Title

The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America. By Thomas King.

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provides the grounds on which the wellsprings of coercive and ideological power are reimagined, regenerated, and resisted in popular culture expression and disseminated through social media and the variety of ways Indian tribes both leverage federal recognition and oppose federal Indian control law.

Take the example of *Geronimo E-KIA: A Poem by the 1491s*, performance art by a self-situated sketch comedy group (2010). Clements' positioning of *Geronimo E-KIA* in a unified American mind leaves him observing the performance simply as another mythical, symbolic Geronimo that represents the tradition of his revisionist extremism in the American imagination. Alternatively, widening the scope and site of analysis from a unified American mind to a prevailing political economy brings into view the logics of unencumbered symbolic assimilation in which now bin Laden is "Geronimo," another dead Indian over which right-thinking people prevail. This Geronimo can be interpreted, too, in symbolic interactions that convey psychological resistance. *Geronimo E-KIA* disrupts the hegemony of red devilishness by reclaiming Geronimo from its conflation with the apparent savagery of terrorism, not by reconstituting the Geronimo of freedom-loving Americans everywhere, but by drawing attention to an alternative American history of terror and survival. This is a call for a redistribution of symbolic power that allows for a measured cultural separatism and, carried to its logical ends, displaces neoliberal selfish individualism and unchecked capitalism with a plurinational and communitary state of belonging.

These are some ideas for reimagining imaginings of Geronimo under different analytical terms. There are other possibilities, of course, for contextualizing, framing, and making sense of how and why Geronimo resonates. There is no good reason to shy away from popular cultural analyses that call attention to "domestic dependent nations" and "Indian tribes and Native entities," or alternatives to distributions of power located in the relation of nation states and free markets, or unregulated capitalism and selfish individualism.

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The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America. By Thomas King. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012. 272 pages. $24.95 cloth.

First and foremost, Thomas King is funny. His humor is insightful and irreverent, and his commentary biting. He pulls no punches when it comes to discussing the history of Indian and white relations in North America. He is

probably "not the historian you had in mind," but he is going to tell you about history anyway (xi). King is also a storyteller. *The Inconvenient Indian* collects personal anecdotes, statistics, musings, contemporary politics, and historical retellings in King's friendly, familiar, and often-informal tone, one that invites readers to engage with his text while it challenges them to reconsider what they think they know about history and contemporary Native peoples.

In less than three hundred pages and without a chronological timeline, King explores Indian-white relations in both the United States and Canada from early history to contemporary times. While others have written entire books on just one of his subjects, King engrosses his readers in a fast-paced, relentless treatise on how history is still an important part of contemporary Native societies. He seems to want to give his reader as much information as possible and often does so without extensive analysis. In chapter one he manages to cover massacres, Pocahontas, the Battle of Little Bighorn, the Canadian Red River Resistance, and the death of Crazy Horse—all in twenty pages. The statistics and facts he provides in all of his chapters are both overwhelming and poignant. King's admiration for Vine Deloria Jr. is obvious throughout; in many ways, King's work is an Indian manifesto for a new time that updates and explores many of the same issues of Deloria Jr.'s seminal work *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*. This lends itself well to King's central argument, namely, that there is no great difference between past and present and that "twenty-first century attitudes toward Native people are remarkably similar to those of previous centuries" (xv).

Some of King's best moments come from sharing personal stories. For instance, in chapter 5 he offers his account of being a child in Catholic boarding school: "The school was at best, a cold, dead place. I've tried to forget about the experience, but researching Native residential schools for this book has caused those memories to seep to the surface once again, and they taste just as bitter now as they did then" (112). He shares in chapter 6 a particularly poignant memory of the Wounded Knee occupation of 1973 when he recalls an older woman at a rally in Salt Lake City asking, "Where are the warriors?" He responds by joining a caravan of people trying to get to Wounded Knee. It is with these anecdotes that King personalizes his work and offers his own account of history, thereby showing how Indian history still affects contemporary Indian peoples.

King describes his book as a "series of conversations and arguments that I've been having with myself and others for most of my adult life" (xii). He insists that he is not a "good" historian and that his text is not a history text, at least not within the strict academic standards that are often a part of the discipline. King's book does not rely on sources, footnotes, or endnotes. In fact, he rarely discusses at length other scholarship or academic discourse surrounding

some of the issues explored. In chapter 8 King provides a thorough discussion of sovereignty, which, as he writes, "is one of those topics about which everyone has an opinion" (193). Indeed, many current scholars have written at length on sovereignty, though King only mentions Canadian columnist Jeffrey Simpson, Cherokee-Creek scholar Craig Womack, and historian David Wilkins. It is not that King is dismissive of the current scholarly discourse around sovereignty; rather, this seems to be his choice of writing style. As a result, he often leaves out or misses a number of important discussions currently at the forefront of Native American studies. King does not, for instance, offer any gendered analysis of Native American history, nor does he engage with other contemporary Native historians who are exploring the rewriting and re-righting of the historical record.

King offers a number of very strong chapters and arguments. Chapter 3 explores the difference between what King calls "dead Indians," "live Indians," and "legal Indians." He discusses how the wider public is obsessed with "dead Indians" from rodeos, powwows, movies, and television commercials. "Live Indians" are invisible, rarely approached or discussed, and many are deemed "inauthentic." And "legal Indians" are the most hated in North America because they are an "error in judgment" that North America made by agreeing to treaties. In particular, this chapter is able to dissect common tropes like "playing Indian," Indians of the West, status Indians, and federal recognition in an accessible way that critically analyzes historical and contemporary approaches to Indian identity. Chapter 8 is also particularly strong: King explores "what do Indians want?" and manages to discuss sovereignty, the Indian Act, tribal membership, resource development, land use, and environmental protection. Chapter 9 asks the question "What do the whites want?" and provides a thorough analysis of the continuing struggle for land. As in his other chapters, King covers a lot of ground in this particular section of the book, though he focuses intently on treaty rights and land use rights. Again, he does this without losing his acerbic wit or conversational style.

At times King's writing style and voice can feel flippant or dismissive, especially when he seems to gloss over rather than complicate his discussion. In chapter 3's exploration of the difference between "dead Indians," "live Indians," and "legal Indians," King presents the example of US Senator Benjamin Nighthorse Campbell (Northern Cheyenne) and W. Richard West Jr. (Cheyenne-Arapaho), who attended the opening of the National Museum of the American Indian in "Dead Indian leathers and feathered headdresses" (55). King dismisses these types of traditional regalia as "first and foremost, White North America's signifiers of Indian authenticity" and seemingly suggests that when Native leaders wear these pieces at events, or even at rodeos, powwows, movies, or in television commercials, they are dressing as

"Dead Indians" to placate or appeal to white people. Puzzlingly, only a few pages after he seems to call into question the authenticity of Native peoples who express their cultural heritage by wearing traditional regalia, King writes, "For us Live Indians, being invisible is annoying enough, but being inauthentic is crushing." King does not engage with how his observation about dressing as "Dead Indians" can, and should, be complicated to explore any number of Native peoples who still utilize these regalia pieces as "live Indians" in contemporary cultures.

King's writing seems accessible, yet almost deceptively so. While the book could be presented as an introduction to Native American history and contemporary politics, each chapter contains so much information it almost assumes at least some background in Native history. As an introductory text it might at times feel overwhelming, fraught with complexities and contradictions at every turn. Perhaps this is King's intention, as this provides a clear illustration of just how complex and contradictory Native history in North America can be. Ultimately, his engaging humor helps to guide his reader through these complexities. King may not be the historian some readers expect, but he is definitely a memorable one with some really great stories to tell.

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Lessons from Fort Apache: Beyond Language Endangerment and Maintenance. By M. Eleanor Nevins. Malden: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013. 280 pages. $99.95 cloth; $119.94 ebook.

Lessons From Fort Apache: Beyond Language Endangerment and Maintenance is an important contribution to the literature on language documentation and maintenance, as well as indigenous language revitalization. Aimed specifically at scholars in the sociology and anthropology of language as well as sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, the book explores the dynamics and complexities of language documentation and maintenance as they play out in local, national, and global contexts. Drawing on her work with the Fort Apache community as a university language expert and her ethnographic work with Apache elders, parents, and religious leaders, M. Eleanor Nevins accounts for why it is important for those engaged in language documentation and maintenance work to listen to community voices and to "anticipate processes of (creative) misrecognition in indigenous language advocacy" (3). At the same time, she also advocates for shifting the discourse from saving and preserving languages to engaging in "innovative social actions . . . amenable to