

**UCLA**

**American Indian Culture and Research Journal**

**Title**

Artistry in Clay. By Don Dedera.

**Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1n16d6xp>

**Journal**

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 9(4)

**ISSN**

0161-6463

**Author**

Stone, Ben

**Publication Date**

1985-09-01

**DOI**

10.17953

**Copyright Information**

This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License, available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

seems ultimately to convey collaborator John Neihardt's philosophy.

Krupat concludes by asserting that while bicultural collaborative autobiographical efforts as well as Indian-written autobiographies will continue to be created, both deserve sophisticated literary analysis and inclusion in the American literary canon. He asserts that Native Americans are increasingly writing their own stories and personally controlling the forms of these autobiographies.

*For Those Who Come After: A Study of Native American Autobiography* serves as a sophisticated reminder that the reader cannot freely accept a written text without considering the metatextual implications of the historical period. Experts on Native American literature and history will be most at ease with this book while other readers will find it difficult reading. Krupat's book will be most relevant when read with the autobiographical works as well as with other contemporary criticism on Native American writings.

*Melinda Castel de Oro*

University of California, Los Angeles

**Artistry in Clay.** By Don Dederer. Northland Press, 1985. 86 pp. \$9.95 Paper.

A publication as short as this that surveys three prehistoric eras of Southwest pottery: Mogollon, Hohokam and Anasazi as well as pottery from eighteen Arizona and New Mexico pueblos and from the Pima, Papago and Navajo, must obviously be brief in its commentaries. The past decade has seen a proliferation of such publications. Some have taunted pseudo scholarship, some promoted stereotypes and reiterated myths created by traders and collectors to enhance the commercial aspects of their inventories. Fortunately, for the reader of this book, we are spared the patter of such foolishness and can share with the author some warm anecdotes of moments spent with a few of the artists whose work is beautifully illustrated with the incomparable photography of Jarry Jacka and others.

Vignettes are fun, as are the personal insights, impressions and assessments that typify the sincere collector/student/writer. There is, of course, always the question which arises, "What is a good

buy and what is an investment?." A good buy is always a good buy if the price is right, the piece is of reasonably good or better quality, and the buyer likes it. Investment is another story. Buying quality works by established contemporary artists is usually a fair investment, but speculating in the work of contemporary living artists may be very risky. Quoting prices and establishing values seems inappropriate in this text.

I was pleased this book does not rekindle and encourage a multitude of the myths that divest the significance of the accomplishments of sensitive and prodigious artisans who brought about the renaissance in Southwest art. Theirs is an integrity demonstrated through their productivity, creativity and commitment to their tribal heritages that merits full acknowledgement. Their lives and creativity are a reflection of what such a renaissance is about. The warm empathy and choice of anecdotes Mr. Dedra has chosen help to accomplish one of his goals: a reflection on the beauty of these unique people.

Researchers and art historians will probably find this work frustratingly short, and may wish for more data and critiquing assessments and history. The questions of "Who started what?" or "What is truly Indian?" and the myths that proliferate, shrouding "Truths" in confusing controversy, have long been fodder for those who choose to argue with reasonability and evidence.

I did find the use of a quote from Mrs. Tanner on page 36 disturbing and quite irrelevant. A comparison of Chinese cloisonne, Florentine mosaics and intaglios, and Czech etching, suggesting they have been ". . . often put to shame . . ." by Southwestern potters is merely argumentative and makes no contribution to this text. I might suggest that artists of merit need not, and prefer not, to have their work elevated with assessments that suggest their work puts to shame other distinguished artistic achievements from totally different eras, cultures and disciplines.

If this publication makes contributions, they are the sensitive anecdotes which bring valuable, warm insights of a gentle people and the reiterated message that "pot hunting" archaeological sights is a violation of law and ethics.

A message that is always valuable for the initiate and novice is to study documented collections. A listing of a few of the major established collections one may visit and a glossary of terms would be an asset in a book of this type. Studying collections is a never ending process for even the most seasoned scholar. It can

provide the valuable insights and awareness of nuances present in fine examples of Southwestern pottery and help develop a perspective all serious collectors should strive to achieve. In that aspect it would be an asset for this book to provide provenance along with the photo credits.

While this is not a monumental work, it is a nice addition to ongoing chronicles about contemporary Native American arts and is a nice supplement to other brief works.

*Ben Stone*

Skiatook Public Schools

**Native Americans and Energy Development II.** Edited by Joseph G. Jorgensen. Boston: Anthropology Resource Center, and Forestville, CA: Seventh Generation Fund, 1984.

This is a revised, expanded, updated edition of *Native Americans and Energy Development*, published in 1978. It seeks both to describe what is happening and to prescribe proper Native American responses to economic threats which endanger tribal lands and futures.

In his foreword, Daniel Bomberry enunciates the book's guiding concern: "There is a war going on right now over Indian resources—a war not too different from the Indian wars of the 1700s or 1800s. The motivation for such wars has always been the same: the exploitation of this continent's resources" (p. 7). For nearly 500 years Indians have struggled to preserve their lands. Today's struggle has shifted from the battlefields to the boardrooms of corporate America. Today's foes are not gun-toting frontiersmen and U.S. cavalymen but contract-wielding businessmen and BIA solicitors.

"The motivation for the new Indian wars," Bomberry says, "is very similar to old wars. Indians sit on resources that America wants. America has reached a point of economic stagnation from which tribal resources may offer some relief. Corporations want to exploit the resources at the lowest possible cost in order to maximize profit. This sets up a situation fraught with difficulties for the energy tribes and their members" (p. 9), and it is this situation addressed by the articles in this book.

Native Americans own one-third of the low-sulfur, easily-mineable coal west of the Mississippi. They own forty per cent