states that it reveals the "truth" about events which have happened and are still happening, albeit as Silko presents it to be.

In a three-part scholarly essay, "Silko's Reappropriation of Secrecy," Paul Beckman Taylor analyzes both *Ceremony* and *Almanac* and finds that "secrecy" is significant in both. Taylor argues that Silko relies on the use of reappropriation of a story, object, or myth by a Native American to reestablish a connection between the two by first exploring the polemics of secrecy in Indian culture and their influence on *Almanac*. Taylor clearly shows how and why appropriation and reappropriation are crucial elements in *Almanac* and *Ceremony* in that ideology of secrecy enables the Native American to reclaim what has been lost.

Like Taylor, Ami M. Regier, who also analyzes both *Almanac* and *Ceremony* in her essay "Material Meeting Points of Self and Other: Fetish Discourses and Leslie Marmon Silko's Evolving Conception of Cross-Cultural Narrative," demonstrates not only the significance of fetishes, but also how they have evolved into influential stories that engender revolutionary actions. First, she historizes them, which serves to illustrate the interaction that occurs across cultures; then she demonstrates how Silko elevates the use and the level of influence of the fetishes, many of which can trigger potential revolutions. Regier concludes that it is in this context that Silko's *Almanac* presents the fetish as revolutionary.

Most of the remaining essays focus mainly on *Storyteller*. They are valuable to the Silko scholar due to their quality and complex diversity. Authors Linda Krumholz, Elizabeth McHenry, Helen Jaskowski, Elizabeth Hoffman Nelson and Malcolm A. Nelson, and Daniel White provide an array of very intriguing analyses of Silko's novels, particularly *Storyteller* and *Ceremony*. Respectively, their subject matter includes ritual and dialogics, the creation and function of *Storyteller,* the value that language plays in the storytellers' lives, the shifting patterns in the various styles and voices in *Storyteller* and *Ceremony*, and, for the essay on Silko's nonfiction, the antidote to the desecration of the Indian's culture by white society.

This collection of critical essays clearly evinces an admirable investigation of Silko's writings, especially *Almanac of the Dead* and *Storyteller*. The volume provides a literary feast for Silko scholars and may also set a high standard for subsequent collections themselves. Without doubt, the essays are of impressive quality and ambitiously fulfill, in several different ways, the editors' desiderata.

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Momaday, Vizenor, Armstrong: Conversations on American Indian Writing. By Hartwig Isernhagen. Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1999. 200 pages. $34.95 cloth; $14.95 paper.

Texts published in the American Indian Literature and Critical Studies Series, general editors Gerald Vizenor (Anishinaabe) and Louis Owens (Choctaw/Cherokee), offer young writers opportunities to contribute impor-

tant Native and non-Native perspectives and criticisms to the field of American Indian literatures. Volume 32 in the series, *Momaday, Vizenor, Armstrong: Conversations on American Indian Writing*, by Hartwig Isernhagen, offers both the valuable perspectives of the three Native authors interviewed—N. Scott Momaday (Kiowa), Gerald Vizenor (Anishinaabe), and Jeannette Armstrong (Okanagan)—as well as the problematic viewpoints of the non-Native interviewer. The juxtaposition illustrates the disadvantages that cultural outsiders often encounter when dealing with American Indian literatures and how Native authors respond to those challenges.

Isernhagen received his training at Freiburg (Germany), Cologne, the University of Pennsylvania, and Würzburg. After one year at the University of Texas at Austin, he went to Basel, Switzerland, in 1981 to teach American Literature and other literatures in English. Although he positions himself as a "non-Indian academic" (p. 21) with "outsider status, as a European approaching Native literature in North America" (p. 14), he finds that position to be an advantage compared to the American insider, whom he argues cannot as easily avoid a "colonialist enterprise" by not recognizing the "power differential between a minority and the majority" (p. 15). Isernhagen, however, does not go far enough in distinguishing the inherent difficulties experienced by the cultural outsider (whether American or European), evidenced by the same set of questions that he employs for each interview. While the use of a predetermined set of questions provides some sense of unity in the interviews and allows the writers to respond to a variety of topics regarding their own writing specifically and American Indian writing in general, the nature of the questions reveals more about Isernhagen's non-Native approach, one which begins to move dangerously close to the very act of colonialism he wishes to avoid.

Isernhagen's failure to acknowledge the three authors' tribal affiliations at the beginning of the introduction, his minimal use of Native critics (one reference to Vine Deloria Jr.) to explain his methodology, and his oversight in addressing the issues of tribal sovereignty or the connections between land and Native identity, expose a lack of familiarity with those issues most basic to an understanding of American Indian literatures. Further, his insistent use of Western literary periods/movements—realism, modernism, and postmodernism—to categorize and label the three authors demonstrates a fundamental lack of awareness in using specific tribal cultural and historical contexts to comprehend the authors' writing styles and their texts.

Armstrong's initial response, for instance, to "*Do you classify yourself, as a writer, as a realist, a modernist, a postmodern writer?*" is "[Laughter] I don't even know what those terms are. . . ." (p. 176). Although Armstrong goes on to discuss in which category she *might* fit, she undermines Isernhagen's agenda by explaining that she "dislike[s] that terminology and the categorization" (p. 176). Yet Isernhagen never considers why there might be a problem with trying to locate American Indian literatures within these categories. In *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism* (1999), author and critic Craig S. Womack (Muskogee Creek/Cherokee) argues that American Indian literatures do not need to be included in the American literary canon and they do not need to be treated with Western models of literary criticism. Rather, American Indian liter-

atures should be considered in the context of their own tribal literary traditions and remain separate from the academy's American canon. To do otherwise allows critics to continue committing acts of colonialism.

In looking at Native criticism another way, Vizenor comments on how he is working "to find a new critical language to interpret what is a Native American text without depending just upon proof of the author's identity" (p. 100). Rather than deal with the ongoing debate about who or what constitutes an authentic Indian writer, Vizenor suggests that a more "sophisticated and intellectually powerful way of interpreting a text" will examine "the power of place, of a culture, of a time, of a voice, of an oral memory" (p. 100). Still, Isernhagen does not appreciate that his Western methodology might be contrary to the tribal criticism that Vizenor envisions, and he continues to counter these responses with challenges that attempt to redefine the authors' answers and adapt them to configurations that match his Western worldviews. He asks Vizenor, "Weren't you in a way positing, on the one hand, the single individual and, on the other hand, a set of universals, the universal issue?" (p. 100) Isernhagen does not see the individual Native author in a tribal context but sees a paradigm of an individual writer against universals that are separate from the communal worldview.

After transcribing the three interviews and writing the introduction, Isernhagen notes, "the three authors represent three ways of writing as well as three patterns of cultural survival" (p. 7). Despite this recognition, he cannot resist his Western way of viewing their writing as representing "realistic, modernist, and postmodernist tendencies in current Native writing" (p. 8). In other words, he comes out of these interviews with much the same predilections that he had going into them. Perhaps the reader of these three interviews will be more successful in gleaning the tribal-specific essence of what each author has to say.

Momaday, Vizenor, and Armstrong, in fact, resist Isernhagen's attempts to generalize about American Indian writing and pan-indigenous writers because they answer his questions from their respective tribal worldviews, one of the most significant aspects of the book. The three authors do not try to speak for all Native writers, but rather qualify their statements as coming from their own experience within a specific tribal context. When Isernhagen asks Momaday how he distinguishes between topography and land (neglecting to ask about any connection to ontological identity), he answers in terms of topography as specific and land as general to the Kiowa worldview:

> I must go back to the example of the Kiowa migration. The topography of that journey is extremely important, and it is a part of the definition of the tribe now. I think a Kiowa in his deepest mind thinks of himself as the product of that migration, that journey, that odyssey. It would be impossible for me to think of the Kiowas without thinking of the topography and their journey. And even since they arrived in the Southern Plains, the topography of Rainy Mountain and all of those wonderful places in just that part of the world are indivisible from their experience. (p. 46)

While Isernhagen does not make the connections between place and tribal identity or realize that Momaday speaks authoritatively only about the Kiowa, the information is there in his answer for the reader who does not bring any preconceived, generalized notions of Indians to the reading.

The three interviews offer useful insights not only for the writings of Momaday, Vizenor, and Armstrong but also for American Indian literatures in general. Despite Isernhagen's predetermined notions about indigenous writings, the three authors' responses reinforce Armstrong's statement that there are "many different cultures producing different kinds of literatures, and particularly different kinds of literatures as a result of contact with different kinds of peoples from Europe and from other parts of the world" (pp. 135–136).

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Native American Oral Traditions: Collaboration and Interpretation. Edited by Larry Evers and Barre Toelken. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2001. 256 pages. $39.95 cloth; $19.95 paper.

In 1992 the editors of *Native American Oral Traditions* invited scholars to make submissions on collaborative translation of Native American oral traditions. The result was originally published in the journal *Oral Tradition* in 1998, and it has now been rereleased in book form by the Utah State University Press. This collection brings together an impressive roster of scholars, both Native and non-Native. The articles offer several solid examples of and good reasons for pursuing collaborative translation and interpretation. As a series of general questions and organizing principles it appears that the various contributions variously address such questions as, What are the rationales for and examples of doing collaborative texting of traditional oral literatures? What roles do the Native and the non-Native collaborators play in the process of interpretation? and What larger values do collaborative productions offer? They are certainly important questions, and they are questions that the contributors to this volume do a fine job in answering. I suspect, however, that these may be questions that we generally know the answers to or that are at the very least accepted as methodologically and politically sound. And while I believe that the book does not strike out into new territory, this does not mean that the book should be ignored. *Native American Oral Traditions* offers interested students of anthropology, history, and Native studies a nice compilation of examples as to the work of collaborative texting.

The book is divided into seven chapters plus an introduction and a foreword. The texts draw on an interesting variety of cultures but offer a limited range of oral traditions/genres. The cultures discussed are the Yaqui of Arizona, Tlingit of the Northwest Coast, Lushootseed of Washington, Tohono O'odham of Arizona, Atsuge-Wi of California, Coos and Coquelle of Washington, and Yupik of Alaska. Oral genres examined include the sermon, fairy tale, and animal (including a bedtrick tale). The O'odham chapter is the