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that occurred near her hometown in the mid-1930s. The presence of the law as an overriding aspect is likewise similar. Perhaps the content of *To Kill a Mockingbird* is more particularly life and death, but the shared schema of a societal attempt to silence an entire ethnic group is apparent. Fletcher's characters read like Louise Erdrich's, fluid, quirky tricksters who live the dilemma at the intersection of history, culture, education, and law. By way of another style comparison, Fletcher writes with a sardonic wit highly reminiscent of the late Vine Deloria Jr., also a lawyer by training.

The fact that Fletcher is a lawyer is the springboard for his work, and he even appears to write himself into *American Indian Education* in the guise of Niko Roberts. Niko is followed from adolescence to adulthood in the chapters, the son of Parker Roberts (the activist-teacher). As a man, Niko pursues a career in the law, ending up representing his grandfather (Toledo Marks), a man who distanced himself from his tribal heritage but who returns to Lake Matchimanitou in the denouement of character-based chapters.

As the collected result of the book's legal quandaries drives a growing sense of self and tribal identity in the characters, *American Indian Education* closes with a hilarious chapter on the Lake Matchimanitou Indian School. Think Horace Miner's "Body Ritual among the Nacirema" (*American Anthropology*, 1956). It is a resounding denunciation of what "Indian school" used to mean, what it means when people take the reins of their own community's education, and how history repeats itself in (in this case) a benignly bitter vignette.

With characterization so complete and human, Matthew Fletcher could easily turn his "cast" to other issues in Indian country. A treatment of the role of more Lake Matchimanitou Band of Ottawa Indians in Indian education and legal policy at the federal level would be welcome. Perhaps the placement of Parker Roberts among the Obama appointees, Niko defending a Native community's use of an Indian mascot when surrounding non-Indian communities feel pressed to remove theirs, or Toledo Marks's successful first novel and the ensuing debate over his authenticity as an Indian writer who spent most of his life trying to outrun his Indianness . . . this reviewer doesn't want to dissuade Matthew Fletcher from continuing to teach Indian law to nascent lawyers but selfishly hopes he will not ignore his gift for fiction that truly educates.

Cynthia R. Kasee

Winston-Salem State University

Born of Fire: The Life and Pottery of Margaret Tafoya. By Charles S. King. Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 2008. 160 pages; 88 color and 10 black-and-white illustrations. \$45.00 cloth.

Margaret Tafoya (1904–2001) was unarguably one of the finest and most important Pueblo potters of the twentieth century. She was from the Pueblo of Santa Clara, known in their Tewa language as Kha'p'oo Owinge, a village about thirty miles north of Santa Fe on the Rio Grande. Once primarily an

agricultural village it is today home to about 1,200 people of whom nearly 400 are potters; most others work as professionals in neighboring cities and at the Los Alamos National Laboratory.

The twentieth century was one of great societal change for Santa Clara. Margaret's lifetime witnessed the transformation of a self-sustaining, barter-based agrarian village of a few hundred people to one that today is integrated and dependent on the broader economy through wages and the sales of pottery to tourists and other non-Puebloan art collectors. But, as Tafoya so admirably demonstrated, the ancient system of pottery production could also be adapted as a buffer and successful means to remain in her own world while participating in the broader economy.

Charles King is a Phoenix-based Native arts dealer who specializes in Pueblo pottery. In his gallery he gravitates to the better potters and cutting-edge and innovative artwork. His appreciation and understanding of Pueblo pottery is present throughout the text. In particular, King's knowledge and familiarity with the Tafoyas creates a warmth and vitality that is further enforced through the use of family quotes and photographs. The color illustrations include many pots not previously accessible. Unfortunately, the photography is uneven in color and lighting. Readers will find the book to be a good introduction to Tafoya and Pueblo pottery rather than the authoritative book on Tafoya (a point that King is cautious about as well). *Born of Fire* is one story within the bigger narrative of this larger-than-life artist.

The book is arranged chronologically, including a section on Sara Fina, Margaret Tafoya's mother. King's analysis focuses on the dating of pottery through an examination of the various signatures used by Tafoya throughout her long career. The final portion of the book includes biographies of Tafoya's children and grandchildren, who today comprise some five generations of Tafoya family potters (omissions on the genealogy chart probably reflect familial disharmonies). The book's reliance on lineage as an explanatory principle mirrors how most pottery is bought and sold in today's market. Lineage connotes "tradition" and therefore authenticity.

In place of a complete biography, the text instills respect for connoisseurship, compelling readers to admire the pots, and politely lauds the collectors who have lent their pieces to be used as illustrations. For readers who already have an aesthetic interest in pottery the illustrations are a visual delight augmented with brief, unsatisfying captions. Insofar as the book does not support an academic assertion, tell an engaging story, encourage an exchange of informed opinions, or contextualize the pottery within a social, cultural, or political history, it situates the visitor as a passive consumer of simple, undisputed information rather than as intellectually engaged participant.

The book was written to accompany an exhibition of privately owned Tafoya pottery. John Krena, a well-respected Native arts dealer from Pittsburgh, accumulated the seventy pots that illustrate the book and are the subject of the exhibition. Krena, not the Tafoya family or the publisher, holds the copyright to the book and the images. The pottery was collected during two decades, primarily from the secondary market rather than from Tafoya. We learn relatively little of Krena, although it is his interest and taste that form

the collection. Provided Tafoya's production of pottery for the non-Native world, it is an intriguing notion that we could learn something more about Tafoya through details about the collector and his collection.

The book is part of a larger enterprise to market and sell this collection of pottery. Marginally a self-published book, the Museum of New Mexico Press is also to be chided for continuing to produce titles that need more careful vetting as well as scholarly expertise to review and edit manuscripts. By using their guise as an academic press, they continue to place books onto the market that could do with broader and better scholarship. Although it is understandable that the press has been pushed into being an entrepreneurial enterprise, the press and museums need to exert more care and avoid shrinking from their educational mission by cutting corners and omitting editorial review committees.

The text is a hermetic story, skimming over or omitting details that might better illuminate Tafoya's career. Further research would have added historical and cultural contexts, injected an authority of documentation, reduced the text's generalities, and helped to eliminate errors in the text and dating of the pottery. In addition, the book posits a single-minded notion that Tafoya's abilities were attributable to birth rather than to her own hard work and development of her skills and aesthetic. As a sentient person, Tafoya made choices and was subjected to influences from within and outside of her culture. Family and inheritance are central tenets of Pueblo life, but excessive use of family in place of individual and social contexts in which the potters envision and create their pottery overly simplifies and objectifies them. Further research would reveal, for example, vital national as well as other nonfamilial contexts of the 1920s and 1930s when Tafoya formulated her approach to pottery.

King's text principally provides insight into a world of Pueblo pottery dealers and collectors. Although it is useful to understand the dealing and collecting world, it also subjugates the contexts of fuller and more accurate histories and biographies for its reliance on lineage, tradition, and authenticity. In using the trappings of scholarship to enhance the dealers' and collectors' expertise and sales, even those outside of academia become susceptible and fair game for review and critique.

Although it is an important narrative, it should not be confused with or replace Pueblo pottery's own indigenous narrative. Sales narratives emphasize tradition and rarity as a pot that is purely aboriginal, with no influence from cultures outside of the village. Further, *traditional* connotes a pot made for Pueblo people's own "home use" as compared to something made for the non-Indian market. When made for home use there is an assumption that the piece is unchanged by the market or other adulterating outside ideas. As a result, traditional pottery is believed to be purer and therefore more authentic. Tafoya's pottery defies and disassembles these notions by being exceptional in its construction—superior to most traditional pottery yet exclusively made for sale. A good example of the contemporary melding of innovation, function, and tradition is one of her first purchased storage jars now in the collections of the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, which was

purchased for a raccoon coat and twelve dollars. It was not purchased as art or heirloom but has been treasured by the non-Native family for decades for its traditional place on their hearth holding firewood.

Tradition is a well-acknowledged messy word. But tradition survives because it is useful and continues to change and adapt itself to its evolving surroundings. Today's traditional pottery, for example, requires the use of sheep, cow, or horse manure, which replaced wood used for firing pottery in the pre-Hispanic Southwest. Moreover, some suggest that the Kapo style or the black pottery type used by Tafoya was brought into the northern pueblos in the late seventeenth century following the Pueblo Revolt by Oaxacan Natives, who helped colonize New Mexico for Spain. Traditional pottery? Yes, without a doubt, because pottery is still relevant because it continues to evolve. Vibrant traditions require sentient artists who continually incorporate ideas into and reject ideas for their cultural cauldrons. Tafoya made pieces with Hopi designs because she knew it was a successful style of pottery being made for tourists (42); her mother made boxes that emulated cigarette boxes or other art deco and modernist shapes because she may have appreciated the forms or realized that potential buyers would find her pottery useful in their non-Puebloan homes (31, 52).

Tafoya as an artist was a keen observer of her world and through her pottery expressed her understanding of her culture and its place in the twentieth century inside and outside of her pueblo. Testimony to this fact is her pottery's elegance and ease in American homes of all styles across the United States, whether Tafoya's work is a singular piece of Pueblo pottery or part of a pottery or broader art collection. Tafoya rode in cars and airplanes, talked on the telephone, met other famous people, and maintained and nourished her family and village through her deportment and ceremonial obligations.

In a final analysis, *Born of Fire* adds to our understanding of Tafoya, pottery, and, importantly, how Tafoya's pottery is appreciated by her own family as well as by outsiders. The critique offered is about the state of affairs in the development and practice of good research and the need to write Native art histories based upon indigenous histories and viewpoints rather than what may seem to be unconstructive disapproval of a new book. Unfortunately, most of the available writing and publications about Pueblo pottery continues to be driven by sales rather than thorough (and new) research and the resulting scholarship.

The book fits well into an existing paradigm; it is this paradigm that needs change or, alternatively, not to be used in place or be disguised as scholarship or substantial new knowledge. My concern is that publications continue to be produced to push Pueblo pottery farther from its own moorings toward our understanding by reifying again and again the legacy of pottery in our collections, histories, and consciousness. There is a place for both types of thinking and consideration—and, moreover, a dealer can be scholarly and share interesting and new interpretations. Importantly, this is not in and of itself a bad thing but rather only when the author confuses his or her purpose in publishing.

Opportunities abound; museum and private collections lay relatively dormant but are ready to be used to create new and more rigorous paradigms

and studies. It is not the cost of mounting an exhibition of Tafoya's work that is prohibitive but rather a lack of expertise and sense of purpose to break from the complacency of practiced and comfortable narratives that transforms pottery into what we believe it is and our own longing for an aboriginality and traditionality (149). We do need to challenge ourselves, believing we can never know enough of the complexities of Pueblo pottery (and other Native art forms) whether old or new, in public or private hands. Good work on North American and Native arts is welcomed and needed. However, it is a decidedly subtle endeavor that requires considerable care to balance the popular and scholarly literature, to balance what the potters do, and to avoid sentimentalizing the present context (part of the overall marketing of contemporary Southwest pottery) for lack of historical and contextual investigation and knowledge.

Potters have for centuries offered us great insights into their culture and history through their work, but we continue to ignore it. We will never understand all of Pueblo pottery, but there are new insights to be gained. Good scholarship requires us to find existing systems of interpretation rather than to create new ones.

Bruce Bernstein

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Brothers among Nations: The Pursuit of Intercultural Alliances in Early America, 1580–1660. By Cynthia J. Van Zandt. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. 264 pages. \$49.95 cloth.

Do we really need another book about the history of colonial America, especially the well-trodden ground of Jamestown and New England? Historian Cynthia J. Van Zandt proves that we do. *Brothers among Nations* suggests that we may know less than we think about the early history of North America. By studying European and Native American communities from the Chesapeake Bay to New England, Van Zandt reveals that early European colonists were involved in a surprisingly entangled and complex web of intercultural alliances that linked them together. She argues that communities in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries survived "only through their connections with other communities, including those with people from other cultures" (4).

Historians have spent the better part of the last century producing works about colonial America, but these largely community-centered studies have created the illusion that individual colonies existed in isolation of one another. *Brothers among Nations* follows a more recent trend in the historiography of colonial America by placing the experience of Euro-American colonists within the larger context of the Atlantic world, linking the peripheries of European empires to their centers. Van Zandt takes this approach one step further and moves the center of that world from the Atlantic to the colonies, arguing that the communities of her study were part of a larger world that included other