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## COMMENTARY

# The Good Red Road: Journeys of Homecoming in Native Women's Writing

**BETH BRANT**

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"There are those who think they pay me a compliment in saying that I am just like a white woman. My aim, my joy, my pride is to sing the glories of my own people. ours is the race that taught the world that avarice veiled by any name is crime. ours are the people of the blue air and the green woods, and ours the faith that taught men and women to live without greed and die without fear."<sup>1</sup>

These are the words of Emily Pauline Johnson, Mohawk writer and actor. Born of an English mother and Mohawk father, Pauline Johnson began a movement that has proved unstoppable in its momentum - the movement of First Nations women to write down our stories of history, of revolution, of sorrow, of love.

The Song My Paddle Sings  
August is laughing across the sky  
Laughing while paddle, canoe and I  
Drift, drift

---

Beth Brant is a Bay of Quinte Mohawk from Tyedinaga Mohawk Territory in Ontario, Canada.

Where the hills uplift  
On either side of the current swift.<sup>2</sup>

This is the familiar poem of Pauline Johnson, the one that schoolchildren, white schoolchildren were taught. Her love of land made her the poet she was. Yet, in reading Johnson, a nonNative might come away with the impression that she only wrote idyllic sonnets to the glory of nature, the “noble savage,” or “vanishing redman” themes that were popular at the turn of the century. It is time to take another look at Pauline Johnson.

The Cattle Thief  
How have you paid us for our game?  
How paid us for  
our land?  
By a *book*, to save our souls from the sins *you* brought  
in your other hand.  
Go back with your new religion, we never have  
understood  
Your robbing an Indian's *body*, and mocking his *soul*  
with food.  
Go back with your new religion, and find - if find  
you can -  
The *honest* man you have ever made from out of a *starving*  
man.

You say your cattle are not ours, your meat is not our meat;  
When *you* pay for the land you live in, *we'll* pay for the meat we  
eat.<sup>3</sup>

It is also time to recognize Johnson for the revolutionary she was. Publicized as the “Mohawk Princess” on her many tours as a recitalist, she despised the misconceptions non-Natives had about her people. Her anger and the courage to express that anger also made her the poet she was. She was determined to destroy stereotypes that categorized and diminished her people. Breaking out of the Victorian strictures of her day, she drew a map for all women to follow. She had political integrity and spiritual honesty, the true hallmarks of a revolutionary.

The key to understanding Native women's poetry and prose is that we love, unashamedly, our own. Pauline Johnson wrote down that love. Her short stories are filled with Native women who have dignity, pride, anger, strength, and spiritual empower-

ment.<sup>4</sup>

Pauline Johnson was a Nationalist. Canada may attempt to claim her as theirs, but Johnson belonged to only one Nation, the Mohawk Nation. She wrote at great length in her poems, stories and articles about this kind of Nationalism. She had a great love for Canada, the Canada of oceans, mountains, pine trees, lakes, animals and birds, not the Canada of politicians and racism that attempted to regulate her people's lives.

In 1892, she was writing articles on cultural appropriation, especially critiquing the portrayal of Native women in the fiction of the day. She tore apart popular white writers such as Charles Mair and Helen Hunt Jackson for their depictions of Native women as subservient, foolish in love, suicidal "squaws." Her anger is tempered with humour as she castigates these authors for their unimaginative use of language and for their insistence on naming the Native heroines "Winona" or a derivative thereof.<sup>5</sup>

Pauline Johnson is a spiritual grandmother to those of us who are women writers of the First Nations. She has been ignored and dismissed by present-day critics and feminists, but this is just another chapter in the long novel of dismissal of Native women's writing.

Pauline Johnson's physical body died in 1913, but her spirit still communicates to us who are Native women writers. She walked the writing path clearing the brush for us to follow. And the road gets wider and clearer each time a Native woman picks up her pen and puts her mark on paper.

I look on Native women's writing as a gift, a give-away of the truest meaning. Our spirit, our sweat, our tears, our laughter, our love, our anger, our bodies are distilled into words that we bead together to make power. Not power *over* anything. Power. Power that speaks to hearts as well as to minds.

Land. Spirit. History, present, future. These are expressed in sensual language. We labour with the English language, so unlike our own. The result of that labour has produced a new kind of writing. I sometimes think that one of the reasons our work is not reviewed or incorporated into literature courses, (besides the obvious racism) is that we go against what has been considered "literature." our work is considered "too political" and we do not stay in our place - the place that white North America deems acceptable. It is no coincidence that most Native women's work that gets published is done so by the small presses: feminist, leftist or alternative. These presses are moving outside the mainstream

and dominant prescriptions of what constitutes good writing. The key word here is "moving." There is a movement going on that is challenging formerly-held beliefs of writing and who does that writing. And it is no coincidence that when our work is taught, it is being done so by Women's Studies instructors and/or those teachers who are movers and hold beliefs that challenge those of the dominant culture. This is not to say that *all* women's studies are as forward-thinking as we would like. At women's studies conferences, the topics of discussion usually center around white, European precepts of theory and literature. I am tired of hearing Virginia Wolfe and Emily Dickinson held up as the matriarchs of feminist and/or women's literature. Wolfe was a racist, Dickinson was a woman of privilege who never left her house, nor had to deal with issues beyond which white dress to wear on a given day. Race and class have yet to be addressed; or if they are discussed, it is on *their* terms, not *ours*.

We are told by the mainstream presses that our work doesn't sell. To quote Chief Sealth - "Who can sell the sky or the wind? Who can sell the land or the Creator?" The few women of colour who have broken through this racist system are held up as the spokespeople for our races. It is implied that these women are the only ones *good* enough to "make it." These women are marketed as exotic oddities. (After all, we all know that women of colour can't write or read, eh?)

Pauline Johnson faced this racism constantly. The "Mohawk Princess" was considered an anomaly, and I can't say that things have changed all that much. I think of Pauline a lot, especially when I rise to read my stories. For like her, "My aim, my joy, my pride is to sing the glories of my own people."

Because of our long history of oral tradition, and our short history of literacy (in the European time frame) the amount of books and written material by Native people is relatively small. Yet, to us, these are precious treasures carefully nurtured by our communities. And the number of Native women who are writing and publishing is growing. Like all growing things, there is a need and desire to ensure the flowering of this growth. You see, these fruits feed our communities. These flowers give us survival tools. I would say that Native women's writing is the Good Medicine that can heal us as a human people. When we hold up the mirror to our lives, we are also reflecting what has been done to us by the culture that lives outside that mirror. It is possible for all of us to learn the way to healing and self-love.

It is so obvious to me that Native women's writing is a generous sharing of our history and our dreams for the future. That generosity is a collective experience. And perhaps this is the major difference between Aboriginal writing and that of European-based "literature." We do not write as individuals communing with a muse. We write as members of an ancient, cultural consciousness. Our "muse" is *us*. Our "muse" is our ancestors. Our "muse" is our children, our grandchildren, our partners, our lovers. our "muse" is Earth and the stories She holds in the rocks, the trees, the birds, the fish, the animals, the waters. our words come from the very place of all life, the spirits who swirl around us, teaching us, cajoling us, chastising us, loving us.

The first known novel written by a Native woman was *COGEWEA - THE HALF-BLOOD*.<sup>6</sup> Written by Hum-Ishu-Ma, Okanagan Nation, in 1927, this novel depicts the difficulties of being called halfbreed. Hum-Ishu-Ma concentrates on the relationship the female protagonist has with her Indian grandmother, and how Cogewea does not turn her back on her people, although she is courted and temporarily seduced by the white world. Hum-Ishu-Ma worked as a migrant labourer, carrying her typewriter everywhere with her, snatching moments to write. Again, I am reminded of Pauline Johnson and her Indian women who remain steadfast in their aboriginal beliefs and spiritual connections to their land and people and the desire to make this truth known.

Fifty years later, Maria Campbell wrote her ground-breaking *HALF-BREED*<sup>7</sup>, taking up the theme of despair that comes as a result of the imbalance that racism and poverty create in a people. Maria has a grandmother whose words and strength give her nurturance and hope and a way back to the Good Red Road. The Good Red Road is a way of life among Native peoples that is one of balance and continuity. Again, this seems to be the overwhelming message that Native women bring to writing. Creating a balance in their protagonists' worlds, remembering what the Elders taught, recovering from the effects of colonialism. This is not to say that Native women's writing contains "happy" endings or resolutions. In fact, to wrap things up in a tidy package is not following the Good Red Road - it's a falsehood. Perhaps this is what irritates white critics our work is said to have no plots! If we won't conform, how can these conformist reviewers write reviews?! Perhaps the questions should be - why are critics so unimaginative in *their* writing? Why are they so ignorant of what is being written by my sisters? Why is a white-European standard

still being held up as the criteria for all writing? Why is racism still so rampant in the arts?

Leslie Marmon Silko published her novel, *CEREMONY*<sup>8</sup>, in 1976. In 1992, *ALMANAC OF THE DEAD*,<sup>9</sup> by the same author, was published. Between those years and after, Paula Gunn Allen, Louise Erdrich, Jeannette Armstrong, Anna Lee Walters, Ella Deloria, Beatrice Culleton, Ruby Slipperjack, Cindy Baskin, Betty Bell and Linda Hogan also published novels.<sup>10</sup>

In the field of autobiographical works, the number of Native women's books is outstanding. Minnie Freeman, Maria Campbell, Ruby Slipperjack, Alice French, Ignatia Broker, Lee Maracle, Madeline Katt, Florence Davidson, Mary John, Gertrude Bonnin, Verna Johnson and others<sup>11</sup> tell their stories for all to hear, and we become witness to the truth of Native lives. Throughout these writings, strong female images and personas are evident. The Cheyenne saying "A Nation is not conquered until its women's hearts are on the ground," becomes a prophecy about Native women's writing. First Nations women's hearts are not on the ground. We soar with the birds and our writing soars with us because it contains the essence of our hearts.

Deep connections with our female Elders and ancestors is another truth that we witness. Grandmothers, mothers, aunties, all abound in our writing. This respect for a female wisdom is manifested in our lives, therefore, in our writing.

Poetry seems to be the choice of telling for many Native women. In our capable hands, poetry is torn from the elitist enclave of intellectuals and white, male posturing, and returned to the lyrical singing of the drum, the turtle rattle, the continuation of the Good Red Road and the balance of Earth. We write poems of pain and power, of ancient beliefs, of sexual love, of broken treaties, of despoiled beauty. We write with our human souls and voices. We write songs that honour those who came before us and those in our present lives, and those who will carry on the work of our Nations. We write songs that honour the every-day, we write songs to food; we even incorporate recipes into our work. Chrystos, Mary TallMountain, Nora Danhauer, Mary Moran,<sup>12</sup> are just a few who have written about the joys of fry bread, salmon, corn soup, and whale blubber, then turn around and give instruction for preparing these treats! To me, this is so ineffably Indian. Mouths salivating with the descriptions of our basic foods, readers are then generously offered the gift of how to do this ourselves. No wonder the critics have so much trouble with us! How could

food possibly be art?! How can art remain for the elite if these Native women are going to be writing recipes in poems? What will the world come to, when food is glorified in the same way as Titian glorified red hair?

There are numerous books of poetry written by Native women.<sup>13</sup> Our poems are being published in forward-thinking journals and magazines, although there are still the literary journals that wish to ghettoize our work into "special" issues, which, if you will notice, happen about every ten years or so. And their editors are usually white and educated in the mainstream constructs of European sensibility.

When I was asked in 1983 to edit a Native women's issue of the feminist journal, *Sinister Wisdom*, I did not expect the earthquake *A Gathering of Spirit* would cause. Eventually, this work became a book, published in 1984, then re-issued by Firebrand Books and by Women's Press in 1989.<sup>14</sup> Perhaps there is a lesson here. When Natives have the opportunities to do *our own* editing and writing, a remarkable thing can happen. This thing is called *telling the truth for ourselves* - a novel idea to be sure and one that is essential to the nurturance of new voices in our communities. I conduct writing workshops with Native women throughout North America, and the overriding desire present in these workshops is to heal. Not just the individual, but the broken circles occurring in our Nations. So, writing does become the Good Medicine that is necessary to our continuation into wholeness. And when we are whole our voices sail into the lake of all human experience. The ripple-effect is inevitable, vast and transcendent.

There are women who are writing bilingually. Salli Benedict, Lenore Keeshig-Tobias, Rita Joe, Beatrice Medicine, Anna Lee Walters, Luci Tapahonso, Mary TallMountain, Nia Francisco, Ofelia Zepeda, Donna Goodleaf<sup>15</sup> are just some of the Native women who are choosing to use their own Nation's languages when English won't suffice or convey the integrity of the meaning. I find this an exciting movement within our movement. And an exciting consequence would be the development of our *own* critics, and publishing houses that do bilingual work. our languages are rich, full of metaphor, nuance, and life. our languages are not dead or conquered - like women's hearts, they are soaring and spreading the culture to our youth and our unborn.

Pauline Johnson must be smiling. She was fluent in Mohawk, but unable to publish those poems that contained her language. There is a story that on one of her tours, she attempted to do a



reading in Mohawk. She was booed off the stage. Keeping her dignity, she reminded members of the audience that she had to learn their language, wouldn't it be polite to hear hers? Needless to say, impoliteness won the day.

From Pauline Johnson to Margaret Sam-Cromarty,<sup>16</sup> Native women write about the land, the land, the land. This land that brought us into existence, this land that houses the bones of our ancestors, this land that was stolen, this land that withers without our love and care. This land that calls us in our dreams and visions, this land that bleeds and cries, this land that runs through our bodies.

From Pauline Johnson to Marie Baker, Native women write with humour. Even in our grief, we find laughter. Laughter at our human failings, laughter with our Tricksters, laughter at the stereotypes presented about us. In her play, *PRINCESS POCAHONTAS AND THE BLUE SPOTS*,<sup>17</sup> Monique Mojica, Kuna/Rappahannock, lays bare the lies perpetrated against Native women. And she does it with laughter and anger - a potent combination in the hands of a Native woman. Marie Baker, Anishanabe, has written a play that takes place on the set of an Indian soap opera, "As the Bannock Burns." Baker's characters are few - the Native star of the soap, and the new co-star, a Native woman who gives shaman lessons to wannabes. In the course of the one-act play, the star shows the would-be shaman the error of her ways under the watchful eyes and chorus of a group of women of colour. Not only does Baker poke fun at the Greek chorus concept in theatre, she turns this European device to her own and our amusement in a caustic but loving way, to bring the would-be shaman to a solid understanding of herself and her own tradition.

Sarah Winnemucca, Suzette La Flesch,<sup>18</sup> and Pauline Johnson also left them laughing as they took their work on the road. To tell a good story, one has to be good actor. I remember my grandad telling me stories when I was little, punctuating the sentences with movement and grand gestures, changing his facial expressions and voice. I think we are likely to witness more Native women writing for the theatre. Margo Kane has ventured into that place with her play *MOON LODGE*. Vera Manuel has written *THE SPIRIT IN THE CIRCLE*, addressing the painful past of residential schools and the painful present of alcoholism and family dysfunction. But she also posits a vision for the future out of these violent truths. Spider Woman's Theatre has been writing, producing and acting in their plays for a number of years. And

Muriel Miguel, one of the Spiders, has done a onewoman show incorporating lesbian humour, Native tricksters, and female history. Native women are writing the scripts for their videos and directing and producing these films. How Pauline Johnson would have loved video!

As Native women writers, we have formed our own circles of support. At least once a week, I receive poems and stories in the mail, sent to me by First Nations women I know and some I have never met. It thrills me to read the words brought forth by my sisters. This is another form our writing takes - being responsible and supportive to our sisters who are struggling to begin the journey of writing truth. The WordCraft Circle, a mentoring program that matches up more experienced writers with our younger brothers and sisters, was born out of a Native writers' gathering held in 1992 in Oklahoma. I am currently working with a young, Native lesbian, and it moves my heart that it is now possible for lesbian Natives to give voice to all of who we are. Keeping ourselves secret, separating parts of ourselves in order to get heard and/or published has been detrimental to our communities and to our younger sisters and brothers who long for gay and lesbian role models. I am proud of the burgeoning Native lesbian writing that is expanding the idea of what constitutes Native women's writing.

There are my sisters who have internalized the homophobia so rampant in the dominant culture and that has found its way into our own territories and homes. These sisters are afraid and I understand that fear. Yet, I ask for a greater courage to overcome the fear. The courage to be who we are for the sake of our young and to honour those who have come before us. Courage of the kind that Connie Fife, Chrystos, Barbara Cameron, Sharon Day, Susan Beaver, Nicole Tanguay, Two Feathers, Donna Goodleaf, Janice Gould, Vickie Sears, Donna Marchand, Mary Moran, Elaine Hall, Victoria Lena ManyArrows, Shirley Brozzo and many others have displayed.<sup>19</sup> Writing with our whole selves is an act that can re-vision our world.

The use of erotic imaging in Native lesbian work becomes a tool by which we heal ourselves. This tool is powerfully and deftly evident in the hands of these writers, especially the poems of Janice Gould and Chrystos. In my own work, I have explored such themes as self-lovemaking, and the act of love between two women<sup>20</sup> as a way to mend the broken circles of my own life, and hopefully to give sustenance to other women who are searching

for new maps for their lives. But Native lesbian writing is not only about sex and/or sexuality. There is a broader cultural definition of sexuality that is at work here. Strong bonds to Earth and Her inhabitants serve as a pivotal edge to our most sensual writing. Like our heterosexual sisters, Native lesbians who write are swift to call out the oppressions that are at work in our lives. Homophobia is the eldest son of racism - they work in concert with each other - whether externally or internally. Native lesbian writing *names* those twin evils that would cause destruction to us.

A major theme in the work of Vickie Sears, Cherokee Nation, is the power over children's bodies by the State.<sup>21</sup> Sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse are "normal" occurrences to the girl-children in Vickie's short stories. Herself a survivor of the foster-care system, Sears finds her solace and empowerment through the things of Earth and the love between women. Her short stories emphasize these possibilities of self-recovery. Indeed, one could say that much of Native lesbian writing celebrates Earth as woman, as lover, as companion. Woman, lover, companion celebrated as Earth. Two-spirit writers are merging the selves that colonialism splits apart.

Recovery writing is another component in the movement of Native women writers. Recovery from substance abuse, as well as racism, sexism and homophobia. Two Feathers, Cayuga Nation, is a wonderful example of this kind of recovery writing, as is Sharon Day of the Ojibway Nation.<sup>22</sup> Again, Chrystos, Menominee poet, excels in the naming of what it feels like to be hooked and in thrall to the substances that deaden the pain of being Native in the 20th century. Highly charged with anger, this recovery writing is, at the same time, gentle with the knowing of how difficult the path is toward the Good Red Road. There is empathy and compassion in the telling of our people's struggle to stay clean and sober, there is rage against the State that employed *and* employs addiction to attempt our cultural annihilation. Many of my short stories focus on that moment between staying sober and taking "just one" drink. The characters are caught in that timescape of traditional Native "seeing", and the unnatural landscape of colonization through addiction. In my stories, as in my life, Creator brings gifts of the natural to "speak" to these characters. It then becomes a choice to live on the Good Red Road, or to die the death of being out of balance - a kind of "virtual reality", as opposed to the real, the natural.

Pauline Johnson knew first hand the effects of these attempts at

annihilation. Her father, a Chief of the Mohawk Nation, was a political activist against the rum-runners who would have weakened his people. Severely beaten many times by these smugglers and murderers, his life was considerably shortened. Many of Pauline's stories are filled with righteous anger against the whiteman who wished to rape our land, using alcohol as a weapon to confuse and subjugate us. I think she would applaud the recovery-writing and name it for what it is - an Indian war cry against the assassination of our culture.

Oral tradition requires a telling and a listening that is intense, and intentional. Giving, receiving, giving - it makes a complete circle of Indigenous truth. First Nations writing utilizes the power and gift of story, like oral tradition, to convey history, lessons, culture, and spirit. And perhaps the overwhelming instinct in our spirit is to love. I would say that Native writing gives the gift of love. And love is a word that is abused and made empty by the dominant culture. In fact, the letters *l o v e* have become just that, blank cyphers used frivolously to cover up deep places of the spirit.

I began writing when I turned forty. I imagine the spirits knew I wasn't ready to receive that gift until I was mature enough and open enough to understand the natural meaning of love. I believe that the writing being created by First Nations women is writing done with a community consciousness. Individuality is a concept and philosophy that has little meaning for us. Even while being torn from our spiritual places of home, having our ancestors names stolen and used to sell sports teams, automobiles, or articles of clothing; having our languages beaten out of us through residential school systems even while having our spirits defiled and blasphemed, our families torn apart by institutionalized violence and genocide; even after this long war, we still remain connected to our own.

Our connections take many forms. I, as a Mohawk, feel deep spiritual bonds towards many who do not come from my Nation. These people - Carrier, Menominee, Cree, Cherokee, Lakota, Inuit, Abenaki and many others are like the threads of a weaving. This Mohawk and the people of many Nations are warp and woof to each other. While the colour and beauty of each thread is unique and important, together they make a communal material of strength and durability. Such is our writing, because such is our belief-system. Writing is an act that can take place in physical isolation, but the memory of history, of culture, of land, of Nation,

is always present, like another being. That is how we create. Writing with all our senses, and with the ones that have not been named or colonized, we create.

Janice Gould, Maidu Nation, has written, "I would like to believe there are vast reserves of silences that can never be *forced* to speak, that remain sacred and safe from violation."<sup>23</sup> I feel that these sacred silences are the places *from* which we write. That place that has not been touched or stained by imperialism and hatred. That sacred place. That place.

Like Pauline Johnson, mixed-blood writers find those sacred places in the blood that courses through our bodies, whispering, "come home, come home." Although we have never left that home, in a sense we have been pulled and pushed into accepting the lies told about our Indian selves. For those of us who do not conform to a stereotype of what Native people "look like," claiming our identities as Native people becomes an exercise in racism. "Gee, you don't look like an Indian." "Gee, I didn't know Indians had blue eyes." "My great-great-grandmother was a Cherokee princess, does that make me an Indian too?" After a while it almost becomes humourous, even while it's tiresome. Perhaps the feeling is that we're getting away with something, that we are tapping into unknown strengths, for which we are not entitled. And how the dominant culture loves to quantify suffering and pain! And how well it has worked to divide us from each other and from ourself. Colourism is another face of racism. And we write about that - exposing our fears of abandonment by the people we love, the people whose opinion matters, the very people who, in our dreams, whisper, "Come home, come home." Yet, mixed-blood writing is also what I have been examining; for most of us are bloods of many mixes and Nations. Linda Hogan, Chickasaw Nation calls us "New People." New People are the survivors of five hundred years of colonial rule. Our grandmothers bodies were appropriated by the conquerers, but the New People have not forgotten that grandmother, nor the legacy she carried in her womb.

In Mexico, a story is told of La Llarona. It is told that she wanders throughout the land, looking for her lost children. Her voice is the wind. She weeps and moans and calls to the children of her blood. She is the Indian, the mother of our blood, the grandmother of our hearts. She calls to us. "Come home, come home," she whispers, she cries, she calls to us. She comes into that sacred place we hold inviolate. She is birthing us in that sacred

place. "Come home, come home," the voice of the umbilical, the whisper of the placenta. "Come home, come home." We listen. And we write.

## NOTES

1. E. Pauline Johnson as quoted in Betty Keller, *Pauline: A Biography of Pauline Johnson* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1981).
2. E. Pauline Johnson, "The Song My Paddle Sings" in *Flint & Feather* (Toronto: Hodder & Stoughton, 1931).
3. E. Pauline Johnson, "The Cattle Thief" in *Flint & Feather*
4. E. Pauline Johnson, *The Moccasin Maker* (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1987).
5. E. Pauline Johnson. "A Strong Race Opinion on the Indian Girl in Modern Fiction" originally published in the *Toronto Sunday Globe*, 22 May 1982.
6. Hum-Ishu-Ma (Mourning Dove) *Cogewea, The Half-Blood* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1981). Hum-Ishu-Ma's mentor was a white man. My reading of *Cogewea* is that much of it was influenced by his perceptions, not Hum-Ishu-Ma's.
7. Maria Campbell, *Half-Breed* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1973).
8. Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (New York: Viking Press, 1977).
9. Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (Almanac of the Dead (New York, Toronto: Simon & Schuster, 1991).
10. Paula Gunn Allen, *The Woman Who Owned the Shadows* (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1983); Louise Erdrich, *Love Medicine* (Toronto, New York: Bantam, 1989); Jeanette Armstrong, *Slash* (Penticton: Theytus, 1986); Anna Lee Walters, *Ghost-Singer* (Flagstaff: Northland, 1988); Beatrice Culleton, *In Search of April Raintree* (Winnipeg: Pemmican, 1983); Ella Deloria, *Waterlily*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1988); Ruby Slipperjack, *Honour the Sun* (Winnipeg: Pemmican, 1987); Ruby Slipperjack, *Silent Words* (Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1992); Cyndy Baskin, *The Invitation* (Toronto, Sister Vision, 1993); Linda Hogan, *Mean Spirit* (New York: Atheneum, 1990); Lee Maracle, *Ravensong* (Vancouver: Press Gang, 1993); Velma Wallis, *Two old Women* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1993); Betty Louise Bell, *Face; In -the Moon* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994).
11. Minnie Freeman, *Life Among the Oallunaat* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1978); Ignatia Broker, *Night Flying Woman: an Ojibway Narrative* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1983); Verna Patronella Johnson, *I am Nokomis, Too* (Don Mills: General Publishing Ltd., 1977); Madline Katt Theriault, *Moose to Moccasins* (Toronto: Natural Heritage/Natural History Inc., 1992); Janet Campbell Hale, *Bloodlines* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1993); Wilma Mankiller, *Mankiller: A Chief and Her People* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993); Bonita Wa Wa

Calachaw Nunez, *Spirit Woman* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980); Helen Pease Wolf, *Reaching Both Ways* (Laramie: Jelm Mountain Publications, 1989); Zitkala-Sa, *American Indian Stories* (Washington: Hayworth, 1921); Ida Patterson, *Montana Memories* (Pablo: Salish Kootenai Community College, 1981).

12. Chrystos, "I am Not Your Princess" in *Not Vanishing* (Vancouver: Press Gang, 1988); Mary Tall Mountain, "Good Grease" in *The Light On the Tent* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1990); Nora Marks Dauenhaur, "How to Make a Good Baked Salmon" in *The Droning Shaman* (Haines: Black Currant, 1985); Mary Moran, *Metisse Patchwork*, unpublished manuscript.

13. Poets include Beth Cuthand, Joy Harjo, Marie Baker (Annharte), Janice Gould, Wendy Rose, Diane Glancy, Awiakta, Elizabeth Woody, Joanne Arnott, Carol Lee Sanchez, Paula Gunn Allen, Doris Seale.

14. Beth Brant, ed. *A Gathering of Spirit* (Sinister Wisdom Books, 1984/Ithaca: Firebrand, 1988/Toronto: Women's Press, 1989).

15. Lenore Keeshig-Tobias, *Bird Talk* (Toronto: Sister Vision, 1992); Rita Joe, *Poems of Rita Joe* (Halifax: Abenaki, 1978); Beatrice (Bea) Medicine, "Ina" in *A Gathering of Spirit*; Anna Lee Walters, *Talking Indian* (Ithaca: Firebrand, 1992); Nia Francisco, *Blue Horses For Navajo Women* (Greenfield Center: Greenfield Review, 1988); Ofelia Zepeda, unpublished manuscript; Donna Goodlead, unpublished manuscript.

16. Margaret Sam-Cromarty, *James Bay Memoirs* (Lakefield: Waapoone Publishing, 1992).

17. Monique Mojica, *Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1991).

18. Sarah Winnemucca and Suzette La Flesch (Bright Eyes) travelled and performed in the United States, talking about their people in poetry and story, within the same time frame as Pauline Johnson's career.

19. Makeda Silvera, ed. *Piece of May Heart* (Toronto: Sister Vision, 1991); Will Roscoe, ed. *Living the Spirit* (New York: St. Martin's, 1988); Connie Fife, ed. *The Colour of Resistance* (Toronto: Sister Vision, 1993); Gloria Anzaldúa, ed. *This Bridge Called My Back* (Albany: Kitchen Table Press) are just four of the collections containing Native lesbian work. See also Connie Fife, *Beneath the Naked Sun* (Toronto: Sister Vision, 1992); Chrystos, *Not Vanishing, Dream On, In Her I Am* (Vancouver, Press Gang); Janice Gould, *Beneath My Heart*, (Ithaca, Firebrand, 1990); Victoria Lena Manyarrows. *Songs From the Native Lands*, (San Francisco, Nopal Press, 1995)

20. Beth Brant, *Mohawk Trail* (Ithaca: Firebrand, 1985/Toronto: Women's Press, 1990); Beth Brant *Food & Spirits* (Vancouver, Press Gang, 1991).

21. Vickie Sears, *Simple Songs* (Ithaca: Firebrand, 1990)

22. Sharon Day and Two Feathers, unpublished manuscripts.

23. Janice Gould, "Disobedience In Language: Texts by Lesbian Natives" unpublished speech to the Modern Language Association, New York, 1990