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Searching for Yellowstone: Race, Gender, Family, and Memory in the Postmodern West. By Norman K. Denzin.

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of corn. At Fort Gibson the people are given shovels to dig for wells. For the first time Maritole allows a conjurer in her field. The conjurer took his rattle and drum to the field; in the cabin the people could feel the old power. "Something old broke loose in Maritole and she cried at the table." They could smell the earth from the dig, and it was not only the smell of a grave and death but also a source of water on their new land. "Out of it their lives would return" (185).

Glancy integrates passages from *The Baptist Ministry Magazine* published in the 1840s; the magazine documents the subjugation of the Cherokees in baptismal ceremonies—month by month, year by year. The officious tone mirrors government policy—this was business. Included in *Pushing the Bear* are photographs from the Cherokee Nation papers and lists of slaves, lost animals, reclamation, and spoliation claims. The dialogue in the book is contrived:

"I feel sometimes we have walked to the moon," Maritole said.

"There is nothing but work lined up for the rest of our lives," O-ga-na-ya said. "We won't make a dent."

"We will all plow fields," Knobowtee said. "We will hold them in common."

"There is already talk of taking care of the field nearest to the cabin we will build," O-ga-na-ya said (12).

The impossibility of rebuilding was a bear—the enormous task of starting over, the weight of discouragement.

The short sentences and repetitive structuring give the prose a wearisome, staccato rhythm. The pastiche of episodes, historical documents, and occasional myth were reminiscent of N. Scott Momaday's *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, but Glancy's prose does not have the same eloquence. In recounting the shameful brutality of the US policies during the nineteenth century, it is appropriate that we turn to the human, earthy prose of writers such as Glancy because the matter-of-fact tone of panoramic history books flattens and eviscerates the trauma of the displacement of Native people.

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Searching for Yellowstone: Race, Gender, Family, and Memory in the Postmodern West. By Norman K. Denzin. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008. 240 pages. \$89.00 cloth; \$29.95 paper.

Sometimes a book comes along that is so muddled and derivative, it is a wonder that it ever was published. *Searching for Yellowstone* is such a book. Overly earnest, broad in scope, and carelessly compiled, Denzin's multi-genre study offers very little that is new or interesting to Native American studies or American studies. The sections containing his personal memoirs, however, are appealing highlights of the book. Skimming the surface of stereotype and

received ideas, Denzin's approach is overly impressionistic and speculative and lacks consistent intellectual rigor. Although Denzin criticizes representations of Native Americans manufactured by the Euro-American imagination, he is guilty of the same vices of romanticization and lack of tribal specificity. Denzin writes of American Indians and creates Native voices in his fictional and historical dramas as though indigenous voices were monolithic, ignoring regional and tribal specificity. He also does so seemingly without being terribly familiar with Native American literature or critical theory. Ultimately, *Searching for Yellowstone* is a sentimentalist hodgepodge that barely earns the descriptor *bricolage* and cannot justifiably be called postmodern. It's more just a mess.

The book has problems beginning with the title. First of all, a book titled *Searching for Yellowstone* was already published back in 1997. If I were the author of that book, Paul Shullery, I would be slightly annoyed that someone had the chutzpah to recycle my title a little more than a decade later. Next, examine the subtitle. Denzin's kind of taking on a lot, isn't he? Race, gender, family, memory, the postmodern West—the subtitle reveals right away the overly wide scope and lack of focus that mars this book. If Denzin bit off more than he could chew, he is more satisfying with regard to the last two elements of the subtitle. Denzin's sensitive autobiographical writings dealing with his family in the cold war period are by far the strongest material here. With race he makes some headway, if only in terms of Euro-American imaginings of Native Americans and how these aid in constructing whiteness; with gender, not so much, beyond some reflections on Euro-American masculinity and non-Native constructions of Native American femininity.

Then there's the "postmodern" part of the subtitle. In the past, the once-trendy term *postmodern* has been used to cover a multitude of sins including imprecision and vacuity, but it has lost some of its power. Befitting Denzin's subject of the "postmodern West," he purports to deploy postmodern literary and critical strategies in his book, blending multiple genres including auto-ethnography, drama, and cultural criticism. Although the bringing together of eclectic materials and quotations may be considered as meeting one oft-cited criterion of the postmodern style, Denzin's tone and politics do not mesh with most definitions of *postmodernism*. To be specific, Denzin's book and his authorial voice are not ironic, free-floating, fragmented, or archly self-aware. Rather, Denzin follows a pointed political agenda of lamenting Euro-American aggression and racism and romanticizing and idealizing Native Americans. He is earnest and sentimental about Indians; his tone and persona are far removed from the postmodern. D. H. Lawrence once wrote that "white people always, or nearly always, write sentimentally about Indians. . . . The highbrow invariably lapses into sentimentalism like the smell of bad eggs." Denzin's authorial voice, plainly stoked by "white guilt," is consistent throughout the book, and despite the fact that Denzin dramatizes heteroglossic voices and historical sources, what we hear all along is solely his own.

Denzin seeks to address everything that he can think of that is iconic or representative of Native Americans as they have been treated in American

mythology and popular culture. An armload of ingredients is tossed in the stew, their flavor diminished by too much handling: “Indian” sports team mascots, Lewis and Clark and Sacagawea, Pocahontas, infected blankets, and most of all, Yellowstone. The problem is, Denzin does little that is novel with these subjects; rather he chooses to cherry-pick quotations and excerpts from a multitude of sources, allowing their sheer juxtaposition to imply a critique of Euro-American attitudes or practices. These juxtapositions, however, are rarely as incisive as their author presumes them to be. What’s worse, Denzin sometimes makes implications that are not grounded in historical fact. His method involves “inventing scenes, foregoing claims to exact truth or factual accuracy, searching instead for emotional truth, for deep meaning” (18). Going for subjective “emotional truth” in a work of scholarly nonfiction could be risky business.

Looking again at the title, ostensibly this book is about Yellowstone National Park. Denzin asks us to link Yellowstone rhetorically with indigenous peoples and practices and asks us to lament the ways in which the land was stolen by Euro-Americans in order to construct a national park (America’s Best Idea, if we are to believe Ken Burns). He wants Yellowstone to operate as a powerful symbol of “Indian land” and the basest form of white expropriation. Good, but Denzin fails to make the case in a persuasive way; we are simply asked to accept his premise. Denzin fails to show us how Yellowstone was integral to any particular tribe; moreover, he presents counterarguments that, against his intentions, begin to cast some doubt on his premise. We are told about tribes that traveled through Yellowstone, but no case is made to show how the land that today comprises Yellowstone is profoundly linked or claimed by any particular tribe or nation, excepting a band of Shoshones called Sheepeaters. Along with this, Denzin also acts as though the reader will find it shocking that the early motives of many planners of Yellowstone Park were commercial in origin.

Another problem with Denzin’s text is that as a non-Native he opts to speak on behalf of Native Americans and create fictional Native American voices in a clumsy, romanticizing way that evinces no value of tribal specificity. For example, in one of his many dramas, Denzin quotes from a historical source that states that Native Americans lacked knowledge of Yellowstone. Then a “Native American” speaks. He or she has no name and no tribe and speaks for all indigenous people. “This is nonsense,” the “Native American” intones. “We knew the region intimately” (47). All Native Americans? Who is speaking? Can we be a mite more specific?

Although Denzin presents information on the history of contact between Native Americans and Euro-Americans, he also doesn’t seem overly familiar with Native American literature, culture, or theory. Few Native writers populate his bibliography. He finds the idea that Indians could also be cowboys striking (and postmodern), in spite of the fact that this figure has long been present in Western American history—he refers to Indians “playing cowboys.” We might assign part of the blame to a fatuous quotation from Ward Churchill that Denzin uses as an epigraph: “White domination is so complete that even American Indian children want to be cowboys” (25).

More importantly, although his project is concerned with simulation and simulacra—and the postmodern Indian—Denzin ignores the theory of Gerald Vizenor, the preeminent Anishinaabe crossblood critic who draws from postmodernism and poststructuralism. Unbelievably, Jean Baudrillard is ignored as well. Vizenor's innovative theories on the post-Indian, post-Indian warriors of simulation, the autoposer, and other subjects, might have helped Denzin to articulate his perceptions of the postmodern West and performative Indianness better. The critical works of Louis Owens, Craig S. Womack, Jace Weaver, and others are notably absent, although Elizabeth Cook-Lynn and Paula Gunn Allen are cited. Regarding his choice of critics and his quotations from the pop-prose of Sherman Alexie, it appears that Denzin likes his Indians indignant, with essentialist tendencies.

Along with speaking of indigenes as undifferentiated, he also commits the same error in discussing Euro-Americans. He frequently speaks of the "white community" and "white America," and he implies (or states) that only "white people" make use of the Yellowstone National Park or are entertained by "Indian" sports mascots. Denzin even has a "Native American" state, "Whites don't know how to play anything other than Indian." What, not even polo? What is "whiteness"? What is this "white community"? It is taken for granted that we know the answer, and that these "whites" are all the same. That there might be differences in temperament, religion, and treatment of Native Americans among various groups of Euro-Americans over history in various regions never seems to occur to Denzin.

Besides neglecting crucial indigenous critical voices, Denzin frequently makes missteps with the writers that he regards as Indian. Churchill is quoted without qualifying him or pondering his habits of dishonesty and plagiarism, much less his morphing and challenged claims of having Native American ancestry. Moreover, Denzin is under the impression that William Least Heat-Moon is a widely accepted Native American writer, for he quotes him under the heading "A Native American Responds." Geary Hobson has baldly stated that Least Heat-Moon "is not an Indian writer, at least in the very important cultural sense of the term." Vizenor writes that Least Heat-Moon "is another cause of manifest manners and simulations in the literature of dominance . . . [he] assumes a surname and embraces pronouns that would undermine his own intended identities as a postindian author."

With his Yellowstone-area vacation property, Denzin wants to have things both ways. He wants to enjoy the park and all that it offers fully, impacting the environment (though less than his polluting neighbors whom he criticizes) by supporting the growing tourist and leisure industry. But he also wants to lament how the "white man" stole the land away from Native peoples and defaced the landscape to make the national park and its tourist environs that he consumes. With regard to Yellowstone, his overarching argument is nebulous. It is never even made clear why Yellowstone in particular was chosen to symbolize expropriated tribal land. He clearly has no qualms about taking advantage of the resources of the park nor is he calling for the park to be given "back to the Indians." So does he just want all "white people" to feel guilty about doing the same? Words such as *hand-wringing*, *self-righteous*,

sanctimonious, and *navel-gazing* come frequently to mind when traversing this work, which reads as though it were held together with pieces of chewing gum, frayed duct tape, and baling wire but with precious little logic or solid argument. Apparently we are to dream of Yellowstone as a new utopian space where people of all races can join together as one in harmony. That's a great thought, and a nice dream, but where does such sentimentalism take us? Without a clear proposal, at what point does a fantasy go beyond a pleasant dream of unity into action?

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Spain, Europe and the Wider World, 1500–1800. By J. H. Elliot. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009. 352 pages. \$38.00 cloth.

Few historians of Spain and the larger Spanish empire rival J. H. Elliot in terms of developing broad conceptual frameworks that seek to identify and explain the major periods of the early modern Spanish world. Scores of graduate students and professional historians have read Elliot's work with an eye toward dissecting his use of evidence, which he gathers from multiple sources, mainly in print form rather than archival-based, and the way he integrates the latest contributions to the historiography. Elliot is part of a cadre of British scholars who have shaped the field of Spanish and Spanish American history through a careful reading of an extensive range of printed matter and secondary materials. The works of David Brading, John Lynch, Anthony Pagden, and Hugh Thomas share shelf space with those written by J. H. Elliot. One would be hard-pressed to find a graduate research seminar about colonial Latin American history at a public or private research university in the United States or Canada that failed to assign at minimum one reading written by these British scholars (or, at the very least, readings that were shaped in part by the scholars' research and interpretations).

Elliot's latest contribution to the literature is a sequel of sorts to *Spain and Its World, 1500–1700* (1989), which tried to bring rhyme and reason to the field of Spanish historical writing. Elliot established a unity to early modern Spain by situating its politics, diplomacy, economy, and diverse society within a larger European context. Much of Elliot's scholarship has sought to link the Iberian Peninsula with the major patterns and personalities of European history, not to mention with the difficulties of maintaining such a vast and far-flung empire. Whether he makes analytical comparisons between the Count-Duke of Olivares and Cardinal Richelieu or the colonial projects of Spain and Great Britain, Elliot has done much to show his fellow Europeanists just how interconnected the historical experiences of Spain and Europe have been.

Often film critics express disappointment in Hollywood sequels. Historians will not have this problem with Elliot's sequel. As a series of lectures, articles, and conference papers, *Spain, Europe and the Wider World* elucidates a number