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Author

Paredes, J. Anthony

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Smoker shares that, “I offer up many explanations for this / too-often conflicted tongue, never / arriving at any shape of reconciliation.” Finally, states Smoker, “I am asking for this same miracle, / the blood and body of the only language / I want to be known by.”

Linguistic survival is a prominent aspect of Smoker’s version of home. “Casualties” laments the “ruin in each Assiniboine voice” as “I ignored them all. / On / the vanishing, I have been / mute.” Similarly, “Grandfather Poem” intertwines indigenous “words . . . ones no longer spoken” with English remembrances of family and heritage. “The Necessary Bullet” contains “the sound of the old women clacking / their old tongues to the roofs / of the mouths in the dust?” as it declares “we are our own proof.”

Identity comprises a major component of home in Smoker’s compilation. “Call it Instinct” delineates the “fantastik we all might choose—if given the chance / to name ourselves over again.” Smoker centers on the concept of collaboration as a theme for balancing various ethnicities and the definition of home in “Several Poems for the Non-Indian in Me.” The poet cleverly examines collaboration between historical enemies, family members, and cultures in this poem. “Intertribal” and “Can You Feel the Native American in Me” both chronicle Indian identity’s intersection with Smoker’s poetry.

“Seven Days is Never Enough” balances all of the issues of home found in this poetry volume. Incorporating “Cowboys and Indians,” her tribal tongue, the idea of

back home
 caught in a February blizzard
 icicles frozen black from the stain
 of glossy prayers that our dead
 look away from

and “confused blood cells,” this poem is symbolic of the works contained in this book. *Another Attempt at Rescue* offers Smoker’s idea of home and insights into identity—encompassing ethnicity, linguistics, land, and verse.

Dawn Karima Pettigrew
 University of New Mexico

Cash, Color, and Colonialism: The Politics of Tribal Acknowledgment. By Renée Ann Cramer. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005. 234 pages. \$24.95 cloth.

Author’s Note: This is my most challenging book review. I know too much. First, I have worked on federal acknowledgment cases from both sides (before my current federal employment). Second, I was twice on ad hoc committees advising the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in developing guidelines for evaluating petitions for federal acknowledgment. I once served on a task force on federal acknowledgment for the Association on American Indian Affairs. And, I am the only anthropologist who has done in-depth

research on one of the two groups for the case studies around which the book is structured, the Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

Cramer's book adds to a growing body of critical studies of the processes by which the US government acknowledges that an Indian tribe exists, that is, "federal recognition." Her work examines both administrative and legislative routes to federal acknowledgment. Refreshingly, she structures her critique around the cases of two tribes, the Poarch Creeks and the Mashantucket Pequot, that were recognized very early in the period since the 1978 establishment of regulations for administrative recognition of Indian tribes by the BIA. Ostensibly, Cramer sets out to show how the acknowledgment process is influenced by politics. In this she has failed. Nonetheless, she provides a rich corpus of information on the historical, political, and social field against which controversies over federal acknowledgment—no matter how ill conceived—are played out.

Nearly a third of the book is a retelling—albeit often innovative and insightful—of familiar topics in Indian history and federal policy. There are sections on removal, termination, Indian activism, pan-Indianism (a bit off-center from what is usually considered pan-Indianism ethnologically), land claims (too cursorily), stereotyping, colonialism, race, and—most important—the BIA Branch of Acknowledgment and Research (BAR), which is now called the Office of Federal Acknowledgment.

In two brief but informative chapters Cramer examines how perceptions of the acknowledgment process are colored by popular conceptions of Indian gaming and Indian racial identity. These are often very insightful and encapsulate some important themes in American popular and, perhaps, bureaucratic cultures, but the author never convincingly demonstrates that decisions to acknowledge an Indian tribe are materially affected by these strains of popular culture. Such a statement as "gaming success has resulted in a threat to tribal acknowledgment claims" (94) might be a reasonable hypothesis, but Cramer merely asserts it and never adequately tests it. In fact, she goes on to present what seems almost contrary numerical evidence (104).

The shortcomings in Cramer's arguments rest on her failure—and that of many other critics—to distinguish between the political posturing and maneuvering (including among academics) *about* acknowledgment and the technical scholarly evaluation of the presumed evidence that a petitioner meets the criteria (for right or wrong) by which an Indian tribe is defined under US law and regulations. (Here I refer specifically to the BAR process.) Whether the recommendations resulting from such evaluations are followed or whether a decision (especially if negative) based on the evaluative recommendations stands are, of course, matters fraught with politics and, frequently, litigation, to say nothing of the claims of would-be petitioners who fault the process without submitting to it. Nonetheless, in my experience, the anthropologists, historians, and genealogists evaluating petitions for federal acknowledgment are a sterling example of government working the way it should. Perhaps they simply do their work too well for those intent on making the "politics of acknowledgment" a self-fulfilling prophecy.

An unspoken premise of many critics of federal acknowledgment is that, by and large, unrecognized self-identified Indian groups are what they say

they are. Unfortunately, in many cases examination of the historical and anthropological evidence reveals this not to be so, no matter how fervently believed. Though Cramer admits to the possibility of phony Indians, she does not seem to appreciate fully the problem of how an isolated Indian ancestor or two in a group comprised of people primarily of other ancestries does not make that group an Indian tribe within the meaning of federal law no matter how much the petitioners might want it to be so, to say nothing of those groups who prove to have no Indian ancestry at all. Perhaps the unwillingness to consider this possibility lies at the root of Cramer simply ignoring the countervailing evidence on the identity of the so-called Mowa Choctaw (see, for example, Bond, "Two Racial Islands in Alabama," 1931; Stopp, "On Mixed-Racial Isolates," 1974), a long-standing ethnic group from southern Alabama that Cramer contrasts with the nearby federally recognized Poarch Creeks as having had their quest for federal recognition stymied by racism.

Admittedly, the rise of Indian gaming, especially since the enactment of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act in 1988, has undoubtedly made for a more volatile atmosphere around federal recognition. Cramer writes convincingly about this political phenomenon, especially in her chapter on the Mashantucket Pequot, the most successful gaming tribe of all. Ironically, the Pequot, like the Poarch Creek a year later, were federally "recognized" in a simpler era when duty-free smoke shops and high-stakes bingo were just emerging, with tribes of long-standing federal acknowledgment blazing a legal pathway—especially the Florida Seminole. Cramer's attempt to untangle the skein of histories of groups other than the Mashantucket seeking recognition as Pequot is admirable. It is unfortunate that she was not equally meticulous in her treatment of the Mowa. But she remains unconvincing that the prospect of gaming has caused the failure of some groups and racism has doomed others. Frustratingly, Cramer never attempts to explain why the Mohegan, close neighbors of the Mashantucket, were successful in their bid for administrative recognition—long after Mashantucket recognition—while other groups in Connecticut have not been similarly successful. Maybe it has something to do with the historical, anthropological, and genealogical evidence.

In her two chapters on the successful achievement of federal acknowledgment by the Poarch Creeks and Mashantucket Pequot, Cramer seems less concerned with explaining how they were successful than using them as counterpoints for discussions of other nearby groups that have failed to achieve recognition, wherein she can play out her themes of racism, stereotyping, "cash," and politics. To her credit, she also includes some revealing discussions of internal differences along these lines among recognized groups.

Cash, Color, and Colonialism often makes for lively and provocative, though often disjointed reading, but it is never entirely clear what the author hopes to accomplish. Perhaps this is best illustrated by the author's own equivocations in her conclusions. In the final pages she says, "The BAR and congressional recognition are both affected by contemporary culture" (165) and, then, in a seeming double contradiction, "I am not arguing or alleging that decision making at the BAR is influenced by political considerations . . . I argue that

there are political, racial, colonial, and economic reasons why groups have not been acknowledged” (166).

There can be no doubt that a swirl of politics surrounds federal acknowledgment, but that is not the same thing as the politicization of acknowledgment no matter how much some scholars want to make it so. Cramer is to be commended for attempting to survey this daunting subject while securely anchoring her discourse in the concrete Poarch and Pequot cases. In taking on such a large task she could not help but miss some historical connections and make some blunders. Some mistakes are relatively harmless, such as apparently being unaware that federal recognition is a condition of membership in the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) not the other way around; that is, membership in USET is useful in becoming federally recognized (130). Other errors are simply outrageously untrue gratuitous assertions such as “federal recognition processes seem more often to depend on how many aboriginal traits the petitioning tribe retains in common with the mythic notion of Indian or tribe, than to truly understand the history and reality of the petitioning group” (59).

While Cramer cites some of my work on the Poarch Creek, oddly she ignores the essay that deals most directly with the Poarch efforts to obtain federal recognition (Paredes, “‘Practical History’ and the Poarch Creeks: A Meeting Ground for Anthropologist and Tribal Leaders,” 1992). Likewise, unless memory total fails me, Cramer never attempted to contact me during her research. Having a detailed knowledge of the Poarch, it was a relief to find that the factual errors and misinterpretations were relatively few and minor, but there was one egregious omission. In her overview of the Poarch, Cramer jumps completely over the tenure of Houston McGhee as council chairman, which was a critical, transformative period of Poarch political history in the 1970s when the foundations of retribalization were being laid.

Cramer quotes without critique a Mowa interview casting aspersions on the legitimacy of the Poarch people that says, “if you could meet the criteria set up by the BIA then you probably weren’t Indian, because that means you’ve stayed in one spot, could read and write, kept a journal of everything you’ve done for the past few hundred years, and were economically stable” (108). Having spent countless hours poring through musty documents, reels of microfilm, and crumbling newspapers piecing together documentary evidence to support the Poarch petition, I can say unequivocally that such a characterization is simply not true. As a matter of fact, along the way I sometimes stumbled across some useful records on the Mowa. Absence of documentary records on petitioning groups is yet another myth of unsuccessful claimants and would-be petitioners for federal acknowledgment.

Reading Cramer’s writing about the Poarch Creeks, especially when she relies upon original interviews with local people, provides the welcome data of a latter-day scholar’s view. Finally, rather than fault Cramer any further for shortcomings in her account of Poarch, I must confess my own feelings of guilt for not yet having written a full, book-length report of research conducted from the privileged vantage point the Poarch people have so long granted me.