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Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literature. Edited by Qwo-Li Driskill, Daniel Heath Justice, Deborah Miranda, and Lisa Tatonetti. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2011. 248 pages. \$25.95 paper.

Compact and comprehensive, the introduction to this important collection of stories situates the contribution of Native gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, and two-spirit (GLBTQ2) writers within the context of decolonizing methodology. The editors, who are accomplished storytellers themselves and who work across genres including poetry, fiction, memoir, nonfiction, and scholarly discourse, assert the presence and persistence of two-spirit voices in terms that echo seminal discussions of decolonization by indigenous researchers including Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Norman K. Denzin, and Yvonne S. Lincoln, among others.

Put simply, the Native two-spirit experience can be thought of as a microcosm of global indigenous experience, which has withstood historical attempts at erasure by the institutions of Euro-Western imperialism to emerge as a widespread activist movement aimed at regaining sovereignty and self-determination. *Sovereign Erotics* asserts “the decolonial potential of Native two-spirit/queer people healing from heteropatriarchal gender regimes” (3). The focus on two-spirit/queer identity formation in the context of resistance against colonial gender binaries and sexual regimes thus mirrors a broader indigenous experience. While one might argue that “decolonization” underpins individual methodological discourses representing various indigenous peoples, it is important to remember that decolonizing research grounds itself in the experiences of a particular community. The editors echo this caveat when reminding us that “queer Native people are far from a monolithic group” (2). By focusing on the diversity of the Native GLBTQ2 community, *Sovereign Erotics* simultaneously gives back to that community while educating audiences who may be interested in learning about indigenous ways of knowing from fresh perspectives.

The decolonizing impulse is recognizable throughout *Sovereign Erotics*, but is nowhere more apparent than in instances where the editors assert the primacy of storytelling: “this collection is not an ethnographic project,” they write; “it is, instead, a space in which writers who identify as both ‘Native’ and ‘GLBTQ2’ can share their creative writing as literature, not social science” (4). This rejection of social science as an inadequate discourse of discovery implicitly aligns it with an academic tradition that begins in fifteenth-century first-contact narratives by European explorers, and extends throughout anthropological studies and armchair ethnographies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Decolonizing methodology resists this research tradition, which has shaped mainstream conceptions of what it means to be Native, and, more profoundly, has delivered to Native peoples a prescription of how they should

think about and represent themselves from the perspectives of their conquerors and colonizers. Decolonization, then, addresses the deleterious effects of “this collective memory of imperialism,” which, according to Smith, has directed “the ways in which knowledge about indigenous peoples was collected, classified and then represented in various ways back to the West, and then, through the eyes of the West, back to those who have been colonized” (1–2).

Researchers emphasize terms like *healing* and *spiritual recovery* to cite the primary difference in emphasis between the activism of decolonizing researchers and the descriptive categorizations favored by social scientists. Historically the language of science has asserted its neutrality and objectivity while promoting highly political agendas, often aimed at the usurpation of indigenous resources and the resulting marginalization of indigenous peoples. The editors echo both of these perspectives. They assert, “Our hope is that this collection can push on the past while making a contribution toward a healthier and more respectful future” (1). Elsewhere, they point out the limits of academic discourse, which relies on clearly defined taxonomies despite the fact that the “labels and terms communities use to refer to themselves are often much less rigidly defined in community practice than they are within academic theory” (4). An effort to balance their project between the often opposing camps of academic theory and community praxis thus informs the notion of what it means to live a two-spirit nature. Reflecting the editors’ recognition that the Native GLBTQ2 community is not monolithic, the term *two-spirit* receives uneven acceptance within the community itself, but is preferred here because “it is being widely used in grassroots movements throughout the United States and Canada” as “both an organizing tool and a particular political orientation that centralizes a decolonial agenda around issues of gender and sexuality” (5).

Arranged into four sections, the stories by Native GLBTQ2 writers succeed in reflecting the diversity of this community of voices. “Dreams/Ancestors” honors the creative resistance of elders who withstood the effects of alienation and othering to become role models for the present generation. “Love/Medicine” transmits the meme of sovereign erotics more directly, illustrating the idea that the erotic, while it certainly engages the experience of sexuality, is also about power and “a return to our bodies” that called to this reader’s mind the Anishinaabemowin word *biskaabiiyang*, “returning to ourselves,” or discovering how one is personally affected by colonization, discarding the emotional and psychological baggage carried from its impact, and recovering ancestral traditions in order to adapt in our post–Native–Apocalypse world. “Long/Walks” contains moving stories of two-spirit people “coming out” to the world and reminds us that two-spirit nature is not de facto accepted by mainstream Native and/or tribal nations simply because the two-spirit person is a member of that culture. This clarification resituates the Native experience in

the broader context of the struggles faced by GLBTQ2 people across cultures. Finally, "Wild/Flowers" calls out to two-spirit and queer persons in ways that might be characterized as a call to action, but does so reflectively, through stories of quiet confidence and strength.

Paula Gunn Allen's (Laguna Pueblo) "Some Like Indians Endure" is a significant rejoinder that Native/two-spirit studies and Queer studies can at times be quite separate and proffer parallel worlds even as her poem provides analogies and similarities of "Indians" and "dykes": "like Indians/dykes have fewer and fewer/someplace else to go/so it gets important to know/about ideas and/to remember or uncover/the past" (lines 70–76). Daniel David Moses's (Delaware) "Gray's Sea Change" will remind readers of his poetry woven so smoothly in Shelley Niro's (Haudenosaunee) film *Honey Moccasin* (1998). Qwo-Li Driskill's (Cherokee Asegi) "Pedagogy" creates the stony-forehead political stance of Claude McKay's sonnets about America in lines such as "I pray I can teach you/ to saw through/ the iron bars of this country/ This country/waiting for us/ teeth/ just sharpened/this morning" (lines 68–76). The currents of globalism, of tribal networks within an intratribal network abound, and transnational echoes linger in the grounded Americas and poetic prose of Janet McAdams's (Creek) "Plaza Bocanegra," Dan Taulapapa McMullin's (Eastern Samoa) poem, "The Act of Memory in Laguna California," and James Thomas Stevens's (Akwasasne Mohawk) "Thames." Tethered by writers well known as Native intellectuals and scholars in their own right, this collection hosts voices such as Deborah Miranda (Ohlone-Costanoan Esselen Nation/Chumash) and Craig Womack (Muskogee Creek).

Readers who wish to pursue the path set forth in *Sovereign Erotics* will find the introduction invaluable in identifying precedents, such as the work of Beth Brant, editor Will Roscoe's 1988 collaborative offering with the Gay American Indians (GAI) advocacy group, *Living the Spirit: A Gay American Indian Anthology*, Qwo-Li Driskill, Lester B. Brown, and Will Roscoe. In particular, the past several years have seen an incredible level of activity in the area of two-spirit research. Notable examples include the 2010 special edition of *A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies on Sexuality, Nationality, Indigeneity*, the 2011 anthology *Queer Indigenous Studies: Critical Interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature*, and recent monographs by Scott Lauria Morgensen and Mark Rifkin. A quick glance at contributions to the field suggests the collaborative nature of the scholarly community enjoyed by the editors of *Sovereign Erotics*.

Sovereign Erotics can be ironically categorized as academic storytelling. It unfolds the story of Native GLBTQ2 experience in the familiar and highly usable format of anthology and would appeal to anyone teaching Native and indigenous studies, Native literature, American or Canadian studies, or gender,

sexual orientation, race, and nation studies. The editors' introduction offers an important preamble, situating their own work within an historical current that has mingled "Gay Power" and "Red Power" from coterminous origins in the civil rights movements of the 1960s. As an exemplary affirmation of scholarly activism, their collaboration represents a manifesto for social justice today.

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Troubled Trails: The Meeker Affair and the Expulsion of Utes from Colorado. By Robert Silbernagel. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011. 304 pages. \$24.95 paper.

This is a purposeful history of the 1879 incidents at the White River Agency in northwest Colorado, frequently referred to as the "Meeker massacre." Journalist Silbernagel writes a conventional and well-documented account of a complex event. Much has been written about this episode, but nonetheless the author creates a convincing and insightful retelling of this fated affair. Unlike Peter Decker's recent treatment of the subject in his 2004 book, *"The Utes Must Go!": American Expansion and the Removal of a People*, and earlier works by Robert Emmitt and Marshall Sprague that examine military and political dimensions, Silbernagel's journalistic approach puts a human and cultural spin on the players in this drama as he investigates incentives, innuendos, and power struggles.

Central to an understanding of the plight of the Utes in western Colorado is the tragedy at the White River Agency. The White River Agency was a remote and isolated agency on the western slope in northern Colorado Territory, nearly 100 miles north of the Uncompahgre Valley. On September 29, 1879, Nathan Meeker, a sixty-two-year-old newspaperman turned neophyte White River Indian agent, who earlier had founded Greeley, Colorado in 1870, was killed by a group of Utes who were fed up with his lack of respect for their culture. The Indians killed him for withholding provisions and annuities, forcing them to farm, and for compelling federal troops to trespass onto the Ute reservation. After the massacre, Meeker's wife Arvilla, daughter Josephine, and three others were abducted by a small group of White River Ute men. These acts essentially sealed the fate of the Utes in Colorado.

Meeker had borrowed money from Horace Greeley, the *New York Tribune* editor and stockholder, to establish the *Greeley Tribune* newspaper in his utopian town at the confluence of the Platte and the Cache La Poudre Rivers in northern Colorado Territory. To pay his debts, Nathan Meeker took an