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left with a well-written book that is suitable for both scholars and students and that raises interesting and useful questions. But at the same time it is important to acknowledge the book's historiographical and methodological limitations.

James Taylor Carson
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Murder on the Reservation: American Indian Crime Fiction. By Ray B. Browne. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press/Popular Press, 2004. 289 pages. \$65.00 cloth; \$19.95 paper.

In his introduction to *Murder on the Reservation: American Indian Crime Fiction*, Ray Browne outlines the purpose of his study: to analyze and evaluate the authors' individual works and to describe how they comment, if they do, on race relations in the United States. Browne focuses on the work of fifteen authors: Tony Hillerman, Jean Hager, Jake Page, Aimee and David Thurlo, Dana Stabenow, Louis Owens (whom Browne calls one of the most promising authors, apparently unaware of Owens's death in 2002), Peter Bowen, Margaret Coel, James Doss, Mardi Oakley Medawar, J. F. Trainor, Thomas Perry, Robert Westbrook, and Laura Baker.

Browne analyzes the literature from four angles and devotes a chapter to each. The Making of the Author provides background information about each of the book's authors. Cultural Background and Development, the most extensive chapter, discusses the cultural background of the Indian characters who appear in each author's work. Chapter three is titled Protagonists, Associates, and Development; chapter four is Literary Achievements. In chapter five, Realities and Implications, Browne offers conclusions about the genre and speculates about its direction. An appendix includes transcripts of mail interviews with ten of the authors, and an extensive reference page and a useful index will aid readers who want to delve deeper into crime fiction that features Indian characters.

As a professor emeritus of popular culture and the editor of the Ray and Pat Browne Book Series, which focuses on popular culture, Browne is a strong proponent of that culture, arguing that "popular culture is the force that pulls prejudices and attitudes, though slowly, onto the level field of democracy" (25). Browne says that as an element of popular culture, crime fiction stimulates "the imagination about the possibility of leveling the cultural playing field through upheaval" (3). He suggests reasons for the popularity of crime fiction: "In addition to providing new fields and human actions in which to present life in different and exotic ways, crime fiction is an economical form of physical and cultural tourism, a trip to exotic societies and a meeting with strange people and ways of life, with exposure to but safety from danger" (8).

Although some readers may be uneasy about Browne's endorsement of cultural tourism, he defends the potential of ethnic crime fiction to "correct misconceptions or ignorance about people different from those the reader knows" (6). He argues that "increasingly, authors of ethnic crime fiction are

trying to exert the power of moral suasion and hope for the resulting political action resulting from education” (26).

Browne compares and contrasts ethnic crime fiction with other types of the genre, claiming that “it is much less contrived and self-consciously ‘literary’ than hard-boiled detective fiction” and more straightforward than “cozy” detective fiction, from which it differs most (6). According to Browne, ethnic crime fiction resembles that of feminist writers, primarily because both forms concern “people seeking acceptance and normal treatment in society” (6), although ethnic crime writers may have an easier time achieving their goals “because they represent a less immediate threat to the dominant society” (7).

Although Browne’s survey of crime fiction involving Indian characters will be useful to fans of the genre, academic readers may have reservations about his tendency to make general pronouncements when a more nuanced discussion is needed. For example, Browne announces that “in ethnic crime fiction a difference exists between male and female success as protagonists, with males more acceptable than females” (7). What does he mean by “more acceptable” and to whom? In the same paragraph he says “often it is comfortable for cultural conservatives to see females triumph in ethnic crime fiction because their field of accomplishment is somewhat detached and ‘other world,’ and therefore a less immediate threat.” That may be true, but where is his evidence?

Browne sometimes mixes perceptive observations about the genre with statements that need much more discussion than he provides: “At its best, ethnic crime fiction can provide great cultural or social satisfaction other than airing the just demands of people who have been culturally mistreated. It dramatizes the conflicts between cultures, reveals the rift of threat to the safety of the dominant society, provides humor, and finally, covertly or overtly reestablishes the reader’s feeling of safety from and superiority over other groups of people” (7).

The first claims that Browne asserts here make sense, but the final one is disturbing. Who are the “other groups of people” readers feel superior to, and why is this ethnic crime fiction at its best? The same lack of clarity is evident in Browne’s discussion of Philip Deloria’s *Playing Indian* (1998): “As whites have played Indian they have also been growing up in regard to their feelings about the Indian. In this process of white maturation the Indians have perforce grown too, though to a much smaller degree, as they have been admitted to cultural maturity” (7). Is Browne suggesting that Indians have grown to a smaller degree than whites? Who has “admitted [Indians] to cultural maturity”?

Browne claims that “ethnic crime fiction benefits from the current American deep concern with political correctness” and that “ethnic crime writing becomes a kind of affirmative fiction, beginning with remorse and showing atonement” (8). That last statement articulates what was apparently Browne’s original thesis for this study, which was first titled “*Paying Back*”: *Remorse and Atonement in Native American Fiction*. In mail interviews with ten of the writers he discusses, he asked whether they were interested in trying to “pay back” the Indian for former injustices perpetrated by the dominant society. In the book’s conclusion he reports that “a sizeable percentage of

authors who write about Native Americans declare that they are interested not in ‘paying back’ for past injustices . . . but only in telling interesting stories interestingly” (237).

In his conclusion to *Murder on the Reservation*, Browne argues that the growth of Native American crime fiction is opening the division between worlds and acquainting non-Natives with this new development in mystery fiction. He believes the introduction of protagonists with different dimensions and cultural attitudes will likely influence mainline crime fiction. He hopes the authors and works discussed in this volume can help readers develop an understanding of and respect for Native American cultures.

Browne acknowledges the danger that this new kind of fiction may introduce new stereotypes about Indians and Indian life, but he does not think that is likely, for several reasons. First, fiction is less amenable to stereotypes than film. Second, the new authors of Indian crime fiction recognize that their effectiveness depends on authenticity. Third, readers of crime fiction are sophisticated. He says that the emerging authors of Indian crime fiction are more “responsible” and realistic than they might have been in the past and that readers are more demanding. Browne concludes that all the authors and works studied in this book are making notable contributions to the genre of crime fiction and to literature in general. If you are a fan of the genre, *Murder on the Reservation* will introduce you to new practitioners, and you can decide for yourself if Browne is right.

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Totkv Mocvse/New Fire: Creek Folktales. By Earnest Gouge. Edited and translated by Jack B. Martin, Margaret McKane Mauldin, and Juanita McGirt. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004. 132 pages. \$49.95 cloth; \$29.95 paper.

The editors of *Totkv Mocvse/New Fire* have made a marvelous contribution to both Native American literature and the scholarship of the Muskogee (Creek) Indians by rescuing the manuscript from obscurity. The stories published here were originally written down in Muskogee by Earnest Gouge, a full-blood Creek, around 1915 at the request of the famous Southeastern ethnographer John R. Swanton. For whatever reason, Swanton never translated or used the stories in his subsequent work, and the manuscript remained unused in the Smithsonian archives. Martin discovered it there in 1994 and subsequently collaborated with Mauldin and McGirt in translating and preparing it for publication. Mauldin, a Creek-language instructor at the University of Oklahoma, and McGirt, her sister, are fluent Native speakers of Muskogee. Martin is a linguist who collaborated with Mauldin in publishing a marvelous modern dictionary of the Muskogee language.

Earnest Gouge was a rather prominent member of the Creek Nation and an activist for tribal sovereignty and treaty rights. He belonged to the Four