

Sword seems the antithesis of what one might imagine as a conservationist of Lakota tradition. In spite of this, he makes the decision to preserve Lakota knowledge through recording oral histories, and does so as a self-proclaimed authority in traditional form. Much like Red Shirt, Sword takes up the role of both researcher and research participant. Sword's narratives possess an extra layer of credibility in that he utilizes no transcriber other than himself, instead choosing to write his words as he spoke. He recites and records the oral histories from memory, taking pains to pen each word exactly as he speaks them. The result of his efforts is an extraordinary series of documents.

Asserting that Sword's oral narratives are representative of a broader Lakota narrative form—despite his eventual support of US interests—Red Shirt contends this is possible because Sword was born into a time preceding contemporary reservation life for the Lakota and received his instruction in traditional Lakota narrative forms. Though he eventually converted to Christianity, he still possesses a certain amount of respect for these traditions, a claim enforced by his hesitancy to offend his tribe's spiritual interpreters by revealing too much. Sword is stridently critical of variations from traditional narratives, and, while his motives can be rightfully questioned, this move to record said narratives can be interpreted as an act of conservatism. He derides the modification of language which he attributes to white involvement, as well as the misunderstanding of customs by Lakota youth, and attempts to preserve traditional forms as true to the "old Lakota" as possible. If the reader accepts this as credible evidence to the authority of the source—and the author makes a strong case for that authority—then one should be able to identify the recurrent compositional patterns in these narratives and credit them as possessing a uniquely Lakota form.

For its intended audience of linguists and anthropological linguists, *George Sword's Warrior Narratives: Compositional Processes in Lakota Oral Tradition* will provide a satisfying read, with its methodological approach sure to inspire other scholars. For a wider audience, the volume makes for a technical read, with little effort made to ease in those new to the subject matter. Though there are limitations as to the accessibility of the work, it provides fundamental groundwork for defining the genre as well as a much-needed framework for analyzing other works of Native oral literature. Even though content is not the author's focus, Red Shirt has laid the foundation for what is certain to be some truly fascinating content analysis to come.

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Imagining Sovereignty: Self-Determination in American Indian Law and Literature.
By David J. Carlson. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016. 242 pages.
\$29.95 paper.

In *Imagining Sovereignty: Self-Determination in American Indian Law and Literature*, author David J. Carlson presents a useful, thought-provoking examination of the concept of sovereignty in the writings of Native scholars and its application within

Native nations today. In the author's own words, this book is an attempt at providing a "sophisticated and fully historicized form of sovereign reading" (198) that intensively examines each author and their particular praxis in relation to indigenous sovereignty and focuses on promoting the concept of literary interpretation in examining their works. Carlson thoroughly covers the development of the concept of sovereignty, which is notoriously hard to nail down within Native and non-Native societies alike. As a concept with origins in societies that carried out colonization efforts in North America, in Indian country sovereignty has been a particularly problematic, historically used against Native nations to promote colonial systems. Carlson not only examines the basis of these uses, but also how Native nations today, in the face of ever-increasing pressures of assimilation and cultural change, are using the concept of sovereignty to decolonize.

First examining the differences between the definition of the term *sovereignty* that stemmed from Europe several centuries ago and the concept as used within Native nations, Carlson is quick to point out that sovereignty was not a purely theoretical construct, but rather evolved out of European political practice. Although a fluid notion since its conception, it has often focused primarily on what can be labeled political sovereignty (17). Within Indian country the concept differs greatly, and Carlson delivers a concise and intriguing discussion of its varying forms, developing his discussion from the starting point of Emma Gross's definitions of the four forms of tribal sovereignty. He weaves in a brief history of the international indigenous fight for sovereignty and recognition on the global stage, including the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the efforts for inclusion during the Law of Nations period, and even stretching back to the Peace of Westphalia, showing the complicated history associated with the daunting task of decolonizing indigenous recognition on the global scale in an arena populated by colonial forces.

Following this, Carlson divides his work into examinations of the use of the concept of sovereignty and its definition as used within the works of prominent Native scholars such as D'Arcy McNickle, Vine Deloria Jr., and Taiaiake Alfred. In doing so, he unveils the complex legacy of sovereignty within Native literature and academic discourse. Whereas Gross narrowed the variances down to four groups, Carlson complicates the topic by expounding on the nuances of the various definitions utilized by each author. Within his discussions of their work, Carlson identifies numerous competing definitions of sovereignty that—depending on where, how, and for what it is used—have subtle and not-so-subtle nuances and differences. This further solidifies that sovereignty for indigenous peoples cannot be expressly captured with an all-encompassing definition, especially in Indian country. The amount of Carlson's research and time he put into fleshing out each individual author's definitions and work is manifestly evident, as is his passion for the topic. While the topic and frameworks are quite complicated and technical, Carlson's enthusiasm, explanation, and discussion makes for a very readable text.

The only aspect of this book that seems lacking is its applicability to future scholarship. It tends to be more of a beam of light into the subject instead of a call to arms, but Carlson does not avoid the activism entirely. In chapter 4, "The Pragmatics

of Literary Nationalism,” he examines work by heavyweights in the field such as Robert Warrior, Jace Weaver, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, and Craig Womack. The authors’ concepts of sovereignty, while primarily disparate, can be linked by their application through connections to legal constructs as well as action. Connecting legal and literary frameworks can help us to understand the intricacies of indigenous sovereignty and, as Carlson outlines in his extensive chapter on Cook-Lynn’s proposed treaty-reading praxis, to combat political and cultural erasure even leads to further development of “sovereignty acts.” He then goes a step further by examining Gerald Vizenor’s foray into constitutional writing and the hermeneutics of dialectic transmotion, which the creative mind can utilize in creating legal frameworks such as constitutions and preambles. Carlson’s exploration of the crossover between literary and legal realms shows that with the complex nature of sovereignty, it is often necessary to examine the topic from a variety of viewpoints. Carlson recognizes that sovereignty is not a concrete structure, but a fluid and ever-evolving concept which “is a function of ongoing relations and reciprocity and recognition” (171). In examining the nationalism/cosmopolitanism debate within the discipline and variety of praxis associated with each author’s examinations of indigenous sovereignty, Carlson sheds light onto the numerous approaches available to Native nations in exerting and defining their sovereignty in the modern era.

Overall, *Imagining Sovereignty* is a compelling and thought-provoking contribution to the discussion of sovereignty that constantly drives the discipline. Carlson provides a useful examination into the varying definitions and understandings of indigenous sovereignty, and in breaking down the viewpoints of key authors in the discipline, he reinforces the notion that assertion of sovereignty serves to define it—in other words, not as theoretical construct, but an action that must be maintained and expanded by Native nations for them to avoid colonialism’s political and cultural erasure. He also makes clear the importance of expressing sovereignty through literature and the role of authors in spreading discourse on the subject. *Imagining Sovereignty: Self-Determination in American Indian Law and Literature* is incredibly useful for anyone interested in the concept of sovereignty and its development in Native literature.

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The Lives in Objects: Native Americans, British Colonists, and Cultures of Labor and Exchange in the Southeast. By Jessica Yirush Stern. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017. 268 pages. \$85.00 cloth; \$29.95 paper; \$19.99 electronic.

In *The Lives in Objects: Native Americans, British Colonists, and Cultures of Labor and Exchange in the Southeast*, Jessica Yirush Stern examines the differing conceptions of commodity and gift exchange for indigenous peoples and British colonists in the first half of the eighteenth century in the Southeast United States. Positioning her work as a corrective to the trope that Indians understood only gift exchange and the British