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Sweet's careful reconstruction of the political and social context of early Georgia demands the attention of scholars of the colonial and Native American past. By placing Indians at the center of her analysis she counters the prevailing view that Trustee-era Georgia was a failure. In addition, her analysis carefully illuminates how various individuals made choices within the geopolitical contexts of early Georgia. These contexts, though, did not determine behavior.

Andrew K. Frank  
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**North American Indian Art.** By David W. Penney. New York and London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd., 2004. 232 pages. \$30.00 cloth; \$16.95 paper.

A long-standing frustration shared by faculty teaching North American Indian art has been the limited availability of good texts for teaching the topic at the college survey level. Institutionalizing art of the Americas into the art history curriculum has been a slow, difficult process impeded as much by the scarcity of a suitable literature for instruction as by the Eurocentrism and lingering primitivist frameworks that still affect the way students are trained in the discipline. Specialization in North American Indian art has been one of the latest developments in visual arts scholarship, introduced into most academic programs even more recently than the related study of Mesoamerican art. The latter has been supported from its beginnings by excellent survey texts that provide a discursive tradition (extending from George Kubler's *The Art and Architecture of Ancient America* [1962], to later handbooks by Mary Miller, Esther Pasztory, and others) that integrates pre-Columbian coursework into programs of study with an assurance that is less readily achieved in North American courses. Faculty who have taught both fields are strongly aware of how the presence or absence of high-quality textbooks written from an art historical point of view shapes both the effectiveness of those courses and their reception in the academic world. The publication of new, up-to-date, authoritative texts like David W. Penney's *North American Indian Art* shifts North American courses away from the margins of art history—where they often serve as exemplars of such exotica as “tribal arts,” “art in small-scale societies,” and “non-Western art”—to a less segregated place in educational programs. Penney's book succeeds the earlier Thames and Hudson handbook *Native Arts of North America* by Christian Feest, which has served as a staple for survey teaching and a source for general readers since its publication in 1980. It joins *Native North American Art* (1998) by Janet Berlo and Ruth Phillips as a competitor for those same markets today.

*North American Indian Art* is a compact publication that covers a very satisfying range of topics in a lean, tightly focused text. The work features 181 illustrations and three black-and-white maps that illustrate the locations of North America's ancient cultures, archaeological sites, and historical tribes from the Arctic to the Mexico border. In addition, the author provides

a chronology of events in Native American history that begins with the Paleo-Indian Clovis horizon and concludes with the opening of the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington in 2004. Nine chapters form the body of the text (including an introduction), spanning antiquity to contemporary times and the continent from the Eastern Woodlands to the Arctic and Pacific Northwest. Individual chapters are devoted to the art of the ancient woodlands, the historical East, the Southwest, Plains, Far West, Northwest Coast, and the combined Arctic/Subarctic zone. A final chapter addresses Native American artists' assimilation of the media, styles, and pictorial concepts of Euro-American "fine art" and discusses Native artists who participate in the modern and postmodern mainstream of contemporary practice. Penney's narrative is clear, readable, and easily accessible for college undergraduates or a general audience, yet it contains a level of detail and specificity that will make it informative and interesting for specialists in Native American art and such related fields as history, ethnic studies, anthropology, and American Indian studies.

The book's most important role, however, lies in demarcating the outlines of Native American art history as a discipline taught to undergraduates that will inform the curriculum, training, and practices of visual arts graduates for years to come. This aspect warrants a comparison with its closest predecessors, the handbooks authored by Feest, Berlo, and Phillips. The three texts reveal much about the intellectual struggles that have characterized the past quarter-century of Native American art scholarship and its relationship to the prevailing philosophies of visual arts instruction. Feest's *Native Arts of North America*, the earlier Thames and Hudson book, reflects a strategy to insert the topic into university visual arts programs entrenched in Greenbergian modernism, which privileged the aesthetics of pure visual form over content and historical interpretation. The elite status granted to the modernist aesthetic in the ideologies of studio and art history instruction throughout the decades preceding Feest's publication shaped a method that would ascribe value to Native American art in formalist terms. The Berlo and Phillips text, authored from the standpoint of the "new art history," is self-critical and explicitly postmodern in its effort to shed formalist academicism and replace it with a deep exploration of art in relation to Native American philosophical, political, and cultural values. Penney's book, published seven years after *Native North American Art*, departs as much in certain ways from Berlo and Phillips's text as they both differ from Feest's dominant focus on artistic medium and formal design.

Less critically postmodern, Penney's work contains a historical narrative within each chapter's regional focus that proceeds from archaeological to recent times, carefully articulating the historical context that Feest elected to diminish and Berlo and Phillips sought to contest. For Feest, concentrating on the interpretation of history and meaning introduced problems of subjectivity, tribal differences, and incomplete preservation that he considered unnecessary interruptions to the appreciation of Native American art, which could be approached objectively on formal grounds. His text avoided applying the "culture area" concept to Native American art, a treatment Berlo

and Phillips restored to their volume, but with strategic disruptions within the standard narrative that refute conventions of the survey genre. Challenging simple notions of decline and revival, the authors inserted contemporary references into their historical timeline to introduce concepts of artistic continuity, transformation, and the survival of aboriginal practices and ideals. If the postmodern moment is over, as academia's prophets have proclaimed, new forms of discourse are steering scholarship and pedagogy toward new ground. In Penney's book, this new ground may include his attention to local histories and the primacy he accords individual artists within those local sequences. His approach to aesthetics is at once broader and more culturally embedded than those of his predecessors, going beyond pure visual elements to investigate cultural and value systems. This method brings dimensions of Native American creativity in the earlier phases of history into a telescopic focus that is new to the survey handbook tradition.

The first chapter of *North American Indian Art* introduces Penney's view of what constitutes an aesthetic system, which is far removed from the aesthetic principles that guided Feest's text. Feest's volume is divided into parts that, first, explain the assimilation of American Indian visual production into the category of "art" as a product of modernist interventions, and second, classify and discuss works of art according to media and styles. His publication struggled with the dissonance generated by imposing such headings as "Painting and Engraving," "Textiles," and "Sculpture" on its varied range of works and media, as well as the scope of its historical and regional coverage. The media terms carry with them the connotations of the relative status and value assigned in academic tradition; in addition, they depersonalize, dehistoricize, and taxonomize works of art in a way that exposes their inflexibility and colonial bias. The tension in Feest's mode of analysis resides in its notion of a universal aesthetic applicable to any body of works, regardless of cultural considerations and historical shifts. The approach adopted by Berlo and Phillips—to enrich the study of art with explanations of cosmology, ceremonial performance, social organization, and other ingredients of culture—responded to the failure of such aesthetic and formal methods to appreciate Native American art on its own terms.

Penney selectively draws on both precedents but shapes his text around a more satisfying aesthetic model, which embraces many functions and artistic intentions and also accepts individual invention and patterns of change. Aesthetic systems, he writes, are culture-bound; he rejects both the notion of a universal system of aesthetics and the privileging of a single standard for what can be termed "art." His concept of the aesthetic departs as well from the troublesome idea of artistic expression elevated to a higher plane that evolved in the Enlightenment, which has proven so inadequate to the cross-cultural study of art. Aesthetics, he writes, "shape the qualitative and ethical perceptions of social life. As such, aesthetics permeate the political, religious, and economic realms of every society" (11). This view finds expression throughout his book. Penney rarely discusses aesthetic interpretation as such but concentrates instead on the way artistic expression relates to and fulfills the individual experience of culture. Writing that "we find culture through the individual . . . not the other way around" (19), he also offers a resolution

to one of the thorniest dilemmas in the study of Native American expressive culture: how to acknowledge individual expression within certain collectivist social contexts without insisting on the individualistic values so prized in the history of Western art.

Faculty appraising next year's textbook orders may wonder specifically how *North American Indian Art* stacks up against its very successful rival from Oxford University Press. Even in paperback, *Native North American Art* is a sumptuous volume with superb illustrations, many reproduced in color and at a scale that enhances their visual impact. The Thames and Hudson volume lacks some of the Oxford book's perks, which include an eight-page timeline printed in color, excellent diagrams, full-color maps of each region, and text sidebars in every chapter. A distinct advantage of the Berlo and Phillips handbook is its extensive introduction that considers an array of issues: Native American social structures and ethnic identities, cosmology and ontological concepts, spiritual practices, the roles of performance and display, and gender and individuality in historical and modern Native American art. Their text, written in a lyrical style, is illuminating in its interpretive depth. That said, Penney's *North American Indian Art* has merits uniquely its own. The most important of these is the fluid, dynamic approach to cultural systems of aesthetics described above; another is its shift of focus from broadly defined cultures to the nuances of individual expression within culture. One of the most notable differences between the Penney and the Berlo and Phillips texts is the handling of religion, worldviews, and spiritual beliefs. Whereas *Native North American Art* devotes much of the introduction and many subsequent discussions to religious dimensions of art, Penney's low-key approach distributes references to cosmology, shamanism, and spiritual beliefs throughout the text, explaining them in relation to specific works or traditions as required. He devotes equal or greater discussion in many instances to their social contexts and purposes. Many who are wary of the popular fascination with American Indian spirituality that students bring to the classroom, and conscious of the discomfort many Indian people feel about the dissemination of religious knowledge, may find Penney's restrained treatment of the subject the preferable choice.

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**Pocahontas, Powhatan, Opechancanough: Three Indian Lives Changed by Jamestown.** By Helen C. Rountree. Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2005. 294 pages. \$29.95 cloth.

Cultural anthropologist Helen C. Rountree ranks as one of the foremost scholars of Virginia Indian history and culture, and her latest book, *Pocahontas, Powhatan, Opechancanough: Three Indian Lives Changed by Jamestown*, is dedicated to the modern Indian tribes of Virginia as "survivors descended from survivors." Written in anticipation of the four hundredth anniversary of the