### **UCLA**

# **American Indian Culture and Research Journal**

#### **Title**

The Telling of the World: Native American Stories and Art. Edited by W.S. Penn.

#### **Permalink**

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4840j3xf

### **Journal**

American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 22(1)

#### ISSN

0161-6463

#### **Author**

Marken, Jack W.

#### **Publication Date**

1998

#### DOI

10.17953

# **Copyright Information**

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

Mendoza says, gamble, in various businesses not because she was greedy or misdirected but because she wanted, in her own way, to help Vincent? Mendoza, for all his sensitivity, is most insensitive to his first wife despite the fact that she died of cancer.

Aside from this one point, however, Mendoza's story is the story of anyone who is of two bloods. Indeed, those of mixed races want the census bureau to include their mixed heritage in the next survey. They wish for their voice to be heard. Mendoza not only provides one for those of Mexican and Indian descent, he also, paradoxically, includes a third. His autobiography is, to some extent, also that of Everyman's: the youthful love of sports and music gradually moving aside for thoughts of death, suicide, bankruptcy, and finally the joyousness of music, life, and family.

Charles Ynfante Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff

The Telling of the World: Native American Stories and Art. Edited by W.S. Penn. New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1996. 240 pages. \$45.00 cloth.

In part, The Telling of the World is an anthology of seventy-one stories, though W.S. Penn says in his preface that there are "eighty stories for this book." He arrives at this total by listing all Osage stories (four) under both Osage and Nez Perce (Penn identifies himself as being Nez Perce, Osage, and Anglo) and all stories indexed under Tanaina (five) also under Dena'ina. And one Clackamas and one Kathlamet are also listed as two Chinook stories.

The anthology is divided into seven sections, each with a short introduction of one or two pages. The first section, entitled "Creation" (pp. 15-39), contains nine stories. The second section, "Adolescence" (pp. 40-74), contains thirteen stories. The third section, "Family" (pp. 75-103), contains nine stories. The fourth section, "Marriage" (pp. 104-33), contains ten stories. The fifth section, "Children and the Community" (pp. 134-67), and the sixth section, "Old Age and Elder Wisdom" (pp. 168-95), each contain nine stories. And the final section, "Death" (pp. 196-234), contains twelve stories.

Nearly a third of the stories have been selected from four collections: Margot Edmonds and Ella Clark's *Voices of the Winds*, 1989 (seven stories); Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz's

American Myths and Legends, 1984 (nine); John R. Swanton's Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Tribes, 1929 (six); and Bill Vaudrin's Tanaina Tales from Alaska, 1969 (six). Other major collections providing stories are Ella Clark's Legends of the Pacific Northwest, 1953 (five) and Barry Lopez's Giving Birth to Thunder, Sleeping With His Daughter: Coyote Builds North America, 1978 (four). Stories have been taken from fifteen anthologies, and a few are from journals.

Comparing the texts of the stories from several of the major collections shows that Penn is a careful editor. He makes a few changes in some stories and occasionally omits material. For example, in the Edmonds and Clark version of "Buffalo and Eagle Wing," Penn changes the second paragraph, which in the original contains: "At that time a large buffalo roamed over the land. From the water he obtained his spirit power—the power to change anything into some other form. He would have that power as long as he only drank from a certain pool" (p. 192). Penn omits the word "spirit" in the second sentence and paraphrases the remaining sentences, which neither loses nor changes the meaning of the original.

Borrowing stories from Lopez's anthology, Penn copies the originals exactly, and he does the same when he takes the story, "Teeth in the Wrong Place," from the Erdoes and Ortiz anthology. The story "Enough is Enough," which he takes from Edmonds and Clark, is also exactly copied. Comparing a dozen of Penn's stories with texts of the sources, I found that Penn made very few changes and often copied the original exactly.

Compilers of anthologies of Indian stories often provide short introductory comments to each story and additional material in notes. Penn has no comments of this sort. He gives the tribal source and the storyteller for most stories under the title at the beginning of the story, and he occasionally says specific things about a particular story in his short introduction to each section.

This anthology contains stories that are representative of the literatures of Native people from most geographical areas of the United States, Canada, and Alaska. The stories are a part of the literatures of nearly forty tribes. They were chosen for the collection, Penn says, because "these stories continue to be important, continue to be vital and alive" (p. 6).

As an anthology, this is an interesting collection. What makes this book unique are the reproductions in color photography of the work by Indian artists, most of which are contemporary, that occupy much of the book. This adds beauty and breadth to an otherwise satisfactory collection of tribal stories. Speaking about this facet of the anthology, Penn says in the last paragraph of his preface:

Finally, a word about the art. The editors and I decided to put together a book that intended, not to erase differences and diversity, but to represent as many of the tribes and traditions as possible. Thus, this is not an illustrated collection of stories. Nor is it a verbally enhanced book of art and image. There is often no direct tribal linkage between the story and the image, except that a Coyote story may be accompanied by an image of Coyote from a different tribe or people. In my mind, this book is two books that go together, side by side, if only because for me all things really are connected like dandelions.

Few pages, except the preface and introduction, and the introductions to each section, lack art. There are more than 130 artworks in color throughout a text that runs to somewhat more than two hundred pages when introductory material is subtracted. Including the leaf opposite the title page, there are forty pages of reproductions covering the whole page. Another thirty-three pages contain art that covers half the page or more, and another sixty pages contain the reproduction of artwork that covers less than half the page. Several pages contain artworks that spill over from one page into the next one.

The artists are listed in the index as belonging to sixty tribes. This is misleading because artists such as Duane Slick and Juane Quick-to-see Smith, who are descended from two or more tribes, are listed under each. Works by thirty-two artists are included. At least half of these are represented by more than one work. Duane Slick's works appear on eight pages, Fred Kabotie's on six pages, while Rick Bartow, Linda Lomahaftewa, George C. Longfish, and Juane Quick-to-see Smith have works on five pages. Most of the artworks are paintings that hang in museums, public galleries, or in the artist's home, where they have been photographed. Almost all of the full-page reproductions are modern works. None of them are traditional in the style of Remington. However, the paintings of Fred Kabotie, all of which are dated 1922, are more or less fanciful paintings of Coyote, always in the shape of the natural animal.

As might be expected because of the nature of the book, many artists are missing. In particular, the Sioux, including the Lakota, are underrepresented with only five works. And four of these, listed under Lakota, are of beadwork or beaded clothing. The one work listed under Sioux is a painting by Jim Yellowhawk, dated 1991, which is the property of the College of Wooster Art Museum in Wooster, Ohio, This work might be called traditional, depicting an Indian on horseback pulling a travois painted on a parfleche. No works by internationally known Sioux artists Art Amiotte, JoAnne Bird, Oscar Howe, or Paul WarCloud are included.

The artworks are beautifully reproduced on the same heavy paper on which the stories are printed. The reproductions have been flawlessly done by Tappan Printing Company of Singapore. This is a large book and is probably designed to be a coffee-table book, where it can attract those interested in either story or art. It is the kind of beautiful book that should lie where it can be seen, but out of the reach of children.

Jack W. Marken South Dakota State University

To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1983-1920. By Clyde Ellis. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996. 250 pages. \$28.95 cloth.

Within the last decade or two, a concerted effort has been made by historians and educators alike to debate and deconstruct the most controversial enterprise of the American Indian educational past—the boarding school. The boarding school concept never fostered ideological neutrality. Viewed as a moral necessity by some and the tangible purveyor of hegemony by others, the boarding school carried with it the dichotomous ideal as a place to be redeemed and a place to be reduced.

It is this notion of opposing ideals that lies at the heart of Clyde Ellis' *To Change Them Forever*. Just as the boarding school construct was never neutral, neither is the author's chronicle of the Rainy Mountain Boarding School on the Kiowa-Comanche-Apache Reservation. Conflict, tension, and fundamental difference are common threads that run throughout this work. It is this underlying theme of contrasting values and expectations that separates this work from other chronicles of boarding