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# Reviews

**All That Remains: Varieties of Indigenous Expression.** By Arnold Krupat. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. 288 pages. $25.00 paper.

Arnold Krupat is one of the earliest, most knowledgeable, and wisest of the historians and critics of Native American literature. He writes elegantly and with admirable lucidity, eschewing whenever feasible the trendy jargon of whatever school of criticism is in vogue for the moment. Any new publication of his is therefore not only an event of interest to students and scholars in the field, but also easily accessible for the general public that may wish to know more about Native American literature. This book is no exception. Rather than an integral text, *All That Remains* is actually a collection of essays, written at different times and for different purposes. An introductory essay offers some overarching themes that serve to hold the disparate parts together, although this device is not always successful. In some ways it would have been better to do without an effort to create artificial unity, for it calls attention to the diverse nature of the collection, raises questions that would not necessarily occur otherwise, and sometimes results in seeming contradictions. However, all the individual essays, including the prefatory one, are interesting and contain valuable information and insights.

Krupat begins by reviewing three of the most important theoretical approaches in American Indian literary studies: the "tribal nationalist," the purely esthetic, and the view that modern Indian literature represents "a process of reconstruction, of self-discovery and cultural recovery" (ix). What Krupat quite rightly sees is that these approaches are in reality complementary, and that they are all necessary to come to anything approaching a comprehensive understanding of contemporary American Indian writing. He also quite correctly points out that traditional Native American thought did not feature the binary oppositions so characteristic of Western attitudes but expressed itself in multivalent tropes. It was a mode of thought that recognized the existence of both/and rather than limiting itself to the either/or of Euro-American approaches to meaning. For this reason, Krupat maintains not only the appropriateness but also the necessity of using multiple approaches to the study of American Indian literature.

After establishing these "ground rules," Krupat moves on to the essay "Trickster Tales Revisited." Just as the author's preface encapsulated the most important aspects of current theoretical debates about how to interpret Native American literature, this essay provides a nutshell view of the many

ways that Indians and white scholars have interpreted the trickster figure of American Indian myth and legend. The multifaceted figure of the trickster exemplifies the necessity of following various avenues of interpretation if one wishes to attain a sound understanding of American Indian literature—which so often features the trickster or trickster-like characters and encounters. If one wishes to do a quick study of the trickster figure, one could probably not find a better text than this relatively short essay.

"Representing Indians in American Literature, 1820–1870" is an examination of how Indians were depicted literarily in America—whether by mainstream writers or Indians—during one rather arbitrarily chosen half-century. The essay concludes with a partially annotated bibliography. This is where the multiple origins of *All That Remains* begin to show through. Krupat explains that what ultimately became this essay was a project on "American history through literature" (31). It reviews well-known stereotypes, such as the noble and the bloodthirsty savage, in connection with the racism of the time—including the "scientific racism" to which fledgling anthropology prostituted itself.

Krupat approaches his discussion of Indian stereotypes in the dominant society's narrative by a quasi-theoretical discussion of comic versus tragic narrative. In this schema, the trope of the "vanishing Indian" exemplifies the tragic narrative. Somewhat surprisingly, the essay does not deal directly with the question of appropriation of voice—mainstream writers representing Indians rather than Indians portraying themselves—since this is an issue of great concern in Native circles. Krupat's catalog of authors and works dealing with Indians is useful, but the rehash of racial attitudes in America adds no new insights to the discussion. One suspects that this particular essay was included just to flesh out an otherwise overly slim volume.

What follows is a fascinating essay, "Resisting Racism: William Apess as Public Intellectual." For those who know about William Apess only from excerpts of his more famous writings sometimes included in anthologies of American literature as token representations of American Indian writing—and more importantly for those completely unacquainted with Apess—this essay is a revelation. Krupat deals not only with Apess's writings but also his persona as a public figure who spoke out on behalf of social justice for Native Americans and deserves to be placed among other impassioned political orators of the early nineteenth century, such as Frederick Douglass and Daniel Webster. Krupat also deftly shows how a study of Apess's life and writings exemplifies several important tenets of postcolonial criticism. The intellectual heat and light this essay generates inspires one to take up the complete works of Apess, which were not easily or fully available until the publication of Barry O'Connell's *On Our Own Ground: The Complete Writings of William Apess, a Pequot* (1992), and to examine the growing body of critical commentary. Krupat's essay, however, does a very satisfying job of presenting a well-rounded picture of Apess in a mere twenty-eight pages.

None of the other essays matches the interest and usefulness of those mentioned, although each of them offers significant information and valuable interpretations of the material they present. The last essay in the

collection, "*Atanarjuat, the Fast Runner* and Its Audiences," differs from all the others in that it deals with film, rather than written work. This fairly well-known 2001 Canadian-made adaptation of an Inuit legend has aroused, according to Krupat, the interest of four distinct audiences. The first of these is the Inuit, presenting their self-image to the outside world. The second is comprised not only of other Canadians and Americans but also people from all over the world who are willing to have their preconceptions challenged and to attempt, at least, to see another society as it sees itself. The third, and arguably the largest, audience appreciates the film for its formal beauty (and perhaps for its "exoticism"—although Krupat doesn't exactly come out and say this). For them, it is a work of entertainment that is "consumed" and at best "contemplated" (133). In a note, Krupat hints at the fourth group of viewers, a growing international indigenous audience that is becoming increasingly connected and that presumably would be attracted by the commonalities of their own cultural experience with those portrayed in the film and also by the film's assertion of indigenous identity in a world dominated by modern industrialized societies that all too often ignore their very existence (196). That a work of art, which is also a commercial product, should be subject to the interpretations and uses that its purchasers put it to is not a particularly great revelation, yet Krupat problematizes the multiple meanings the various audiences assign to the film, seeming to ask which is the real one. This seems an odd gambit given his insistence in his author's preface on the multivalent nature of Native thought and art and the necessity of approaching it with a both/and rather than an either/or mentality, of accepting simultaneous different points of view and not seeing them as necessarily opposing. He ends up solving the dilemma by invoking this very directive, thus making the whole essay seem either contrived or, paradoxically, insufficiently conceptualized in advance. The investigation of the multiple responses to the film would have been a worthwhile enough endeavor, without overinterpreting it.

There are some technical issues with the book that perhaps reflect more on its editors than its author. The bibliography often lists the works of Indian writers that have been edited for publication by the name of the editor rather than the author, thus inadvertently (one supposes) "erasing" the Native author and denying his or her agency. In such cases it would have been helpful to have double entries (by editor and by author). This is a supreme irony in a work by an author so committed to combating cultural erasure as Krupat. Then there is the matter of the endnotes—grouped together at the end of the book instead of at the end of the essay to which they pertain. This is presumably a result of putting matters of convenience and economy in publication above the interests of the scholar who reads the book and wishes to follow up on references without the maddening necessity of constantly flipping back and forth and engaging in a hunt for the relevant note.

The bigger issue, however, stems from the book title. It is presumably derived from a Wendy Rose poem about sunset that is used as an epigraph (v):

> a line so thin
> that it steps through the dark

like a seal slips through water.
And what remains? dissolving
touch
echo of whispers
begun long ago. . . .

Even if this is its source, the title reads like an epitaph. It has resonances of the "vanishing Indian," knowable only through the material culture left behind. This is completely at odds with one of the messages of the book—that the vanishing Indian is a stereotype to be dismantled and discarded. It certainly is also at odds with the vibrancy of many contemporary Native American cultures, including their literary flowering of which Krupat has been one of the chief proponents. Surely the vanishing Indian was not the intended allusion contained in the title, but there it is, nonetheless. In spite of these reservations, Krupat has once again provided a thought-provoking and often informative and enlightening experience to his many admirers: students, teachers, and scholars of Native American culture, and even anyone who may just happen to pick up this book and read it out of intellectual curiosity.

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**Also Called Sacajawea: Chief Woman's Stolen Identity.** By Thomas H. Johnson with Helen S. Johnson. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2008. 124 pages. $14.50 paper.

Three years after the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the Lewis and Clark expedition, all things Lewis and Clark—and Sacagawea, the Shoshone woman who traveled with the expedition—are still highly sought after. Thomas H. Johnson's book should be added to the mix. The anthropologist tells readers he started reporting "whatever the Eastern Shoshone wanted to tell," but he ended up doing much more (1).

Scholars generally agree that Sacagawea was captured by the Hidatsa and ended up belonging to the French Canadian trader Toussaint Charbonneau. Lewis and Clark encountered them in 1804 in what is today North Dakota. Charbonneau expressed interest in working as an interpreter, letting it be known that he had two Shoshone women. So Lewis and Clark decided to bring Charbonneau and one of his wives along to interpret the Shoshone language for them. In February 1805, Sacagawea gave birth to her first child, Jean Baptiste Charbonneau. Sacagawea, Charbonneau, and Jean Baptiste joined the expedition on a sixteen-month journey to the Pacific Ocean and back.

Stories about Sacagawea are wrought with myth and debate. At least four different tribal nations claim to be her birthplace. Whether her name has Shoshone or Hidatsa origins is contested. Here Sacagawea refers to the Shoshone who traveled with the expedition, and Sacajawea is Johnson's