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which Ruppert attributes to Native cultures and traditional Western culture have significant validity, such validity must obtain at a higher level than that of ethnicity—at the level of literate and nonliterate cultures perhaps. But at this level, the distinction ceases to be valid with respect to the literate Native American authors whom Ruppert discusses.

Why is Ruppert so committed to these stereotypical imaginary readers and epistemological frameworks? The answer can probably be found in his eagerness to demonstrate the applicability of Bakhtinian dialogic to Native American texts and his understandable desire to demonstrate for contemporary Native American fiction a positive social function—the “bringing together” that Silko attributes to storytelling in general and that Ruppert identifies as the peculiar *métier* of contemporary Native American fiction. The mediational approach allows Ruppert to show that Native American texts, which he obviously and rightly values so highly, affect readers, Native and non-Native alike, in ways that promote his desired sociopolitical agenda.

Few readers of either or any ethnicity, I suspect, will object to this agenda, but many readers, I equally suspect, will emerge from these chapters feeling encumbered rather than enlightened by Ruppert’s analysis. Enlightenment there is, but it is not easily had.

Ruppert’s book needs to be read in the context of other recent studies of Native American fiction. Lewis Owens, in *Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel* (1992), and Robert M. Nelson, in *Place and Vision: The Function of Landscape in Native American Fiction* (1993), have both provided clear, sensible, insightful discussions of contemporary Native American novels, and Alan R. Velie’s *Four American Indian Literary Masters* (1982) remains a reliable resource, especially for students.

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**The Native American in Long Fiction: An Annotated Bibliography.** By Joan Bream and Barbara Branstad. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 1996. 359 pages. \$56.00 cloth.

According to its authors, *The Native American in Long Fiction: An Annotated Bibliography* has been designed as a current and extensive resource for locating works of long fiction that offer alternatives to

Eurocentric views of the histories and circumstances of Native Americans. It is aimed primarily at librarians seeking to build collections, teachers working to diversify curriculum, and general readers with an interest in this field. It includes both Native and non-Native writers among its more than four hundred entries, but it does not include entries for short fiction, juvenile literature, works more than one hundred years old, or works judged to be of low quality (though it does provide a categorical list of deletions). Some Canadian authors are included. Thematic criteria for entries center around issues of perspective. Works included focus on Indian characters or concerns, and most have a central Indian voice: "We were not interested in white society's view upon historical events in the settling of this country. In fact, we were interested in collecting those fictional works that would present exactly the opposite perspective" (p. xiii). To this end, the authors attempted to be as complete as possible in their inclusion of Native writers, and to identify tribal affiliation when possible. While it is not a bibliography of Native American literature per se, it does include a comprehensive bibliography of Indian novelists as a subset of its offerings.

Entries for each work include a brief bibliographical statement; categorizations by historical period, locations, and tribal groups represented; a commentary; and, for some entries, references to reviews and critical articles. A short general critical bibliography is also included as an appendix. All of these items are quite useful, and the categorizations of content are used to build corresponding indexes of entries by time, place, tribal group, and genre at the end of the volume. Annotations for each entry include a fairly detailed synopsis of plot and thematics, as well as some level of evaluative commentary. These evaluative comments are both a strength and weakness of the volume. Especially for the reader new to the area, the authors provide some guide to choices among possibilities, identifying some works, such as Gerald Vizenor's, as difficult though rewarding, and others as of more limited use for other reasons. They also sound a note of caution in a few instances for writers, such as Hyemeyohsts Storm, who have attracted controversy. In a field in which other annotators have tended towards the hagiographic (particularly with Native writers), they are also willing at times to be critical, wishing, for instance, that Silko's editors had been a bit more ruthless with *Almanac of the Dead*, and characterizing Erdrich's work as depressing and "not easy to comprehend" (p. 87). Not everyone, of course, will agree with these opinions.

The weakness of such evaluative commentaries lies, however, not in these kinds of candid opinions, but in other less obvious claims to authority. In keeping with their project of identifying works that present a Native point of view, the authors frequently comment on the accuracy of a novel's accounts of Indian life. "Hillerman's descriptions of Navajo religious beliefs and ceremonies are quite accurate, as are his depictions of life on the Navajo and Hopi reservations," they argue (p. 131). While few are likely to find this particular evaluation controversial, it does raise a larger question: What is accuracy and how do these authors judge it? The biographies of the authors included at the end of the volume do not suggest their expertise in making such judgments, nor do they present themselves in their prefatory material as experts. And what is "a Native point of view"? This question is notoriously difficult to answer, even in those instances in which the speaker or author can be presumed to be Native, but here, even that appeal to ethnic authenticity remains unclear. While some writers are identified as having a tribal affiliation, no explanation is given for how those identifications were made. Do they indicate tribal enrollment? Self-identification? Hearsay? In some cases—David Seals, Jamake Highwater—some level of editorial uncertainty is indicated by a question mark following the identification, but some more extensive form of accounting or at least an explanation of method would be helpful.

To many, of course, and especially to newcomers to this field (much of the intended audience), the consideration of such issues may seem a bit obsessive, and the relatively slim distinction made in this volume between Native and non-Native writers may come as a reasonable and welcome relief. But to others, and especially to those whose perceptions have been formed in the context of debates over tribal sovereignty, Indian education, and the emergence of a Native American literature as a hybrid form, such issues are central. Some earlier annotated bibliographies, such as Colonnese and Owens, *American Indian Novelists*, or the very recent *Dictionary of Literary Biography: Native American Writers of the United States* edited by Kenneth Roemer, address this and other related issues in considerably more detail (Kenneth Roemer's introduction to the latter volume is especially useful in this respect).

These are, of course, very different kinds of books than that offered here. The argument can certainly be made, however, that given precisely the history of representations of Indian peoples which this volume is designed to address, these are issues that should be identified for readers, even the newcomers, and espe-

cially the educators. Here, the danger is that they slip below the surface, undermining the laudable project that the authors have in other ways so painstakingly designed, by eliding some central distinctions. Readers wishing to gain a fuller understanding of the complex issues of authorship, authenticity, and representation should recognize that no single volume is likely to provide a complete understanding, and that other works, such as the ones noted above, should be added to the repertoire.

Such caveats should not, however, detract from this volume's many strengths. Colonnese and Owen's book is more than ten years old, and though its more extended summaries of critical arguments on some works is extremely useful, both its primary listings and these critical notes have been eclipsed by time. Similarly, the strengths of the *Dictionary*, its concentration on Native writers and its extended critical essays, precludes the extensive coverage offered here. In this volume, the entries on non-Native writers often provide the most interesting information—that Zane Grey, for instance, that icon of popular Western writers, took strong positions against government and church policies towards Indian communities as early as the 1920s.

Given its limitations, authors of this volume have produced a very professional piece of work. They note that they read every work included, and their thorough and comprehensive entries are evidence of their care. Their inclusion of indexes and critical citations will make this volume useful to its intended audiences of librarians, educators, and general readers, and to specialists in Native American literature as well. If their annotations are taken in the spirit in which they seem to have been written, not as definitive but as competent, useful, and entertaining summaries and opinions on more than four hundred books, even specialist readers will find themselves browsing with pleasure for useful information and overlooked opportunities.

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**Native American Verbal Art: Texts and Contexts.** By William Clements. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996. 253 pages. \$45.00 cloth; \$19.95 paper.

The study of expressive verbal arts among American Indians has been the focus of linguistic anthropology since Dell Hymes