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American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

From the Glittering World: A Navajo Story. By Irvin Morris.

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1r04055f>

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 21(4)

ISSN

0161-6463

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Publication Date

1997-09-01

DOI

10.17953

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and pottery presented in *Dialogues with Zuni Potters*, while *Gifts of Mother Earth* provides a historical and cultural context for the Zuni pottery tradition. Readers searching for a more interpretive analysis of Zuni pottery making may find this book disappointing since the text largely consists of quotations from the potters with little interpretation by the authors. As previously mentioned, books are available that can supplement a reader's understanding of the Zuni pottery tradition.

Dialogues With Zuni Potters developed out of a need to document the growth and artistic skill achieved by Zuni potters since the 1980s. The book has accomplished this task along with contributing potters' viewpoints to existing books on Zuni pottery. Furthermore, as a publication by an enterprise owned and operated by American Indians (it is the third book published by Zuni A:shiwi Publishing), it is a valuable resource since it was generated from within Zuni artists' perspectives. Books like *Dialogues With Zuni Potters* that incorporate artists' voices are a needed addition to available books on the arts of American Indians.

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From the Glittering World: A Navajo Story. By Irvin Morris. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997. 272 pages. \$24.95 cloth.

There are many Native American stories, and in *From the Glittering World*, Irvin Morris has devised a way of telling them all. His effort yields a literal omnibook, comprising as it does virtually every aspect of narrative as it contributes to the forming of a writer's vision. A Tóbaahí Navajo with a master of fine arts degree from Cornell and presently teaching at the State University of New York, Buffalo, Morris draws on the theoretical expertise of experimental fiction in order to accommodate his own experience, which stretches from the most uncorrupted renditions of creation myths to his own creation as a writer. Thus, *From the Glittering World* encompasses both the individual in the cosmos and the cosmos within a single person. Indeed, Morris demonstrates the great world that his personal experience enfolds, and the result of that demonstration is an uncommonly complete form in which to write.

Morris' "Navajo story" is recounted in four parts: a creation

narrative, a group of autobiographical sketches, a briefer set of contemporary accounts, and a gathering of short stories. The four sections are distinctive, each written in a uniquely appropriate manner, yet they draw on one another for cumulative force and climax in the empowerment of a fiction writer able to produce the stories that conclude this book. Any of them could appear separately, and have, but together they reinforce the nature of this writer's persuasiveness and completeness. If writing is to express a universe and contain its essence in the form, *From the Glittering World* is a good example of how such goals may be achieved.

Creation stories are anything but new to Native American writing, even in the way they inform contemporary narrative. Morris' retelling of the Diné story, however, is not anthropological in its own terms, nor is he seeking a pattern within which to establish his own more current craft. Instead, the writer here establishes himself as prime storyteller, retelling the prime story. He tells it well both in terms of authenticity and of currency. As happens in many tales from Morris' childhood and in the short stories he writes as a contemporary author, creation itself is less instrumental than is transgression—and not just one initial transgression and banishment, but several, a repeated cycle that continues right down to the end of the fabulative and the beginnings of recorded history with the territorial removal, slaughter, and imprisonment of the Navajo people at Fort Sumner in 1868. In all versions of the story, new boundaries are constructed to preserve the sense of good that has been merited. As long as people remain within these limits, all will be fine. But with the inexorable progress of narrative these bounds are eclipsed, and experience—that accrual of trials and tribulations beyond an ideal stasis of pure good—continues on. By telling the Fort Sumner story as part of the Diné legend, Morris makes the point that will justify the many other narratives that make up his larger book. It is the author's act of telling and not what he extracts from legend that legitimizes his work.

"Into the Glittering World" thus yields to part two, the childhood stories of "Childhood of the Glittering World." Here is by far the longest part of Morris' volume—the most interesting for him to write, perhaps, and certainly the most interesting to read. Everyone loves a story, and hearing about an author's childhood (in factual terms) is as pleasurable for the reader as it is for the fiction writer to write. There is a great sense of lay-

ering here: As childhood experiences help generate subsequent fiction, so does the creation myth underlie the narrative of one's childhood. To all three, a contrasting sense of "in" and "out" directs the writing; indeed, Morris's first view is of both and of the separation between. It is especially insightful that most of these episodes involve removal: to the BIA school, to Vietnam (in the experience of another), to Gallup ("where two worlds meet"), to the Navajo Community College, to the Institute of American Indian Arts, to Los Angeles, to Santa Cruz, and to other distant locales. Beyond the carefully held limits of the good, odd threats of evil loom, from UFOs to such magical characters as an upright-walking dog who can outrace a ninety-mile-per-hour car and another car driven homicidally by a bear. There is as much of the fabulative in these childhood memoirs as in the creation myth, Morris shows. Together, a sense of storytelling's power consists in building toward a point where it can become the individual's salvation in the face of what would otherwise be debilitating threats.

These debilitations form much of part three, "Travels in the Glittering World." This shortest section of the book is seen as the most troublesome to the author, for set loose in America (beyond all protective boundaries) he feels alien, threatened, and excluded. Travel points across the Midwest mean nothing, and once into lands where Indians live, a friendly glance toward Anglo locals can be an invitation to disaster. The one place Morris feels comfortable is in the Harve, Montana of James Welch, partly because he can imagine Welch's characters surrounding him. Redemption for this cross-country trip is thus achieved at the Rocky Boy Reservation, where the author can admire the beauty and triumph made from what was once a last resort.

Can the world be again made good within protective limits and friendly boundaries? It can, Morris shows, by letting his storytelling abilities be developed by the three narrative movements that have proceeded. With three styles of writing mastered—creation myth for the cosmos, the story of one's own childhood for knowing who you are, and wide experience in the outside world to sample what boundless life has to offer—Irvin Morris turns to section four, "From the Glittering World," six short stories that take the unacceptable materials of "Travels in the Glittering World" and transform them into something that both writer and reader can enjoy. The key is mastery, and mastery in such fiction comes from believing in the power

employed. As with the intruder gently warned off in the last story, "Meat and the Man," it is not a question of dominance or even aggression but of being able to construct a persuasive account of what matters.

The big difference between facing the world as it is and telling a story about it is the measure of control—who is generating the "facts": a hostile, alien culture or a writer who has mastered the ultimately fictive nature of those facts (which are themselves nothing but representations of others' attempts at control). Unmastered, the glittering world can be exclusionary and finally destructive. Incorporated into the art of storytelling, it need not be a hostile object but rather the illusion of glitter that it is, just another fabrication waiting to be tested by another fabricator's account. In *From the Glittering World* Irvin Morris takes his writing four levels deep and passes the test quite well.

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Gerald Vizenor: Writing in the Oral Tradition. By Kimberly M. Blaeser. Norman, OK. University of Oklahoma Press, 1996. 246 pages. \$29.95 cloth.

In Gerald Vizenor's prolific career as journalist, novelist, poet, critical theorist, and social commentator, he apparently has deliberately sought a relatively small audience for the sake of the stylistic eccentricity of his theoretical writings and his uncompromising allegiance to the requirements of the post-modern novel. In placing Vizenor's work in the context of our present literary culture, therefore, suggesting at least a tentative approach to it and defining his artistic, critical, and ideological concerns, Blaeser has performed a useful service.

But readers will be disappointed if they are looking for a critical explication and judgment of Vizenor's fiction, that is, for an answer to the question we should ask of the work of any contemporary writer—whether anyone thirty or forty years from now will want to read it. Blaeser's concerns are more theoretical than critical. In fact, Vizenor's fiction cannot be understood finally without reference to his own theoretical assumptions, and Blaeser therefore concentrates on such matters as Vizenor's attempt to sustain in writing the tribal ideal of an oral culture, his experiments in haiku in relation to Ojibwa dream songs, his "trickster" fiction as a vindication of his post-