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reproduced photographs and color plates and its well-assembled testimonies by the weavers whose works are featured, this book will allow its readers to listen, as it were, with an admiring eye.

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The Women's Warrior Society. By Lois Beardslee. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2008. 138 pages. \$29.95 cloth; \$16.95 paper.

Whereas Ojibwe artist and author Lois Beardslee's *Rachel's Children: Stories from a Contemporary Native American Woman* (2004) focuses on a single family's stories, and *Not Far Away: The Real Life Adventures of Ina Pipig* (2007) presents a semifictional first-person memoir, her latest, *The Women's Warrior Society*, merges a variety of community voices and stories all fighting to preserve traditions against colonial oppression and racism or "privilege induced abuse" (61). In the tradition of Native authors as social activists, Beardslee uses her imaginative voice to speak out against continuing institutionalized colonial oppression with a sense of humor and passion akin to Sherman Alexie's short fiction, Eric Gansworth's *Mending Skins* (2005), and Stephen Graham Jones's *Bleed Into Me* (2005), but she does so with an indigenous feminist agenda in the spirit of Joy Harjo's poetry, Lee Maracle's *I Am Woman* (1988), and Anna Lee Walters's *The Sun Is Not Merciful* (1985). Like these other pieces of short fiction and poetry, this collection exposes the various sites where politics meets the personal and reveals the author's defeat of institutionalized oppression through the storytelling tradition.

The book begins with two poems and a prose piece revolving around "Baby Stealers," the historical conquerors and modern-day abusers embedded in institutions such as the public education system. By using a mythic-meets-realistic theme in an oral-poetic style that informs all the stories and poems in the collection, Beardslee places the stories within a pan-tribal historical context of conquest, genocide, and, most importantly, survival amidst such conflict. Responding to such a history in the final prose part of the initial trilogy, Beardslee introduces her archetypal character Ogitchidaakwe, a woman warrior who subversively and ironically resists the baby stealers and abusers by simply existing outside of and simultaneously mocking expectations and stereotypes and those who believe them. With cunning and perhaps biting coercion, Beardslee leads the reader into "Da Wimin's Warrior Society," a sweat lodge ceremony promising inside knowledge of real Indian spirituality held in a public library on tribal land. The stories that follow capture various individual women's lives and the struggles they face as mothers, daughters, lovers, and sisters, but all are versions of Ogitchidaakwe, a student-warrior learning about history and culture while resisting historical and cultural oppression. Beardslee's collection thus becomes one book in the virtual library of women warriors' stories of survival and an act of resistance to the lack of such stories within the actual library.

Beardslee's theme and style reinforce an indigenous feminist agenda centered on subversion, history, and maintaining culture and epistemology in a modern world where oppressive institutions permeate individual and communal consciousnesses and real-life experiences. The collection seeks to reveal the internal and external forces that inform the woman warrior/indigenous feminist perspective on such institutions, consciousnesses, and experiences. The women empower each other by hearing others' stories and coming together to heal during the sweat lodge ceremony at the library. In the face of daily psychological and physical oppression, these educated and strong women take over the library, which represents all oppressive institutions, and both physically and psychically create a communal space, the ultimate act of resistance and survival. However, warrior status isn't limited to women as seen in "The Warrior in the Mercedes" where the Indian guy who could pass for white attempts to live in the white world as an Indian but returns to the tribe knowing that he could never succeed in a power-hungry world driven by misconceptions. Instead, he resists the sense of imposed "powerlessness" by becoming a successful husband and father deserving of a warrior's respect. Including Native men in her stories solidifies the indigenous feminist agenda against institutional oppression that affects everybody either directly or indirectly. Furthermore, Beardslee questions concepts of power and respect according to white standards and presents a healthier alternative for women and men.

Framing several stories around the first line of the common bar joke ("two ___ walk into a bar"), Beardslee forces the reader to confront negative stereotypes of Indians and attempts to alter such misconceptions by progressively changing the line from "three Indians walk into a bar" to "three Indian women warriors walk into a bar" to "two Indian women warriors into a tribal library," and finally tests the reader with "these Indian women warriors, they walk into a bar. You visualized a library this time, didn't you? I'm proud of you. You're finally getting it" (20, 54, 57, 135). Along with directing her stories to "you," the anticipated white reader expecting romantic versions of Indian life, such repetition with a difference seeks to effect an ideological transformation by mirroring and subverting the stereotypes and systemic influences on individual perceptions. Beardslee also writes several of the stories from a first-person white male perspective to demonstrate further the attitudes and ideologies that contemporary Indian warriors must face, including racism, sexism, and classism. Other stories also reveal internalized oppression, the effects that racism and sexism have on the individual consciousness, and how the individual perpetuates oppression internally and against others.

With perhaps the most important story, "Initiation," Beardslee presents her own woman warrior response to oppression by providing an education and a voice to Native children within a supportive community setting. Nine-year-old Cinqala attends the library sweat lodge with her mother and shares a story about a Thanksgiving-time class project that was "dyscultural" and an insult to Native people. Cinqala recognizes her teacher's arrogance and ignorance and the women warriors arm her with cultural support in order to overcome such offenses. With this story, Beardslee emphasizes that women

warriors are not born but are trained from youth by supportive elders who encourage them to share their stories and continually resist oppression in new and meaningful ways that allow the women to shape-shift and elude physical or psychological containment of any kind.

Some interesting stylistic choices include the shift of perspective and tense between stories and the use of vernacular language. The narrator's voice guides the reader into several of the stories that lead us into tricky ideological terrain. It is often unclear if Beardslee is navigating a trickster, woman warrior, or abuser fueled by self-hatred or racism. For instance, "You're So Fuckin' Spiritual, I Can Feel It" seems to be mocking and degrading to the directly addressed reader and the Indian women warriors it discusses. Like several other stories, this one leaves the readers questioning and uncomfortable about their role in such a story, which may be Beardslee's intent. Furthermore, the narrator's use of vernacular language (for example, "da wimen's warrior society" and "I'm gonna") in these same stories seems to reveal the perspective of someone in the in-group, or someone who would like us to think she is in the in-group, while the content of the story often proves the opposite, which causes the reader to feel even more uneasy and unsettled. Such choices are no surprise considering Beardslee's construction of the shape-shifting woman warrior who seeks to reveal institutionalized oppression ideologically imbued in our communal consciousnesses and discourses. With these stories, Beardslee attempts to subvert, transform, or shape-shift storytelling traditions in resistance to oppression.

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