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Parker's work is provocative in more ways than one, and he generously and courageously welcomes skeptical responses. In turn, I break with book-review convention by winnowing my summaries of chapters and returning as a skeptic to larger issues of authority and performance. Parker brings a tenacious critical intelligence to his material; he grapples, and I value the opportunity to watch him work. He is mindful of pedagogy, especially in the closing chapter, with its refreshing discussion of post-canon teaching practices that resist tidy multiculturalisms. It is vital, I believe, to situate American Indian literature as he does in a multiplicity of literary and cultural contexts. But his performance throughout this book often strikes me as too dogged; at times he overstates his case, making every last turn of the theoretical screw and exuding a critical confidence, if not certitude, that does not so much work against complexity as take possession of it. Of course, this dogmatism is, in part, a response to the tenacious, searching critical intelligences of some of the most influential critics and theorists in the field: Robert Warrior, Arnold Krupat, Craig Womack, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, and Vine Deloria, Jr., to name a few. They make strong, directive arguments, as does Parker. But my problem is that I cannot determine exactly with whom Parker is arguing. For a variety of reasons, he does not seem to be addressing persons (such as myself) already established in the field of American Indian literature and reasonably well versed in the territory he covers. Given that Parker does not quite seem to see his readers as co-conspirators, perhaps he has in mind prospective specialists and/or those who are curious about American Indian literature, inclined to read and teach it, but who still need to be persuaded of its relevance and viability.

Much more remains to be discussed. Consider these four examples: Parker catches exactly the right tone in his nicely modulated critique of W. D. Snodgrass's anti-Indian poem "Powwow." He tells us that he will work "often through comparison to African American literary cultural studies" (p. viii), but does not do so. He recognizes the often-overlooked, yet important presence, of the ordinary in American Indian literature. The index lists proper names only. How do these last four observations mesh with each other and with all that I have discussed and overlooked in this review? That is, of course, an unanswerable question. If in posing it I reinvent the conclusion that nothing is conclusive, I hope that I have also suggested how and why this particular strain of "nothing" articulates an ambivalent counterargument to the more decisive conclusions of Parker's book.

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**Keepers of the Morning Star: An Anthology of Native Women's Theater.** Edited by Jaye T. Darby and Stephanie Fitzgerald. Los Angeles: UCLA American Indian Studies Center, 2003. \$20.00 paper.

Perhaps one way of critically assessing American Indian dramatic literature is to examine the new representations that it calls into being. By this measure,

*Keepers of the Morning Star* is an important achievement, and would remain so, even if it were not a stand-alone anthology of plays by Native American women. Although a small number of play anthologies by individual American Indian playwrights and theater collectives have appeared during the last two decades, this volume is the first compilation of plays exclusively by Native women who, despite their majority status in Native theater, still remain neglected in mainstream dramatic and academic discourse.

Darby's insightful introduction provides a springboard for discussions of Native theater in the classroom and identifies a number of themes and strategies in the plays. These include women's "transformative agency" (p. xiv) as intergenerational healers and storytellers, and dramatic demonstrations of the influence of the spirit realm and ancestral voices upon present-day events and knowledge. As the editors note, many of these works seek to debunk stereotypes and rewrite dominant-culture histories of Indian peoples, even as they confirm the centrality of women to their respective tribal cultures. One of the few elements overlooked in this introduction is Native humor, which permeates all the plays, even the most awkwardly didactic. Indeed, the comic elements of the didactic plays often provide the best theater moments, illuminating yet another shared trait that allows Indian women to endure and innovate.

Darby and Fitzgerald have given careful thought to the placement of individual plays within this anthology, and they include notes, stage directions, and artistic statements by the playwrights along with their texts. These not only help students understand how a playwright's goals and concerns shape her work, but on many occasions give a specific intratribal context to Darby and Fitzgerald's necessarily intertribal discussion.

*Songcatcher* by Marcie Rendon and *molly has her say* by Molly Bruchac open and close the anthology. In both plays, spirits intrude, disrupt, and humorously display their powers in the physical world, leading the young protagonists toward new insights into their respective tribalographies and, hence, new self-knowledge. In *Songcatcher*, Jack, a young powwow singer intent upon learning his traditions (not to mention impressing his drum rivals), brings home a library tape of old American Indian songs. In so doing, he opens the door to spirits, including early musicologist Francis Densmore, whose ethnocentric blindness regarding the meaning and place of music in tribal cultures destroys the life of one of her informants and her own humanity. By contrast, Molly Marie, the protagonist of *molly has her say*, focuses all her energy on maintaining a strict emotional distance from her Abenaki ancestry. Yet as she reads for her thesis, the ancestral spirit of Molly Ockett forces herself into Molly Marie's study, rewriting history from the Abenaki perspective and using Native words passed into English, among other tools, to reveal the violence and distortion of Western interpretations of Native cultures. One weakness of this play is that Molly Marie's character is so disadvantaged vis-à-vis the witty and eloquent Ockett that her moments of self-insight lack punch. Yet *molly has her say* is strikingly innovative in its approach to song, which does twice the work of the dialogue in creating and advancing the play's action.

*Keepers of the Morning Star* is the first Native theater anthology to publish a dance-drama that includes detailed descriptions of the choreography for each scene, thus according dance the importance that it receives in other American Indian traditions. *No Home but the Heart*, by longtime Native dance choreographer Rosalie Jones, tells a little known and dramatic story about the French/Cree heritage of the Pembina Chippewa and Jones' family roots. The dance imagery here is vivid and telling, from the dramatic "Specter of Death" dance, in which Smallpox and the victim are danced by the same figure; to the flirtatious and witty "Clog Dance," to the "Chair Dance," in which a grandmother character poignantly enacts a body broken by repeated childbirth.

Diane Glancy's *The Woman Who Was a Red Deer Dressed for the Deer Dance* attempts to create a poetry of dialogue that relies on stasis rather than linear progression for its dramatic effect. At its best, the dialogue between the grandmother and granddaughter is disturbing and memorable, expressing not intergenerational harmony but conflict and dysfunction. Unfortunately, the granddaughter's monologues, which try hard to be topical, function in a more conventional and linear manner to undercut the play's impact. At the other end of the spectrum, first-time playwright Sierre Adare's *Takeover of the Andrew Jackson Room* reveals a fine sense of irony, but needs extensive cutting and structural revision to work on stage.

Marie Clements, one of the most experienced playwrights of this anthology, proves a poetic statement of all the theater languages in *Urban Tattoo*. Clements' carefully beaded words, in tandem with sound effects, music, lights, and projections, create images and associations that deeply involve the audience in Rosemarie's freefall through memory to a homecoming of self-knowledge. *Winnetou's Snake Oil Show* could not be more different from *Urban Tattoo* in its deliberate "low art" antics that parody Western novels, movies, and plastic shamanism, even as the play offers new representations of Caribbean and Mexican Indian cultures. Collectively written by the Miguel sisters and Hortensia Colorado, this play not only deconstructs stereotypes and canonical narratives, but also invites its non-Indian audience participants to inhabit the ridiculous boundaries of these stereotypes for the moment. Burlesque wit flavors the best moments of *Ghost Dance* by Annette Arkeketa, a play that also offers images of deep poignancy. Arkeketa has used this work to raise audience consciousness about the desecration of Native American human remains and the theft of cultural patrimonies (ongoing, despite passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act). This play, however, also needs a better structure to move from staged readings into a full production life.

The shortcomings of some of these plays—rubber-stamp white characters that play well to Native audiences, but which with a little more specificity might force the non-Indian spectators or readers to recognize themselves in certain cultural situations; and a tendency to didacticism and verbosity—are weaknesses that one cannot blame entirely on the playwrights. Lack of institutional funding and material production support for Native theater limits the ability of Native playwrights to refine, revise, and test their work outside its birthplace, a fact reiterated by many of the production histories of these plays. Thankfully, the situation is changing.

While academics will undoubtedly welcome *Keepers of the Morning Star* as an important resource in teaching Native theater, I hope that this anthology will inspire Native playwrights and theater practitioners. There is enough material here to keep both groups busy for several seasons.

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**Native Americans, Archaeologists, and the Mounds.** By Barbara Alice Mann. New York: Peter Lang, 2003. 520 pages. \$29.95 paper.

Barbara Mann's book *Native Americans, Archaeologists, and the Mounds* provides a fascinating study of various and often conflicting interpretations of the numerous mound sites east of the Mississippi River. By carefully researching published, archival, and oral traditions, the author illustrates the continuing disdain with which many historians and anthropologists treat indigenous histories of the mounds. Rather than using her book as a diatribe on this unpleasant reality, the author explains a number of the contextual reasons for this lacuna within archaeological interpretations of these sites. As a result, the book focuses on the ramifications of conquest in relation to interpretative histories of indigenous peoples. Specifically, the author suggests that colonialism not only rendered the voice of Native peoples mute, but also skewed the ability of colonial scientists to study archaeological sites without preconceived notions about the precontact histories of indigenous communities. Invariably, the biased viewpoints of early academics prevented them from using oral histories in their analyses of these sites.

Mann has attempted to redress this situation by incorporating oral traditions of numerous Native Americans in her book. The author's careful use of this source of information provides insights into the histories of the mounds that mesh with archaeological data, in some cases, but offers alternative views in others. Native histories of these sites generally agree on the importance of warfare during the heyday of the mounds. Often relying on the oral stories of the Cherokee, the author discusses the presence of social classes, warfare, religious leaders, and the redistribution of surplus among mound site communities.

She also offers interesting insights into the abandonment of these sites. According to oral histories from both Natives and early non-indigenous settlers, the priestly class overstepped its societal role and alienated the vast majority of the non elites—a development that, in Mann's opinion, made revolt against the priests inevitable. However, the data show that this revolt did not destroy the society of the mound builders, but rather transformed their system of government. In place of a highly stratified society with oppressive priests, these societies became less male-dominated and more open to the voices of many (p. 166). Mann uses contemporary theological and philosophical opinion about the arrangement of societies, clans, and families to illustrate the historical depth of these transformations. To prove her points