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families after the nineteenth-century institutional projects and twentieth-century social welfare blunders is a project that has my whole-hearted support.

Dian Million

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The Institute of American Indian Arts: Modernism and U.S. Indian Policy. By Joy L. Gritton. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000. 208 pages. \$45.00 cloth; \$22.95 paper.

Joy Gritton's recent work presents the argument that the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA), a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and now a congressionally sponsored tribal art college in Santa Fe, New Mexico, was not in its early years the "cross-cultural refuge it was espoused to be" (p. 2). Rather, she claims, the IAIA's curriculum "favored a Western, modern aesthetic dominated by individualism . . . over indigenous aesthetics distinguished by concern for communal welfare" (p. 2). Gritton's analysis, which depends heavily on archival and written resources, attends largely to the Rockefeller Foundation sponsored precursors of the IAIA, the 1959 conference *Directions in Indian Art* and the 1960–1963 *Southwestern Indian Arts Project* at the University of Arizona. Webs of influence are drawn between institutions (the Museum of Modern Art, the Indian Arts and Crafts Board), individuals (notably Rene d'Harnoncourt), and politics (BIA termination efforts and anti-communism sentiments) that led to the creation of the IAIA.

A clear distinction should be articulated from the outset that the intent Gritton tediously outlines (IAIA administrators and supporters backing assimilationist policies) does not necessarily equate to the outcome of the theory in practice. In essence, this BIA- and Rockefeller-sponsored "experiment in the arts" has since its inception in 1962 continuously challenged its students, faculty, and administrators to think critically about Indian education and the place of the arts (in all its complexities) in tribal communities. Gregory Cajete states this succinctly in the introduction when he argues that despite an assimilationist foundation, many IAIA students find their cultural selves at the school, lending to a sense of cultural revivalism. Unlike Cajete, however, I doubt that this work will create dialogue for revitalizing the institute, for Gritton's book is condemnatory of the school throughout, a stance that actually weakens her theoretical aims.

The first passages of the book reference IAIA curriculum offerings from the 1960s, such as "The Artist in Business" and etiquette training, as examples of the BIA educators' efforts toward forcing the students to adopt "American consumerist habits" and thus an assimilated lifestyle. The faulty nature of this assumption lies in a premise that saturates the text: for a Native person to engage in mainstream education and business or to live a lifestyle that is described as modern necessitates their rejection of tribal values. This either/or philosophy projects a one-dimensional status onto Native Americans and robs individuals and communities from incorporating tools

that enhance living cultural values. The terms and values that Gritton utilizes such as “modernist individualism” and the “personal creative approach” are positioned in opposition to and entirely separate from “tribal traditions.”

This essentialist thinking is clearly expressed in her statement on page 64: “For the goal was always the fit with the dominant society rather than the Native.” Of the myriad interpretations this conjecture creates, the one that stands out most prominently is the conclusion that traditional Native communities must be so fragile that even an introduction of modernist influences necessarily results in the disappearance of unique Indian values. The apparent pervasive and all-powerful influence of modern art is thus seen as a more potent, charged, and meaningful force than centuries of tribal art forms. This logic stands in opposition to Gritton’s apparent championing of these same traditional influences.

My conversations with the original IAIA faculty have led me to an altogether different conclusion than Gritton’s concerning the utility of business and etiquette classes. Oleta Boyce, a Choctaw educator, still resides in Santa Fe, just a few blocks from the IAIA Museum downtown. During the course of my teaching an IAIA research methods class four years ago, Boyce (my family affectionately calls her Miss Merry) readily agreed to my bringing IAIA students to her home for them to interview her about the history of the school. Over fresh coconut cake served in style with silver place settings, she explained how many of the first IAIA students who traveled to Santa Fe came from homes without running water, electricity, or telephones. She spoke with passion about how she was not going to allow her students to be made fun of or to feel inferior because they did not know how to handle silverware and place settings. Similarly, Lloyd New, president emeritus of the IAIA, a Cherokee educator who also continues to live in Santa Fe and work with IAIA students, speaks with heart as he describes the tragedy of Native Americans receiving only \$5 for paintings in the 1960s. It is a point of pride that after the IAIA was established, Native American artists could ask fair market prices for their work.

My interpretation of the history of the school is guided by these elders who, with thought and courage, worked hard and under difficult circumstances to ensure that young Native people were able to move freely in a world that required business savvy and a knowledge of Western social norms. To critique these efforts as Gritton has done from the convenient perspective of postmodernism some forty years later is to engage in the luxury of historic revisionism. What is so blatantly amiss in Indian students having single beds instead of bunk beds? Why shouldn’t the girls be given hair dryers (p. 82)? When one wonders what alternative programming Gritton would find acceptable (only sun-dried hair or sleeping on the ground?) a veiled longing for authenticity becomes apparent. Are those Indian girls in the cafeteria photo (p. 106) any less Indian because they sport beehives and white collars?

Gritton’s critique of the Institute’s early programming is disturbingly one-sided. Pages of text are devoted to controversies between the local Pueblo community and the new IAIA administration over the allocation of scarce Indian education resources and the lack of retention of Santa Fe Indian School personnel at the newly chartered IAIA. Gritton’s charge that “traditional” Indian instructors were dismissed in preference of professional “main-

stream” artists (p. 2) ignores the fact that many, if not most, of the new IAIA instructors (Allan Houser, Charles Loloma, Otellie Loloma, Louis Ballard) were Native Americans who were both professional and traditional. Again, the reading of Native identities is collapsed.

It is unfortunate that the forty-year history of IAIA has not been adequately documented in a manner that conveys the life of the place. The only other full-length manuscript devoted to the Institute (Winona Garmhausen’s 1988 *History of Indian Arts Education in Santa Fe: The Institute of American Indian Arts with Historical Background 1890 to 1962*) suffers from the same shortcomings as Gritton’s effort, with too much attention paid to what non-Natives thought they were accomplishing and not enough attention to what the students and staff were actually doing and feeling. Other Indian boarding school histories that rely primarily on the testimonies of students, such as K. Tsianina Lomawaima’s *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of the Chilocco Indian School* (1995), offer a better model for this type of assessment than the art history approach pursued in Gritton’s work. As important as the historical documentation of the Institute’s beginnings might be, this reader is not convinced of the author’s assertion that this publication is the “real narrative” to be “told and the school benefit from the telling” (p. 156).

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Leslie Marmon Silko: A Collection of Critical Essays. Edited by Louise K. Barnett and James L. Thorson. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001. 336 pages. \$24.95 paper.

This volume of twelve new analytical essays on Leslie Marmon Silko’s writings is a welcome addition to Silko scholarship. Robert F. Gish’s preface sets the tone for the entire collection via his “personal testimonial” (p. viii) to Silko’s storytelling genius and to the appeal that her stories have to her critics. Editors Louise K. Barnett and James L. Thorson introduce the volume with their stated purpose: to concentrate mainly on *Almanac of the Dead*. The collection does indeed with five essays on *Almanac* and two on both *Almanac* and *Ceremony*. Of the remaining essays, three focus primarily on *Storyteller*, one on *Storyteller* and *Ceremony*, and one on Silko’s nonfiction essay collection *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit: Essays on Native American Life Today* (1996). Concluding Barnett and Thorson’s volume is a bibliographical essay and an extensive bibliography, both by Connie Capers Thorson.

The introductory essay is Robert M. Nelson’s “Laguna Woman,” a brief essay that discerns the pattern of movement in Silko’s life, a pattern echoed in the lives of her various literary storytellers, particularly those in *Almanac*. But the first major critical essay begins with David L. Moore’s most thought-provoking, “Silko’s Blood Sacrifice: The Circulating Witness in *Almanac of the Dead*.” Moore concentrates on two major elements that emerge in Silko’s *Almanac*. The first he identifies as the narrative witness itself and then strength-