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she has lived the biggest portion of her life there. (The situation of *most* Americans since we *are* natives of America even when we are not "native-Americans.") In "Clouds" she laments to herself "Mary, you do not belong here at all," and yet she *does* belong there when her thoughts remind her that the nation becomes that of those whose kin are buried there: "Our friends, our family, the dead of our wars, / deep in this strange earth / we want to call ours" (page 45). But even when she knows that she belongs there as much as anywhere she dreams of what that land once was: "Let everything be how it could have been, once: / a land that was empty and perfect as clouds" (page 45).

Out of this mixture of backgrounds and experience the poet seems to be successful in her hunt for personal identity when she ends the book with the lines "Hands of earth, of this clay / I'm also made from" (page 85). This is from the poem called "Turtle Mountain Reservation," written for her Indian grandfather. The hands referred to are *his* hands, thus Erdrich says that we are in part the people who have made us, just as she said in the poems concerning the Butcher's wife, but we are also of this earth, *all* of us who occupy this continent, regardless of the mixtures of blood.

When Erdrich ends the poem "Jacklight" with the lines "And now they take the first steps, not knowing / how deep the woods are and lightless. / How deep the woods are." It is an invitation to the reader to go hunting, to try to find what these poems are about. It can be a very elusive game at times, but *Jacklight* is a finely crafted collection of poems that is well worth the effort of hunting for the ideas deep in those psychic woods.

Richard K. Waters

Roy, Utah

**Native American Literature.** By Andrew Wiget. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1985. 147 pp. \$15.95 Cloth.

Wiget's book must be considered a pioneering work. Except for fragmentary chapters in out-of-date histories of American literature, we have had no attempts to summarize the achievements of American Indian writers and the vast body of oral materials which must be considered the massive foundation of the subject. Alan Velie has concentrated on *Four American Indian Literary*

*Masters* (Oklahoma, 1982), Charles Larson has produced a survey of a single genre, *American Indian Fiction* (New Mexico, 1978), but the only recent work that has dealt with the larger subject is Kenneth Lincoln's *Native American Renaissance* (California, 1983). The latter book surveys contemporary writing and pays some attention to its oral antecedents, but unfortunately it is less a coherent history than a collection of essays, and it not only lacks critical focus—a chapter on contemporary poetry mentions fifty writers without judging any of them—but, to put it bluntly, it can hardly be said to be well-written. In other words, until now we have had no book which attempts to deal with any degree of critical rigor with all aspects of the subject from its origins in oral tradition to the contemporary awakening in fiction and poetry. For this reason we must regret that Wiget's book is restricted by the length and format requirements of Twayne's United States Authors Series, of which it is a part.

But Wiget has performed some basic spade-work; almost all of the writers that should be treated are discussed to one degree or another or at least mentioned, and anyone who attempts hereafter to build on his effort probably will need to employ some version of his structure: oral narrative, oratory and oral poetry, writers before 1900, modern fiction, modern poetry and other modern forms. Furthermore his book serves as a healthy reminder that the concentration of most American Indian literature courses on traditional oral materials and contemporary poets and novelists may cause us to ignore the fact that Indian authors have been writing since early times. The Mohegan preacher Samson Occum (1723–1792) is probably only a historical curiosity, but the Pequod activist William Apes (b. 1798) deserves attention for his autobiography (1829) and his *Eulogy for King Philip* (1836). As in so many cases with Indian authors, the republication of these works, which presently exist in virtually inaccessible editions, is an essential task for modern scholars. Other early writers to whom scholars should pay attention include the nineteenth century Ojibwa historians George Copway, Peter Jones, William Warren, and Andrew Blackbird, and the poets John Rollins Ridge (Cherokee) and Alexander Posey (Creek). The latter was also a political satirist, and Wiget's quotations from his humorous journalism suggest that someone ought to collect it from the Oklahoma newspapers in which it was printed in 1903.

Wiget's most commendable achievement is his initial chapter. Here, using Navaho and Iroquois examples, he has created a morphology by which we can relate earth-diver and emergence myths to myths of tricksters and transformers and legends from historic and late prehistoric times. American Indian mythology is an incredibly complex subject, and this chapter is recommended to those who teach it as perhaps the best brief introduction that we have.

His most serious omission, it seems to me, is his neglect—except for *Black Elk Speaks* and the comment that the Blowsnake/Radin *Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian* is "something of a classic"—of the wide field of autobiography, both oral ("as told to") and written. He mentions a number of examples, fails to mention others, and makes us regret that he was unwilling (or more likely, given the Twayne requirements, unable to include a section on the subject, with comment on *Sun Chief*, *Mountain Wolf Woman*, *Plenty-Coups*, *Son of Old Man Hat*, John Joseph Mathews' *Talking to the Moon*, and Kay Bennett's *Kaibah*, among many others.

As for contemporary writing, Wiget had little opportunity to deal with fiction at sufficient length to add a great deal to what has already been written about Momaday, Welch, Silko and others, though what he does say is sound, and his survey of contemporary poets makes a commendable effort to sort out a great amount of material by assigning the poets to categories (Formalists, "Songs from the Earth," Visionaries, etc.) which give some order to what, because of its great bulk, has been a rather shapeless subject. Here, too, the mass of evidence suggests a basic problem which critics and editors in the field should address: while a number of poets have been published by trade or university presses, too much of the work of poets of considerable talent (Paula Gunn Allen, Peter Blue Cloud, Joy Harjo, Lance Henson, Linda Hogan, Maurice Kenny, Wendy Rose, among others) can only be found in quarterlies and small press editions. It is clear that a primary responsibility for scholars and the single most compelling need for teachers in the field of American Indian literature is a substantial anthology which would do justice not only to the tribal contexts of traditional materials but to a wide range of contemporary writing.

The study of a literature inevitably requires some background in the social and historical conditions in which it was produced.

The literature of the American Indian, so important a part of which is traditional and tribal, particularly requires such background. Wiget begins several chapters with a summary of the historical context, but these summaries are brief and too often seem only to be going through the motions of explaining the conditions of Indian-White relations. But a reading of his book suggests two areas of the sociology of American Indian literature which merit scholarly investigation, though Wiget himself cannot be faulted for not dealing with them. For one thing, certain early writers might well be examined to determine precisely to what extent they may be said to be Indian. Wiget refers, for example, to an "almost Poe-like vision of supernal beauty" in one of Ridge's poems and to the apparent influence of Owen Wister's western fiction on the work of John Milton Oskison (Cherokee). This suggests an intriguing question. Is an Indian writer one who happens to be Indian, whatever the subject of his work? Or must the work treat Indian subjects and dramatize Indian themes? A close examination of the writings of Ridge and Oskison and perhaps other authors of works that might be considered Indian-White amalgams might help us discover what is Indian about them. This in turn might enrich our definition of Indian identity and consciousness.

The other factor is historical. The history of American Indian literature reveals much evidence that the production of books by Indian authors has been directly related to the currents of thought in the American public. The Indian has served as a mythic figure for white America, and the preoccupation of the larger culture at various stages of our national history have created a background which encouraged Indian authors and made certain of them popular. Wiget describes how *Black Elk Speaks* "languished for thirty years . . . until it was resurrected in the more receptive climate of the 1960s," and suggests that "the final effect [of Storm's *Seven Arrows*] suggests an attempt to exploit a particular segment of the youth culture." Whether or not this latter judgment is fair, it is obvious that the present acceptance of Indian authors is related to the civil rights movement of the 1960s and to the public concerns—particularly those of the environmentalists—of the last couple of decades. The interrelationship of Indian literary production and the white culture which simultaneously feeds it and is fed by it is a subject which deserves thorough study.

In any case, Wiget has taken a commendable first step in the process which we must hope will produce, eventually, a full and comprehensive history of American Indian literature. No one who hopes to contribute to this enterprise can ignore his book.

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**Carl Gorman's World.** By Henry and Georgia Greenberg. University of New Mexico Press: Albuquerque, 1984. 195 pp. \$35.00 Cloth.

It must be admitted that R. C. Gorman, as an artist and personality, far outshines the light of his illustrious father to those of us outside the art circles and societies of the Southwestern United States. As a master of the media in the 20th Century, R. C. has skillfully excelled in salesmanship, showmanship, eccentricity, boldness, ethnocentricity, guru-worship, and general con-manship not to mention the pantheon of other artist/public-figure skills a contemporary artist such as he requires not only to survive, but to succeed, in a world where "artists" are a dime-a-dozen. It appears that R. C. wasn't left out of the book about his father, either. Had Rudolph Carl Gorman not been so successful an artist perhaps Carl Gorman's light would've shone brighter, perhaps not.

One cannot help but wonder why C. N. Gorman, who surely qualifies as a great artist from the Navajo people, was never more publicly known in his long and distinguished career? As a member of the Navajo Code Talkers in the South Pacific's Guadalcanal during World War II he received the accustomed accolades due American heroes of war upon his return to the U.S.A. This service in duty to the U.S. Government, in spite of his personal dislikes and grievances against the administrative policies enacted towards the Navajo at this time, was upheld in what can only be described in terms of being the most undesirable circumstances any such man could be called upon to undertake. As a person who decades before was taught the traditional Navajo way, who knew the family history and knew of the historical atrocities committed by succeeding generations of U.S. governmental agencies and administrations against his people, and who struggled against such totalitarianism, the fine art of being "civilized"