These speakers or anoli(s) cue their audiences to recollect "insider knowledge" or a certain historical event that members of the tribe are familiar with. The emotion those memories instigate causes the audience to respond appropriately. Choctaw anoli(s) would continue extolling current realities but implore the people to consider questions of the future. The performance worked on orator and audiences alike to create the cultural glue that binds future tribal actions.

> The orators would approach their themes gradually. After saluting all present, according to their rank and office, they complimented the dignitaries present, the inhabitants of the village, or those living on the neighboring streams, and their long line of forefathers. Thus preparation was made for the announcement of the main subject. While speaking they rarely look anyone in the face. Some of their most frequently recurring archaisms consisted of lengthened pronominal suffixes *to* verbs, nouns, adjectives, etc., as Nanta hocha, "What is it?" for Nana Hona, "something." A few of the venerable men of the nation are still fine examples of this class of orators. It is truly a pleasure to hear one of these orators when fully prepared speak before a large council. (Byington 8)

While Byington describes the orators as "captains, councilors, and Chiefs," those positions of speech-maker are held by men or women who were highly trained in the art of performing before large tribal and inter-tribal audiences. The documents also mention Choctaw children who are "adopted out" to another tribe in the Southeast in order for the child to become fluent in another's tribe's language. As young bilingual

adults when they return him they are further trained as cultural and political translators for both communities.

Nanta hocha, "What is it?" the orator asks.

Nana Hona, "Something" the audience replies.

Craig Womack in his introduction in *Red on Red* insists that "Native artistry is not pure aesthetics, or art for art's sake: as often as not Indian writers are trying to invoke as much as evoke. The idea behind ceremonial chant is that language, spoken in the appropriate ritual contexts, will actually cause a change in the physical universe" (16-17). In other words, a Native performative act is a way cultural growth of a tribal community can develop. Womack goes on to ask scholars to search for "a deeper investigation of narratives that goes beyond the simple structural categories of creation, hero, journey, monster slayer, and so on, in which the stories most frequently get cast" (17).

Which brings me back to my role in our academic performance this evening. I'm here to talk about my experiences in writing and performing contemporary Native plays. My first experience was working with the late Choctaw author Roxy Gordon and urban Indian students. My later experiences were with Indians in specific tribal communities: Durant, Oklahoma, home of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma; and Mission, South Dakota, home of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe.

I began writing plays with Gordon in 1986. Our first play, *Big Pow Wow*, was produced in 1987 by Sojourner Truth Theater in Fort Worth, Texas. It is a play about a Choctaw woman in dire straights. Blossom BirdSong is overweight, on welfare, and she drinks too much. In short, she is a stereotypical mess. However, once her ancestor, an old Choctaw ghost named Tullock Chishe Ko appears and admonishes her by using lines he's memorized from top forty hit singles, Blossom decides to take charge of her life. *Big Pow Wow* was reviewed as a political comedy and ran for six weeks in the summer of 1987. Our two lead actors were Choctaw and Cherokee.

In 1988, Gordon and I cowrote *Indian Radio Days*, a radio play that tells Indian history since the beginning of time. The play ends in the future when American Indians build an off-world gaming casino on Mars. In 1993, when I was working at the University of Iowa, I gathered together American Indian students at UI and WagonBurner Theatre

Troop was born. We were a community of urban Indians mostly from the five largest Southeastern tribes in Oklahoma. WagonBurner Theater Troop really created *Indian Radio Days*. The performers worked on the script, wrote new scenes, created music and new characters. However, what we discovered while performing throughout the Midwest was that our non-Indian audiences NEVER reacted to the humor. They didn't seem to know the code, or the cues to be able to react. When we performed before American Indian audiences, the reaction was much different. The audience laughed in most of the places we (playwrights and performers) expected. To compensate we wrote audience cues for non-Indian audiences and made them part of future performances. What we learned boils down to this: if audiences don't know tribal histories, or even "pan-Indian history" they can't read the cues. They lack insider knowledge.

My next experience came from a theater workshop at Red River Arts Academy in Durant, Oklahoma. The students were ages 14–18 and we had nine days to write, direct, and perform a play. Not only did the students accomplish this; they wrote three plays. The titles were: *Madame Oklahoma*, *The Love Story That Brings Three Lonely People Together*, and *Two Catfish, An Indian Barber/Photographer/Clerk/Sheriff's Deputy who live life in a small Oklahoma Town*. In the final scene, everybody dies. Again, comedy juxtaposed with tragedy.

When I took the job, I did so thinking all the students would be Choctaw. It wasn't the case. Five students were of Choctaw, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Caddo, and Comanche ancestry, and there were four non-Indian students. (One student was learning to speak his tribal language.) The students quickly decided they wanted to write about Indian and white conflicts in Oklahoma *and* love affairs. They went to the library and found stories about an Indian postman in the late nineteenth century in Caddo, Oklahoma. All three plays involved the Indian postman and his hazardous job. Some of the same trends occurred among the Red River Arts Academy students, as did with WagonBurner Theater Troop members. They wanted to write together and collaborate. Although they didn't know each other previous to the workshop, they refused to work alone. The process became an interactive team effort. It should be noted that there are no feathers in the three plays,

but land, and events in Caddo, Oklahoma, are central themes. A political statement in itself.

Jeffrey F. Huntsman writes:

> Without such centering in sacred time and place, Native American dramas would be mere displays, robbed of their meaning. Sometimes a special place is created for the drama, either permanent, like the kivas of the Southwest, or temporary like the Sun Dance Lodges of the High Plains. Sometimes the stage is the people's ordinary living space, like the Northwest Coast family houses, the Southwest village plazas, or the Plains lodges. (86)

I would argue that tribal colleges have created spaces that are "telling places." In the fall of 2000 Jeff Kellogg, theater professor at Sinte Gleska University in Mission, South Dakota, invited me to be their artist-in-residence for three weeks. I worked with students in theater, and in the creative writing classes. Professor Kellogg and I used a variety of approaches to begin the playwriting process. We invited students to write outside of class and bring their scenes to workshop. Then we tried writing scenes collaboratively in class. This became the students' method of choice. They wrote two plays. *Rosebud* is a play that pokes fun at the film *Citizen Cane*, and uses Rosebud (land) as a reference to engage and cue a Lakota audience. The Hearst's infamous Home Stake mine, Indian land claims, and problems associated with the environment since the white man arrived, are all issues raised by the characters in the play. The students also used a series of contemporary advertising slogans that became the "ceremonial chants" creating segues between scenes.

Eyaphha, The Black Hills are not for Sale!

The tribal audience read the cue and began to repeat the chant, the slogan. Other chants the students used in their play were:

Peabody Coal—the ecology company. Also repeated by the audience.

Lakota Lullaby, the second play, is about a Rosebud family who questions Columbus Day celebrations at their local school. Sinte Gleska students gave two staged readings of their plays. Nearly seventy people from the reservation attended the performance at the school's student lounge.

My aim has been to show that American Indian students, whether

urban or reservation, tend to draw on their tribal traditions, land tenure, and their tribal histories to write and perform contemporary Native plays. I suggest that many "performative acts," especially storytelling, can be thought of as historical antecedents of contemporary Native theater.

Now as a way to close this evening's performance I would like you to join us in performing a scene from *The Shaman of* OK. First we'll have the sing-a-long. You know the tune, and the words are on the sheet of paper.

Audience sings. "Somewhere over the rainbow, way out west. There's a land that I long for once in a treaty tale . . ." Applause rocks the conference room at the all-inclusive resort, Inter-Continental Hotel, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, November 30, 2000. There is no weeping . . .

The End.

NOTES

1. The particulars of these dances undoubtedly differed in each of the Lakota communities. Waktegli is the Lakota term for Victory Dance (Black Bear 60–61).

2. "Motion of Songs Rising" from *Sáanii Dahataał: The Women Are Singing* by Luci Tapahonso ©1993 Luci Tapahonso. Reprinted by permission of the University of Arizona Press.

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Book Reviews

Larry Evers and Barre Toelken, eds. *Native American Oral Traditions: Collaboration and Interpretation*. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2001. 264 pp.

Domino Renee Perez

From the time of Columbus, cultural outsiders have sought to record and explain the lifeways of Native peoples. Some have done so to "inform" voyeuristic audiences of the "savage" and brutal ways of a heathen race, while others have done so to preserve a written record of a people destined to inevitably vanish from the earth. Of the outsiders and cultural tourists presently reporting on American Indian cultures, none has become more reviled or looked upon with greater suspicion than the anthropologist, whose presence has spawned an entire genre of Indian jokes, like the one about the anthropologist who spends a whole day recording stories told by an old Indian man named Coyote. When the anthropologist returns to his lab, he discovers his tapes are blank except for the occasional snicker of laughter. But the misrepresentation, romanticization, and, at times, theft of indigenous material from cultural communities is no laughing matter; this is why *Native American Oral Traditions: Collaboration and Interpretation* is worthy of our attention. Editors Larry Evers and Barre Toelken reflect on previous practices and attempt reconsider collaborative folkloric work done in and on Indian communities. For this effort the book was awarded the Wordcraft Circle Award for contributing to its vision "to

ensure that the voices of Native writers and storytellers—past, present, and future—are heard throughout the world."

John Miles Foley, in the introduction, outlines possible collaborative roles between Native people and non-Native scholars, such as cultural interpreter, co-translator, and interviewer, but concedes that the roles of the collaborators need to evolve, a point we see clearly when we reflect on Toelken's previous work with the Yellowman family that appears in *The Dynamics of Folklore* (1979). The Yellowman family served as collaborators with Toelken in his previous work on Navajo lifeways, weaving and storytelling in particular, yet overall, Toelken represents Yellowman and his family more as objects rather than speaking subjects.

In the article "Coyote and the Strawberries: Cultural Drama and Intercultural Collaboration" George B. Wasson (Coquelle tribal elder and traditionalist) and his voice are allowed to dominate, while Toelken, who brings his work with Yellowman in as a comparative point concerning Coyote stories, provides limited analytical commentary, a marked shift from his prior efforts. In fact, Wasson's role as storyteller and cultural interpreter are so thorough, complete, and engaging, readers may question the need for Toelken's involvement at all.

The presence of the Native authors included in the collection, Nora Dauenhauer (Tlingit), Elsie Mather (Yup'ik), Felipe Molina (Yoeme), Mayra Moses (Tulalip), George Wasson (Coquelle), Darryl Wilson (Iss and Aw'te), and Ofelia Zepeda (Tohono O'odham), represents a vast change from previous folkloric studies in which Native voices were mediated or completely silenced. The areas of expertise, the range of knowledge, and individual investment of these researchers vary, yet all provide a level of insight into their subject matter that is unmatched by their collaborators.

The history of Indian and academic relationships is one that has always been defined by power, divided unequally between insider and outsider, marked by distrust and conflict. Indeed, Evers and Toelken indicate that the collection sought to investigate the binaries of "'scholar' and 'Native,' 'investigator,' and 'informant' . . . [and to] take up issues associated with the positions of insider and outsider" (1). Furthermore, Evers and Toelken describe the previous relationship between Native

and academic communities as "awkward" and "imbalanced in favor of the academics" (3). Statements such as these seem naïve in light of the way that certain texts, anthropological and otherwise, have given rise to Indians of the imagination. The language they use is not severe enough to describe the effects academics have had on indigenous communities. Evers and Toelken do cite previous cases of "collaboration," in particular the case of anthropologist Ralph Linton, who used work done by Pawnee field worker and writer James R. Murie to publish five articles on the tribe without ever having any contact with that specific community and certainly without citing Murie. While the situation is presented as unfortunate and used as an example to "urge" us to reassess the "history of American anthropology," as Roger Sanjek notes, the way in which they fail to condemn the Indian/academic "problem" makes one wonder if self-critique is possible. Whatever the case may be, clearly there is little culpability for the way in which academics have and continue to write and interpret American Indian communities.

The proposed changes to institutional practices, concerning the study of and collaboration with Native communities, seem far from radical. Those of us working within the areas of Native studies are well aware of the need for more Native scholars and the importance of their representation in the classroom and field. Their call for collaboration as a "standard dimension of research in Native American communities" only serves to reinforce the dependence of Native peoples on academics to report, record, and preserve indigenous lifeways. However, Evers and Toelken do acknowledge that "even in the best collaborations, the tone and agenda may still be set by the more powerful partner, and the realities of academic publication are driven by powerful gears indeed" (9). This point is made painfully clear by Evers in his portion of the article he coauthors with Felipe S. Molina on Yaqui Deer Singers. Whereas Molina's continuing commitment to the Yaqui people resonates in his desire to hold a deer singers' conference, Evers admits: "I felt the work with the deer songs had gone far enough." Even more unsettling is the way in which Evers acknowledges that he used his role as the proposal writer and fundraiser of the pairing as a "trump card" to temporarily discourage Molina's interest in the conference so that he could work on something "new." Evers's disclosure illustrates the way in which he

wielded power in their previous collaborations, but other than admitting to doing so, we see no move on Evers's part to rectify his behavior or permanently shift the balance of power. What we do hear is the concession that Evers's participation in the deer singers' conference is due to Molina's securing of funding on his own and by "a desire to support Felipe in work he felt was important" (23). Molina's ongoing dedication to the Yaquis crystallizes the way in which he, himself a deer singer, sees his relationship to the group as dynamic, and one that has to be reinterpreted as new material is both transmitted and absorbed.

Evers and Toelken unquestionably encourage rethinking the issue of collaboration, but its future appears uncertain: "It is clear that *if* we are going to include American Indians in all aspects of collaboration, including interpretation, then we will need an approach and a set of critical attitudes," ones that include the open dialogue, recorded in the text, between "ethnographer and native" (10; emphasis mine). The uncertainty of their language suggests that folkloric work will continue with or without Native involvement, at least in terms of collaboration. Ultimately, they do call for "mutually responsible dialogues that will bring forth the hundreds of other tribal literatures and languages of America. And it remains for all of us to learn how to hold them properly in our hands" (12). Here again, the "us" named is uncertain and the purpose for doing so unclear, at least from their perspective. Perhaps we need to ask ourselves why we feel it necessary to continue to invade Native communities. Perhaps we need to realize that some things were never meant for us to "hold" in our hands and that their passing is as necessary as was their existence. Perhaps we should listen to Native communities and help them to preserve what *they* decide is important, or even better still, make our resources available to them to help them preserve and record their materials for themselves, should they choose to do so. As the contributors to the collection illustrate, collaboration with cultural outsiders can be good. Still, Native authorship and agency is better.

Guy W. Jones and Sally Moomaw. *Lessons from Turtle Island: Native Curriculum in Early Childhood Classrooms*. St. Paul: Redleaf, 2002. 175 pp.

Kathleen Godfrey

A curricular staple of many elementary and preschool classrooms is a unit devoted to American Indians in which children research a tribe, customs, architecture, or historical events, creating art projects like the diorama of an Indian village. Although teachers often intend for such units to enliven children's interest in Native peoples, the reality is that these activities generally reinforce stereotypes and encourage misinformation about contemporary indigenous Americans. The authors of *Lessons from Turtle Island*, Guy Jones (Hunkpapa Lakota) and Sally Moomaw have collaborated to educate teachers of young children about how to integrate Native books and themes into their curriculum, suggesting alternatives to the ubiquitous "Indian unit." They argue that all children will benefit from a curriculum that treats ethnic minorities and the dominant culture in similar ways, that pairs picture books about everyday themes inhabited by Native characters with books representing other ethnic groups. According to Jones and Moomaw, non-Native children will thereby learn that American Indians live lives similar to their own, possessing the same concerns and joys that all humans experience.

Jones and Moomaw begin by defining the pedagogical problems associated with American Indian curriculums in elementary and preschool classrooms. They argue that teachers can learn to ask better questions and find better answers about all cultures by considering the problems associated with damaging pedagogical choices in connection with Native peoples: "1. Omission of Native American materials from the curriculum 2. Inaccurate portrayals or information in the curriculum 3. Stereotyping of Native American peoples 4. Cultural insensitivity" (7). Regardless of good intentions, teachers can perpetuate stereotypes due to a tendency towards "tourist curriculum" which accentuates "skin color and appearance," "warlike" natures, and dehumanizing images (10, 12–17). This brief overview works to introduce teachers not familiar with American Indians to vital concerns of contemporary Native peoples.

Moreover, Jones and Moomaw touch on "cultural insensitivity" as they critique such practices as making headdresses, peace pipes, and totem poles in preschool and elementary classrooms, thereby discouraging the replication of the sacred in the form of art instruction. In particular, they critique what sounds like an atrocious book, Laurie Carlson's *More Than Moccasins* (1994), which instructs teachers on how to make peace pipes using toilet paper rolls, fetishes out of soap, and tom-toms from oatmeal containers. Jones and Moomaw stress that such art projects demean the sacred and reinforce stereotypes. Each of the subsequent chapters ends with a brief analysis of other activities that the authors discourage, thereby educating readers about activities that demean Native peoples.

To replace problematic activities and texts, Jones and Moomaw summarize a variety of children's books authored by American Indians that, on the whole, portray contemporary Indians in ways that help children understand cross-cultural similarities in children, families, and human beings. Chapters focus on traditional categories like home, families, community, and the environment, following the format of dialogue between Jones and Moomaw, brief definition, suggested readings with activities, and analysis of activities not recommended. In the bulk of the chapters, Jones and Moomaw link art, science, and writing projects with picture books dealing with the lives of contemporary Native peoples; their emphasis throughout is on integrating Native materials into thematic curriculums for young children rather than studying American Indians as rarified, exotic others. For example, after reading books dealing with moccasins, Jones and Moomaw suggest activities such as playing shoe store (including a variety of kinds of shoes) and creating a science project with sand and the imprints of shoes. They suggest that such activities serve to educate children about shoes rather than about Native Americans. The books by and about Native peoples serve only as a jumping off point for learning, just as teachers use picture books to focus discussions that help children learn to function in the everyday world. One of the greatest strengths of this text for teachers and academics is its valuable bibliography of picture books.

One of the final chapters suggests having students make a photo

album, artwork, and diary entries about their own families after reading picture books about Native families including *This Land is My Land* (2003) by George Littlechild (Cree) and *A Rainbow at Night: The World in Words and Pictures by Navajo Children* (1996) by Bruce Hucko. This project encourages students to think about their own family culture, at the same time educating them about the cultural practices of class members. Although the analysis is often simplistic, the accumulation of detail in connection with good practices adds up to a solid basis for designing curriculums that includes Native people. In fact, throughout the book, Jones and Moomaw encourage teachers to invite American Indians to their classrooms in person and in print, music, and art. The authors also solidify how to make choices about curriculum involving American Indians in the final chapter with lists of guidelines teachers can consult when inviting Indian guests to their classes and when choosing picture books, toys, and other materials.

Preschool and elementary teachers have the unenviable responsibility to teach well a wide variety of subjects (behavior, science, language, art, history, etc.). While I find the explanations in this text sometimes overly simplistic, overall it gives helpful, easily accessible advice to busy teachers, providing an introduction that is instructive for those unfamiliar with contemporary Native concerns.

James Thomas Stevens. *Combing the Snakes from His Hair*. Native American Series. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2002. 143 pp.

Ron Carpenter

OPENING THE BOX

During the changing colors of autumn when we prepare for the cold winter ahead, the people I know tend to build puzzles. The puzzle's closed universe opens them to a process of introspection, of rediscovering how their combination of abilities and perceptions, their internal pieces as it were, confirm selfhood. Although James Thomas Stevens's *Combing the Snakes from His Hair* is a vibrant text more suitable for

reading and celebrating in the spring, its sense of renewal and personal growth comes only through the poet's and our recognition that his influences and experiences interconnect to fashion a lyrical picture of his identity.

BORDERS AND EDGES

According to Stevens (Akwesasne Mohawk), his collection of free verse poems, drawings, and autobiographical reminisces is an "attempt to center me between nature, love and history" (3). This concept of triangulation permeates Stevens's self-conception as he also situates himself amongst Mohawk, Welsh and Anglo cultural contexts. Three long poems, "A Half-breed's Guide to the Use of Native Plants," "Notes on a Music I Never Heard," and "*Tokinish*," dominate the text. His utilization of three as an organizing principle is no doubt in part due to his identification with the Mohawk tribe. The People of Flint, for example are comprised of three clans (Wolf, Bear, Turtle), and as horticulturalists, raised the Three Sisters of corn, beans and squash.

Although the title commits the text to an Iroquoian worldview, referring specifically to the healing ceremony of Onondaga leader Atatarho, Stevens's work cannot be understood solely through familiarity with Mohawk history and traditions. Stevens was raised in an Anglo community positioned amidst the three reservations of his grandparents; he presents his identity as triangular, reflecting an ego at ease with division and displacement. He steps into division, finding himself in a "new *old world*—a world that half my blood fought to obtain and the other half struggled to hold" (5). "Displaced," as he says, in ways, and for reasons that remain tantalizingly ambiguous for Native American studies scholars. Stevens's sense of personal dislocation from the community might refer to his perspective of American colonization, that "False Sunflower":

> Your hand against his spine
> reveals the coarseness of his skin
> and
> worse the forked tongue

a fertile forked pistil
Take note of his tendency to colonize (25)

Or, as in "The Act of God," it may invoke both his rejection of the healing ceremony performed on him as a child after losing three fingers, and his love for men.

Stevens's multiethnic identity thus also confronts readers with the differences present to his body, love, and personal history. Readers are called to accept the poet on his terms. Stevens reconfigures the healing ceremony in which Atatarho's mind, body, and spirit are "straightened," playing with the ceremony's core metaphor that equates the act of straightening with peace and health. "The Prairie Milkweed," for instance, with its double entendres of the penis, implies that semen is a preventative medicine, "as psychic / a serum against those who may wrong you" (9). Rather than straightening his queer love, Stevens writes to straighten his account of himself and the world we share, taking that knowledge into his spirit and transmitting it to others. Seeking acceptance, he embraces his triangular boundaries as the poems resonate to code his literary, ethnic, and queer persona.

INSIDE

Combing the Snakes from His Hair has five sections; love poems and translations of Iroquois stories respectively, separate the three major pieces. Grouped loosely, many poems in the first section produce striking images of survival. In "Cream Wild Indigo," Stevens writes,

Others find other means to endure,
hook-like they hang
on the hides of the enemy.
Pollinated by Queens walking across their backs
and gleaned of precious nectars (31)

This survival is often linked with mobility as in the "Scurfy Pea":

Changing skins to curb reactions,
they keep shallow roots and break from base.
Dispersing in danger,
to flee infestation (29)

Stevens thus describes how the natural world of plants models his personal journey.

Divided into thirteen movements, "Notes on a Music I Never Heard" illuminates the odd sorts of combinations that Stevens views in the surrounding environs. Citing classical composers and musical theorists, Stevens creates his best stuff here. With lines like

> Sentiment that joined instrument
> to the fragile web of birth,
> the hollow reed reverberating
> against a spider's timpanous sack (89)

Stevens attains those elusive intangibles that characterize all good poetry (like that other Northeastern poet named Stevens).

I enjoyed most of those pieces where Stevens pairs specific words and concepts from his bilingual heritage. Throughout the last third of the book, Stevens marries indigenous languages—their sounds and meanings—with English in poems such as "Cornbread Song" or "*Tokinish*": "A bow exists for the English as the shape of the bow itself. / The Narragansett know the bow as *Onu–ttug*. A halfe Moone in war" (126). These texts display the meaningful, if abstract, cultural combinations Native persons construct not just for their benefit but for all querying their identities.

LAST PIECE

Less confrontational than Lee Maracle, and more succinct than Maurice Kenny, Stevens adds to the longhouse of stories Mohawks tell about themselves. *Combing the Snakes from His Hair* utilizes language, sketch, and song to persuade readers to accept the author's three-dimensional differences. Many thanks to James Thomas Stevens for his sharing.

Diane Glancy. *The Mask Maker*. American Indian Literature and Critical Studies Series, vol. 42. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002. 141 pp.

Daniel Heath Justice

One of the defining characteristics of Diane Glancy's work is its stark, unrelenting intimacy. Distanced observation is not an option. She draws the reader inward, through all the self-deceptions of the ego, through fear and resentment, into the tensions between the hope of love and the need for freedom. Whether in poetry, drama, or prose, Glancy's narrators and characters speak from that tangled emotional interior, and it is from this place that they work to unravel their histories, spiritualities, identities, and desires.

The Mask Maker is the story of Edith Lewis, a "watered down" mixed-blood Pawnee woman who has come to an uncomfortable junction in her life. She still holds a lingering love for her ex-husband, Bill, but has no interest in returning to the cold silences that characterized their marriage; she cherishes her warm friendship with Bix, the Pawnee owner of the local hardware store, but fears the possibilities of allowing herself to love him. She's distanced and detached, unwilling to connect, but desperate for understanding. She's a mask maker by trade and inclination, and the Arts Council of Oklahoma sends her to schools across the state, where she shares her masks with bored students and their dismissive teachers. Edith's teenage sons Joseph and Benjamin are becoming more distant and ashamed of her eccentric occupation, and her frequent absences drive them further apart. She is flailing, her life is crumbling, and the safety and security she once found in the making of masks is fading.

Much like the eponymous character of Glancy's 1998 novel, *Flutie*, Edith is awkward with words and suspicious of stories. Words have no permanence, no enduring certainty, especially in the mouths of the men she loves, starting with her father and then moving to her ex-husband, to her sons, and even to Bix. Words "squirm around the truth [and] divide the truth into subtruths or almost truths"; she wants the masks to define themselves, not to be "masks for which words are written" (65). She wants to avoid the possibility of lies, would rather "*just think*

in masks," but she can't escape from words or the stories they tell (16). Masks are the fraying warp and weft of her world, and her mask-making is as much a need to understand herself as it is to be understood by others. Edith's creations are the compilation of scavenged and found objects, the remnant rubbish of human life from which uncertain meaning is made. She fumbles for comfort in numerous institutions—marriage, motherhood, Christianity, Indianness—but finds that each too often requires her to "[put] on a mask that someone else had made" (22). Even as she tries to create masks that reflect her world with their presence, she understands that they are inevitably haunted by emptiness—each mask is defined by the certainty of absence, "the energy that gets trapped between the face and the mask it wears" (63).

Edith occasionally connects with others, outsiders all: Mildred, a world-worn waitress; her former mother-in-law, Maybelle, who respects and understands Edith's need to make masks; and a quiet young Indian man who breaks down in tears when he tries to tell a story about his mask in class. Yet it isn't until her ex-husband decides to marry again—to create a new life for himself that doesn't include her—that Edith is driven to look behind the masks of her own life, to that emptiness and everything it represents:

> What happened to a people used to hardship when they began to regain strength? What would they do without the struggle that had become a part of them and left an emptiness when they no longer had it? Is that why the lives of Edith and Bill were always torn up? Were they trying to call the hardship back, without realizing it, so their lives would continue with what they were used to? (124)

Rather than re-creating herself through her art, she comes to understand that "art was giving of itself. It was *other* more than *self*"; the masks teach her "that everyone [is] struggling" (130). Instead of making masks that reflect her own self-absorption, she discovers that her only hope of healing is by transforming *herself* into a mask for the world, embracing both the absences and presences in the world, denying none.

The Mask Maker is quintessential Glancy. Her prose is richly tex-

tured and draws strength from the deepest needs of the human spirit. She's an accomplished stylist with a well-trained sensitivity to the rhythms of language and story; similar to her 1996 novel, *Pushing the Bear*, Glancy has again chosen to privilege multiple stories and perspectives over monolithic individuality.

Yet the text is weakened by the shadow of individualistic mixed-blood angst and generic Indianness, both of which ultimately undermine the communitistic ethos implied by the other stories interspersed throughout. Edith is conflicted about her Pawnee heritage, but this conflict doesn't appear until nearly a third of the way through the novel; its sudden revelation seems a gratuitous afterthought, more a writing habit than a substantive narrative element. Although the land and community of Pawnee, Oklahoma, are named and invoked, and although Bix is "the only Indian [she] know[s] who feels he has a place," there is little sense that Pawnee nationhood is anything more than quaint cultural color (75). We know that Bix is both a proud Pawnee and a Christian, but we know little more about their significance to his life or to that of his community. The novel's stated cultural contexts are so thickly veiled as to be nearly unidentifiable.

Native literature should never be an exercise in ethnographic tourism, but contexts do matter, particularly in the literary arts of Indian Country. If, as the narrator states, the moral purpose of art is to be "giving of itself," to be "*other* more than *self*," why are tribal nationhood and tradition relegated only to the margins of this story? Is Edith only a "faded, part-time Indian" or a distinctively *Pawnee* mixed-blood? If she's the former, can her art ever escape self-referential myopia? If she's the latter, the question extends to the larger text: does Edith's story move beyond a keenly-felt but ultimately undernourished intimate self?

At the end, the novel fails to satisfy this deeper question, and one is left feeling that the book is itself something of a mask: provocative in content and richly textured in form, but fundamentally defined more by absence than presence.

Charles H. Red Corn. *A Pipe for February*. American Indian Literature and Critical Studies Series, vol. 44. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002. 269 pp.

Barbara K. Robins

A Pipe for February is a gentle story about violent times. Set in Oklahoma in 1924, the young members of oil wealthy Osage families carve out a social life for themselves in Pawhuska's boom town days. John Greyeagle, his cousins Molly and Evelyn Thunder, and Ted Bearsky are all in their twenties but their circumstances have not fully prepared them for the challenges of negotiating the conflicting values of the idle rich and the traditional elders of their community. In the introduction to his novel, Red Corn states:

> Our ancient culture was on a collision course with both good and evil forces of economics that would occur early in the nineteen hundreds when oil was discovered on our reservation.
>
> Some of our people abandoned the ancient teachings and some went a little crazy with wealth. Some of our people stood back and watched and tried to make sense of it in the context of the old culture. (n. pag.)

Like other crime mysteries, there are details and clues that go unnoticed. Tension grows for the reader as the characters begin to suspect all is not right. Several characters try to overcome their grief of yet another questionable death with lavish parties, travel, and expensive gifts. This is where Red Corn's subtly is especially nice—it is easy to understand the behavior of these young people who seek out adventure in their small town, and who would rather throw a party than investigate the circumstances.

Red Corn's quiet storytelling blends layers of regional and national history. Pop culture is represented by music and sports celebrities of the day but the novel emphasizes family connection and concern overall. The sheer frequency of meals described confirms the importance of sharing food for a wide range of social reasons. For readers familiar with the Osage murders, *A Pipe for February* will add one more family's

story as does Dennis McAuliffe Jr.'s "memoir" and family history, *The Deaths of Sybil Bolton* (1994). Instead of taking on the investigation for the entire crime wave as Linda Hogan does in her novel of this same period, *Mean Spirit* (1990), Red Corn keeps to Pawhuska. People arrive from around the world to speculate in oil, to work in the oil fields, to satisfy their curiosity regarding Indians who defy the stereotypes of the day with each Pierce Arrow they purchase, and to create opportunities for themselves whether the means are honorable or not. One newly arrived investor observes, "do you know there are eighty-seven lawyers in Pawhuska? That means about one of every one hundred people in this little town is a lawyer" (87).

Red Corn demonstrates great confidence in his subject, the history, values, and customs of Osage people. All of the Osage characters are comfortably bi-lingual in English and Osage, an uncommented upon fact of their community. Some of the English dialogue is in fact translated Osage or serves in the place of Osage—indicated in the text by italics. Frequently, Red Corn layers in the roles and duties of the Clan System and basic language instruction. Still, dialogue often feels wooden. The instructive quality of the book strikes me as Red Corn's primary motive for writing this story and the turbulent, transitional times of the 1920s offers an exciting vehicle for comment on the persistence of Osage culture.

John Greyeagle becomes the embodiment of culture in transition. Looking through a lens of 70-plus years could present some authors with the temptation to write solely from a twenty-first century sensibility. Red Corn uses this position to comment on events without judging his characters. At 25 years of age, Red Corn's protagonist seems younger, living a sheltered life among protective elders and the lawyers, Indian agents, and Pawhuska businessmen who tend to his money. Red Corn's decision to make John a frustrated artist addresses the contributions to American art by Native American artists and the need for those artists to question the aesthetic styles and values they were taught to mimic. It is likely no coincidence that Red Corn himself comes from a family of well-known Osage painters. His insights embrace human creativity, sacred place, and self-actualization. During John's obligatory European tour, he realizes "Tuscany made me feel artistic . . . and the land looked

so much like Osage country that it eased a case of homesickness" (44). Back home, John's character deepens as his grieving family draws inward. Gradually, he anticipates identity issues that would emerge through the works of many real-life Indian artists over the course of the twentieth century. When the Kiowa Five emerged in the 1920s, Indian art was expected to portray traditional scenes and dancers in a flat, two-dimensional style. These "modern" images of the "vanishing race" became the stereotypical view Americans would continue to hold until the 1960s when Fritz Scholder would blast it apart with his *Super Indians* series of portraits of sometimes grotesque individuals involved in contemporary activities. His student T. C. Cannon would in turn challenge American notions of Indian identity using Post-Impressionism, Expressionism, and Pop Art. His *Osage With Van Gogh or Collector # 5* reveals a complex identity—a man in traditional dress sits in a well-appointed room with Van Gogh's *Wheatfield* positioned on the wall behind him. John's painting of the Osage leader Mon-tse-nopi'n stirs a desire "to conceive [. . .] a series of pictures that will explain the Osage experience" and becomes the artistic turning point that reveals John's life's work (266). It is easy to visualize Cannon's Osage collector as the culmination of John's goals. Cannon's painting may not have been possible back in 1924, but the possibility of John painting such a portrait seems very real, very appropriate.

Some may find this novel's pace slow, especially as compared to other murder mysteries such as LeAnne Howe's rapid-fire *Shell Shaker* (2001). Red Corn's primary interests appear to be domestic, the flow of everyday life for family and community with ritual and mundane events intertwined. There is little here to explain the psychology of those men who used their trust and position for the purposes of systematic killing. But their story of greed and exploitation is an old one. The stories that need to be told are those of John Greyeagle and his cousins—those who survived and continue to thrive in the context of living, evolving cultural traditions.

Margaret Dubin, ed. *The Dirt is Red Here: Art and Poetry from Native California*. Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2002. 82 pp.

Cari M. Carpenter

Readers of this rich collection of poetry, photography, painting, mixed media, and performance art are likely to appreciate the editor's presentation of California Indians as persisting, diverse peoples who are defining themselves. Tribes of this region share certain characteristics that distinguish them from many other indigenous groups, lending credence to the category of "California Indians" that the book is organized around: early interactions with Spanish peoples, which are evident in the *rancherias* that in many cases take the place of reservations; tribes like the Chukchansis that exist outside the radar of most Americans' image of "Indians"; and the urban relocation to places like San Francisco that was so crucial to some of the AIM actions of the 1960s and 70s.

However, given the historically contested state and national borders of California—think for example of the Kumeyaay Indians, who preserve their connections to Indians of Baja, Mexico—it seems somewhat odd to maintain such loyalty to this geographic and political concept. Indeed, certain pieces suggest that this collection is more about the Pacific Northwest than California *per se*: consider the words "from Puget Sound / to the Willamette Valley" in Janice Gould's "Snow" and "Cannery, Hood River," the title of one of her other poems (2). More commentary about how various pieces challenge or re-envision California would provide a self-reflexive, complex commentary on these issues.

The most effective aspect of Dubin's collection is not an overarching engagement with the category "native California" but its miniature juxtapositions of certain works of art. Linda Noel's poem "Rain Belief" appears next to Bradley Marshall's *Abalone Necklace* in an arrangement that emphasizes the crossover between the shiny bone-like shells and Noel's lines of descriptive words, which fit together like pieces of the necklace:

> swollen
> sky
> sing us some rain sway

oak arms shed
your blue clothing let
free your moist flesh flung
against bone windows. . . . (21)

The Dirt is Red Here is also characterized by poems like Deborah Miranda's "Deer," which create the kind of imagery that stays with the reader long after the piece is finished:

. . . But what I will remember are men's hands—
fingers stained with oil and blood—
the rough way they turn back the hide, jerk down hard
to tear it off her body. A dull hunting
knife cracks and disjoints the carcass. (34)

The language and structure of several poems convey the complexity of contemporary American Indian—and American—identity. Linda Noel's "Independence Day," for example, is composed of short, understated lines and an alliteration that makes the jarring imagery ("as they crush / our clamshell history") strangely harmonic (20). Sylvia Ross's "Tribal Identity Grade Three," an account of schoolgirls naming their native ancestries, ends poignantly with the defiant child's voice: "Chik Chancy is a tribe" (46).

These brief engagements with issues of California Indianness make me wish for more sustained discussion of them in the book's introduction. Instead, I am left with a series of questions: what happens, for example, when we take performance art out of its original context and place a single photo representation of it next to a sculpture or a poem by another artist? What do we lose, or gain, in this new arrangement? Were any of these pieces presented outside of California, and if so, do they resist the California label that the book is organized around? What makes a form of art Californian, or, in turn, California Indian?

The design of *The Dirt is Red Here*, with its brief introduction and limited commentary, resembles that of a coffee table book. Given that the coffee table book has often served as a marker of its owner's cultural sophistication and disposable income, the collection implicitly raises a question about its own function and audience. To whom is it directed, and for what purpose? Is it possible for such a book to critique its social

position as an instrument of casual, consumerist looking—especially when it is Indians and Indian objects that are being looked at? Together, Deborah Miranda's poem "Baskets" and Linda Aguilar's woven art come closest to pursuing such questions: consider Miranda's lines,

> But when I see you, baskets—
> locked in cabinets, / behind glass,
> preserved in shadows—
> I tear wide with want . . . (37)

These words leave us to ponder the location of Linda Aguilar's woven creations: although they aren't presented behind glass, they are arranged to be viewed as if they were in a museum.

In his installation *The Artifact Piece*, which is not included in this collection, James Luna lies face-up in a glass museum case, surrounded by exhibit cards.[1] In calling into question the way "we" look at Indians, Luna challenges the very nature of the media that he's working within. It is this kind of explicit self-critique that *The Dirt is Red Here* would most benefit from.

Deborah Miranda's "Indian Cartography," one of the poems in Dubin's collection, is another site for such inquiry: "My father opens a map of California— / traces mountain ranges, rivers, county borders / like family bloodlines . . ."; and later, the father "with eyes open, / looks down into lands not drawn / On any map . . . (32). In these few lines Miranda offers a brilliant image that serves as a subtle interrogation of the book's reliance on lands that are drawn on many maps. It is the lands *not* drawn, in this case, that are most salient.

NOTES

1. James Luna, *The Artifact Piece*, http://www.emory.edu/ENGLISH/Bahri/Luna.html.

Ruth Spack. *America's Second Tongue: American Indian Education and the Ownership of English, 1860–1900*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002. 231 pp.

James H. Cox

America's Second Tongue is a study of the teaching of English as a second language to American Indian students in the last half of the nineteenth century. Spack establishes in the first chapter the ideological and pedagogical contexts that informed what occurred in English language classrooms in both reservation day schools and off-reservation boarding schools. Prevailing assumptions of those who developed and implemented English language pedagogy included, for example, that English was superior to Native languages in terms of allowing for intellectual inquiry, that language differences caused much of the conflict between Natives and non-Natives, that the English language promoted virtues and Native languages promoted vices, and that English was a vehicle both of Christian salvation and European American values, such as individualism and private property. Many non-Natives mistakenly expected, Spack explains, that English-speaking American Indians would automatically be one of the most clear signs of European cultural domination and the "advance of civilization." Instead, as she documents in later chapters, many students reinvented the enemy's language, to reference Joy Harjo and Gloria Bird, in order to use English to defend themselves and their communities. The focus on the debate between the merits of bilingual or monolingual education is particularly revealing for what non-Natives believed was at stake in language instruction classrooms. By presenting the detailed circumstances that led to the coercive and often punitive insistence on English-only education, Spack demonstrates the way that a colonial practice develops to confirm the assumption of European American cultural and racial superiority.

The second and third chapters focus on non-Native and Native teachers of English, respectively. Spack devotes the second to a consideration of diverse pedagogical contexts: missionaries at the Dakota Mission, a Quaker teacher at the Wichita Agency, civilian women under the guidance of Pratt at Fort Marion, and the relatively more progres-

sive teachers at Hampton, for example. The primary focus is on Hampton, which had been established for freed slaves. The discussion suggests that even at its most progressive, English-only instruction was so fraught with difficulties that one wonders that students actually learned English and that teachers could persist in such an ill-conceived enterprise. The curriculum included teaching the students that they were inferior "savages," and students appear to have been able to demonstrate their "progress" as much by critiquing their home cultures as by writing in standard American English. Though the teachers used innovative teaching strategies and had "good intentions," the look Spack provides into the classrooms at Hampton reveals that in the colonial context of the Americas, domination and prejudice can come in many guises. Spack explains that at a school like Hampton, "all the teachers understood that their mandate was to displace Native languages and cultures" (75). Perhaps only a little more creative and a little less destructive than physical violence, teaching English to American Indian students at Hampton was primarily a successful exercise in disrupting Native communities. In what ways that disruption led to students having access to power within the colonial system, however compromised that power was, is the focus of the following chapters.

Spack shifts to a study of Native teachers of English in the third chapter. She notes that "the documents I examined portray these teachers as faithfully promoting the civilizing project," but adds they "shared a commitment to use English to help their own communities" and "did not necessarily reject or subvert all the goals of the civilizing project" (80–82). The group of teachers Spack discusses includes Lilah Denton Lindsey (Muskogee), Thomas Wildcat Alford (Absentee Shawnee), Sarah Winnemucca (Northern Paiute), and Luther Standing Bear (Oglala Lakota). Alford's story suggests the range of experiences a Native teacher of English might have. Alford was raised hearing stories about colonial incursions into Native America. Tribal leaders believed that learning English could help the Shawnees fight the invaders with one of their own weapons—words. After willingly attending a Quaker day school, Alford went to Hampton, where he liked the teachers and was a star pupil, then returned to his tribe with the stated intention of being a savior to his people by civilizing them. Initially rejected by the commu-

nity and some of his relatives, Alford eventually became the principal of the Shawnee government boarding school. His goal was to teach students "the advantages of civilization," but simultaneously, Spack explains, he did not want "to force students to deny the virtues of their own culture" (90–91). This story of Alford's life outlines the cultural and ideological terrain occupied by many of the teachers and students that Spack discusses. The terrain might be called bi- or transcultural, but is perhaps neither in the sense that Spack's extensive research suggests it is not necessary to define this terrain as somehow different than "normal" or "Native" and "European American" cultural space. That is, Alford shares his experience with so many Native people that the terms "bicultural" or "transcultural" tend to efface the way in which they established *cultural* terrain.

Spack devotes the final two chapters to a discussion of the choices students made about what to write using their new language. Many students' texts reflected colonialist discourses, though many also used English to re-present and defend themselves and their own languages. Students claimed ownership of English by using their writing in this second language to privilege Native ways of knowing and critique European American worldviews. Spack's conclusion to the fourth chapter is that in the late nineteenth century, Native people had developed a heightened sense of their own transculturation, whereas European Americans' own transculturation process had become invisible to them. The implication is that by denying American Indians had any cultural influence on European Americans, they found one more way to confirm their assumed superiority. The last chapter is a specific study of the way that Zitkala-Ša claimed ownership of English: defending Native women as a way, Spack argues persuasively, to unify *American Indian Stories*. The conclusion to the work is that neither the land nor the English language was the colonizer's exclusive property and that learning English or even speaking English exclusively does not erase Native ways of knowing. Domination, Spack's study suggests, is rarely a total or finished project. *America's Second Tongue* is an indictment of the often unimaginative pedagogical practices of often incompetent teachers oblivious or uninterested in the needs of Native students and communities, but the work is also a testament to Native students, teachers,

families, and communities that found ways to make this particular aspect of the broader colonial project work, as much as possible, for them.

Lee Irwin, ed. *Native American Spirituality: A Critical Reader*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000. 334 pp.

Suzanne Evertsen Lundquist

Native American Spirituality: A Critical Reader ought to be renamed. Or at least the "critical reader" idea should be given first billing. Fourteen scholars with excellent academic credentials and publication records conjoin to produce a book of essays concerning ethical approaches to the study of Native American religious practices. In his introductory essay, Lee Irwin defines "spirituality" as activities that establish "connectedness to core values and deep beliefs" as well as "a pervasive quality of life that develops out of an authentic participation in values and real-life practices meant to connect members of a community with the deepest foundations of personal affirmation and identity" (3). One could expect, with such an introductory clarification of spirituality, a work dedicated to an understanding of the daily activities of Native peoples—those activities that have allowed traditional peoples to survive the incursions of arrogant outsiders. Evidently Native religious practices have undergone such horrific censoring and misguided appropriation, that those entering into contemporary discussions about Native spirituality must first learn to position themselves politically, ethically, and intellectually before Native spirituality can be adequately understood and narrated.

Part One: "Theoretical Concerns" focuses on protocols that can more productively engage researchers, professors, and students alike in understanding the sacredness of traditional peoples' life-ways. Having authority to speak or write about Native American religious traditions requires auto-ethnographic identification. In other words, the storyteller's position must emerge from "understandings of the ethical frames, boundaries, and reciprocal protocols that attend to any dis-

cussion of Native belief systems," claims Inés Hernández-Avila (Nez Perce) (13). To avoid being duped by "white shamans" or spirituality for sale, aspirants should employ a "politics of recognition." This requires cognizance of cultural difference (pluralism), authenticity (whether elders have authorized sharing traditional practices), place (understanding the power of sacred sites), and survival (the "evocation of sacred power" in daily living), explains John A. Grim (42–49). New kinds of discourse patterns must emerge between "this hemisphere's First Peoples and Euroamerican intellectual tradition, in which the former are active, critical participants rather than passive specimens or curiosities," writes Christopher Ronwanièn:te Jocks (Mohawk) (63). Such new patterns involve moral-political and hermeneutical arguments accompanied by recognition of the privileges and responsibilities attendant to scholarly endeavors. And finally, Ronald L. Grimes explores the fundamental academic question confronting scholars of Native religions in the twenty-first century: Under what conditions should non-Native academics offer courses in Native religions—if at all?

Part Two: "Dialogic Relations" demonstrates how dialogic methods more clearly reveal spiritual identity. Robin Ridington draws on the experiences of various ethnographers, Native informants, and contemporary Native American authors to show that Native experience is performative, experiential, and participatory. Furthermore, Native experience is reciprocal (dialogic). Dialogues are "possible only when storyteller and listener respect and understand one another through shared knowledge and experience." The truly dialogic is "possible only when every person can realize a place in every other person's story" (99). Melissa A. Pflug shows how "the good life" or pimadaziwin is obtained through contemporary Odawa rituals. Ritual reciprocity pulls individuals into interactive community, into a circle where "connection between all ethical people is continually regenerated" (123). Theresa S. Smith's essay explores attempts at syncreticity (the conjoining and reinterpretation of traditional Catholic iconography with and in light of Native symbolization) in the building of the Church of the Immaculate Conception among the Anishnaabeg of Manitoulin Island. Smith explores this thesis question: "Is the move to syncretic structures and worship in this context a responsible and appropriate response to the

past and promise for the future . . . , or are we merely witnessing the appropriation of the one symbol system in the service of the other?" (148). Richard Haly, in a monograph length work, explores the possibility of the survival of Nahua religion "from the perspective of nationalism," a perspective through which "indigenous religion can be described only in terms of syncretism, a bastard and adopted (read illegitimate) mestizaje of Spanish Catholicism and preconquest practices" (159).

Part Three: "Historical Reflections" explores various and complex political and legal practices for or against Native religions within historical contexts. Clara Sue Kidwell examines the tribal, legal, and scientific difficulties surrounding repatriation of Native artifacts, human remains, and funerary and sacred objects from museum collections. Kidwell explores issues of history and prehistory, cultural continuity, and cultural patrimony as they exist in deliberations over the aims and outcomes of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1989, 1990). Mary C. Churchill unmasks the imposition of Western bipolarities on the study of Cherokee religious traditions. Churchill chronicles the efforts of numerous ethnographers to force Cherokee spirituality into an oppositional tension between "purity and pollution"—an opposition that perpetuates classic Western dualities such as good and evil, sacred and profane, and light and dark binaries. Churchill claims that: "Cherokee traditions could be more accurately interpreted in terms of an indigenous-based model of complementarity rather than opposition" (225). Benjamin R. Kracht, through an exploration of Kiowa cosmology, demonstrates how "'experiential anthropology' transforms the ethnographic text from merely paying lip service to people's beliefs . . . to a narrative that says, 'yes, there is something here' " (237). Thomas Buckley outlines the attempts of Northwestern California Natives to survive through coparticipation in the Shaker Church. Finally, James Treat (Creek) chronicles the "religious roots" of Indian activism from 1963 through 1995. And Irwin writes a "brief history of Native American religious resistance" to slanderous and hostile government policies from the late 1800s to the passage of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act in August of 1978 (295).

Native American Spirituality rests on Irwin's conclusion that:

> The character of religious resistance is grounded in the confrontation between various cultural monomyths and the struggle for any people to value the uniqueness of their own spiritual practices. Only when we fully affirm those practices as living resources for our mutual betterment can we move past the need for legislation and legal protections for what is, in fact, a right of all human beings—the free exercise of their religious beliefs. (309)

Native American Spirituality clearly illuminates the benefits to traditional scholarship in the move from "determinism to indeterminancy," from "univocalism to polyvocality, objectivity to partial perspectives, unity to montage, and canonical interpretations to postcolonial ones" (Churchill 225). This move shows how writing about Native religions more nearly resembles novel writing—full of real and diverse characters interacting and conversing about the various and complex worlds they (we) inhabit and share, characters who also recognize their (our) mutual obligations to make the world habitable (free from exploitation) for all sentient beings.

Wendy Rose. *Itch Like Crazy*. Sun Tracks: An American Indian Literary Series. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2002. 121 pp.

Margaret Dubin

Everyone has a family, absent or present, but few people have spent as much time as Wendy Rose has researching her genealogy and imagining the lives of her ancestors. Rose's newest book, *Itch Like Crazy*, presents the intellectual fruits of this labor in poems that use the language of the personal to speak about the history of Indian-white relations and the true meaning of cultural identity. *Itch Like Crazy* revisits some of Rose's favorite earlier themes—her search for roots and belonging, the harsh realities of survival, the cruelty of colonialism—but addresses them in a different voice. While Rose's earlier voice was searching and political, brimming with the anger of the disenfranchised, her

new voice is knowing, rich with facts recovered from her research, in places empathetic, and always pointedly personal.

In the first of the book's three sections, titled "These Bones," Rose's great powers of imagination spirit her bodily across continents and oceans and back in time to the castles and cottages of her Irish, Scottish, and English ancestors, the creaking damp ships that brought them to America, the covered wagons that carried them west, and the unplanned human encounters with Miwoks and others that added new generations and new blood to the family tree. Rose describes the "itch" that drove her to research her multicultural family history and addresses individual ancestors in powerful dream-letters. To Margaret Castor, a great-great-grandmother who came to California from Germany, she poses the question,

> Did you give one glance back,
> one final goodbye, words
> that must
> last a lifetime? (24)

Rose gives herself the gift of family, but rather than inserting each new member into her life she travels back to insert herself in theirs:

> If you are a part of me,
> I am that crazy acorn within your throat
> around which pioneer stories rattle and
> squirm
>
> I am the other voice
> blasted from the mountain
> by hydraulic cannons,
> the other fetus
> embalmed on your knee. (25)

The language is evocative and lyrical, but in places the references to specific people and relations are confusing. This problem can be solved by turning first to the third section of the book, titled "Listen Here for the Voices." This section consists of black-and-white photographs of relatives and ancestors accompanied by prose descriptions of each person and his or her relationship to Rose. A significant new piece of information is

revealed in this section: that the Hopi man whom Rose had always thought to be her father might not actually be her father. Rose's mother had been married to an Anglo man named Dick Edwards, whom for various reasons, Rose was led to believe wasn't her biological father. The details aren't explained, but the new uncertainty about the identity of her biological father brings her perceptibly closer to her Anglo ancestors. Perhaps this is the source of her empathetic descriptions of their struggles, or perhaps personal knowledge of the men and women whose lives brought her into the world have softened her anger or opened her eyes to other kinds of suffering. Whatever the case, the short biographies in this section are lovingly rendered and provide important background information for understanding the poems in "These Bones."

The second section titled, "This Heart," is shorter and more varied than the first, but it contains some of the true gems and most timeless pieces in the collection. Leaving the terrain of family history behind, Rose picks up the threads of her earlier concerns about the challenges of being "mixed," of being an American Indian in academia, and of wanting to honor her tribal heritage without having as much access to it as she would like. These themes found raw, powerful expression in earlier collections such as *The Halfbreed Chronicles and Other Poems* (1986) and *Lost Copper* (1980). In *Itch Like Crazy* they have matured but not lost their power. In "Women Like Me" Rose recalls a promise she made to a grandmother that she would "pull / each invading burr and thistle from your skin," and asks where she should begin (81-82). Which finger, which eye, which bone should she excise? There is no easy answer because, Rose sighs,

> I am broken
> as much as any native ground,
> my roots tap a thousand migrations.
> My daughters were never born, I am
> as much the invader as the native,
> as much the last day of life as the first. (81–82)

Rose writes in free verse and frequently moves the first line of her poems up to serve as a title. This makes the poems feel informal, like stories spilling out from the author's mouth. Short lines, carefully chosen line breaks, and a descriptive use of verbs lend a sense of movement:

". . . bones come flowing / from museum shelves / to dance in the rippling grass . . ." (70). There is nothing haiku-like or peaceful here—each line reports turmoil and action, even if only in the stillness of the author's mind, and Rose's style is effective in conveying this content.

Rose is a prolific poet; *Itch Like Crazy* is her twelfth book and her second with the University of Arizona Press. Several earlier volumes of poetry were written while she attended college and university in the late 60s and 70s in the Bay Area, where she was also involved in the burgeoning American Indian Movement. Despite her overwhelmingly personal subject matter, the poems are more than narcissistic confessionals; her sparsely populated lines leave room for larger meanings. In many ways, her story is our story, the story of anyone whose "mixed" ancestry includes the powerful and the powerless and leaves us wondering where we stand. As Rose said once in an interview: "We are in fact all half-breed in this world today."

Leanne Hinton with Matt Vera and Nancy Steele. *How to Keep Your Language Alive: A Commonsense Approach to One-on-One Language Learning*. Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2002. 123 pp.

Ruth Spack

As a result of his own experience as a student and teacher, Luther Standing Bear understood that enforced English-only education in turn-of-the-century American Indian schools was robbing Native communities of their linguistic and cultural heritage. He also understood that language preservation could succeed only through a grassroots movement:

> The language of a people is part of their history. Today we should be perpetuating history instead of destroying it, and this can only be effectively done by allowing and encouraging the young to keep it alive. A language, unused, embalmed, and reposing only in a book, is a dead language. Only the people themselves, and never the scholars, can nourish it into life. (234)

In *How to Keep Your Language Alive*, Leanne Hinton, Matt Vera, and Nancy Steele offer a systematic way for language communities to cultivate and maintain their own heritage tongues. In California, where there are fifty endangered indigenous languages—most spoken by fewer than a dozen elder speakers—the Master-Apprentice Language Learning Program pairs an elder speaker with a member of the community who wants to learn the language. Ideally, language learning is perpetuated when one apprentice who has been through the program teaches another. Administered by the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival (AICLS), this "mentored learning approach" is designed primarily for people who have access to a speaker if not to a formal language classroom (xiii). The authors also offer recommendations for establishing community and intertribal programs and extend their approach to college classrooms. The manual is written with remarkably little linguistic jargon, making it an accessible guide for both teachers and learners.

The teaching and learning described in this book takes place through an immersion approach, with the team members committing themselves to spending at least ten hours a week together and speaking chiefly in the target language. The approach is derived largely from Stephen Krashen's "input hypothesis," that states language is learned when it is spoken in the context of actions that make general meaning clear, and from the "total physical response" model, which combines language with whole body movement so that the learner focuses not on the words themselves but on the overall message. Throughout the book, the authors provide specific examples of language activities for the teacher and learner. With the understanding that the elder teacher may not be a trained language instructor, the master-apprentice model places the responsibility for guiding the learning process on the apprentice. Thus, for example, the learner regularly asks the teacher for words and phrases the learner needs to know.

At the end of the book, the authors acknowledge the problems inherent in their program: the failure of teams to remain immersed in the language, the difficulty of arranging schedules to accommodate at least ten hours of language learning a week, and the reluctance to push forward to a more advanced level when a plateau is reached. However,

they offer practical suggestions to overcome each of these stumbling blocks.

In promoting this method, linguists Hinton, Vera, and Steele debunk several myths of language learning, for example, the notions that grammar lessons and translation are essential in order to teach language and that adults cannot learn new languages well. Instead they emphasize several principles drawn from second language acquisition theories: communication can take place without recourse to English because nonverbal actions and activities facilitate comprehension; comprehension precedes the ability to articulate meaning; the grammar of a language can be learned unconsciously, through listening and speaking; and, since language is also culture, it can be learned through practicing customs and appropriate behaviors. The authors also stress the need for patience in the process, given that a learner may "have to hear and practice a word twenty times in twenty different contexts—that's four hundred times—in order to master it!" (34). The emphasis in the manual is on spoken language, but the authors do advise apprentices to learn the writing system of their language, if it exists, because it is now part of their linguistic heritage. And even though the authors eschew translation, they acknowledge that it is useful in certain circumstances, especially for the keeping of a journal that records daily learning.

Hinton et al. point out that because linguists often don't speak the languages they study, their records may not be fully accurate. Yet the authors do not turn their backs on the scholarly work in linguistic anthropology that has been conducted for centuries. Rather, they recommend searching through anthropological and linguistic publications and field notes in order to find information on individual languages and how to use them, traditional stories that can be shared in the language learning process, and even the voices of relatives who recorded material for researchers as a way to preserve their own language and culture.

In 1990, Congress passed the Native American Languages Act, charging the United States government with the responsibility to work together with indigenous people to guarantee the survival of their lan-

guages and cultures. Although the government has yet to provide the kind of resources necessary to stem the tide of language loss, the people themselves have taken up Luther Standing Bear's challenge. As Hinton et al. remind us, their master-apprentice program is a part of an ongoing indigenous movement of language revitalization. Conferences and workshops, for example, bring together individuals and groups doing work on language preservation and teaching, including the annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages conference and the annual American Indian Languages Development Institute. Some of the desire to preserve a particular language may originate from a defiant reaction to the U.S. government's historical suppression and vilification of Native tongues, but the primary motivation to learn a language is "a recognition of one's heritage and retention of ties to kin" (xiv). Awareness of this movement should inform any discussion of Native life in the Americas, counterbalancing the tragic story of linguistic violence with an optimistic story of linguistic growth and pride.

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Announcements and Opportunities

Rockefeller Foundation Short-Term Fellowships in American Indian Studies at the Newberry Library

Rockefeller Short Term fellowships are designed to promote research and teaching in American Indian studies by tribal college faculty, librarians, or curators at American Indian cultural centers or museums, or historians working in reservation-based communities. These fellowships foster research in any aspect of American Indian studies supported by the Newberry Library's collections. Each fellow will have the opportunity to research in the extensive library materials related to American Indian history, participate in an active community of scholars, and present research in a D'Arcy McNickle Center Seminar.

Applicants' projects may culminate in a variety of formats including but not limited to curriculum development projects, artistic works, or publications. The fellowships support one to three months of residential research at the Newberry Library and carry a stipend of $3,000 per month plus $1,000 in travel expenses.

Founded in 1887, the Newberry Library is an independent research library that is free and open to the public. Its holdings center on the societies of Western Europe and the Americas from the late Middle Ages to the early twentieth century and include two unequalled collections of print and nonprint materials on American Indian peoples. The Edward E. Ayer Collection of general Americana has more than 130,000 volumes, plus an extensive collection of manuscripts, maps, atlases, photographs, drawings, and paintings. The Everett D. Graff Collection of Western Americana focuses on the trans-Mississippi West in the nineteenth century.

For further information about specific collections or how one might pursue a particular topic in the collections, contact the reference desk via e-mail

or phone. Information is also available at our website. Future application deadlines: January 15, April 15, and September 15, 2003–2004. Submit applications to:

Committee on Awards
The Newberry Library
60 W. Walton Street
Chicago IL 60610-3380
Phone: 312-255-3666

E-mail: research@newberry.org
Visit the website at http://www.newberry.org.

OAH/IU Diversity Fellowship

In an effort to recruit new practitioners to the profession of U.S. history who reflect the diversity of the U.S. population as a whole, the Organization of American Historians, in conjunction with Indiana University's College of Arts and Sciences and its Department of History, awards a diversity fellowship biennially to one student enrolling in the Ph.D. program in U.S. History at Indiana University.

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Students from traditionally underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups (including African American, Latino/a, Asian American, or Native American) who have not yet begun graduate work at Indiana University are eligible. Submit applications to:

John Bodnar, Chair
Department of History
Indiana University
1020 E. Kirkwood
Bloomington IN 47405-7103

Visit the website at http://www.oah.org/activities/diversity.

Contributor Biographies

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RON CARPENTER received his B.A. in English from the University of California, Riverside, and his M.A. in American studies from the University of Utah. He holds a Ph.D. in British and American literature, having recently defended his dissertation on Native American women's autobiography. He currently teaches, fishes, and dreams in Salt Lake City.

JAMES H. COX teaches Native American and American literature classes at the University of Texas at Austin. He has published articles on Thomas King and Sherman Alexie and has an article forthcoming on Gertrude Bonnin's editorial work for *American Indian Magazine*.

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Major Tribal Nations and Bands Mentioned in this Issue

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 American Thought and Language, 235 Bessey Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing MI 48824-1033, or send an e-mail to sail2@msu.edu.

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