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Critical Essays on Native American Literature. Edited by Andrew Wiget. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1985. 266 pp. \$32.50 Cloth.

Recently, a considerable number of critical works of very high quality on Native American Literature have become available. It is much to be hoped that, in the press of this unwonted abundance, scholars will not overlook Andrew Wiget's fine collection of sixteen essays by various hands, prefaced by Wiget's own introductory history of the study of Native American literature. It fills a genuine need in the field and will be of great interest to all students of Indian literatures, both oral and written.

True, some very good collections of essays on Native American oral literatures have recently been published—Dell Hymes' *"In Vain I Tried to Tell You,"* Jarold Ramsey's *Reading the Fire*, and Dennis Tedlock's *The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation*, for example—but they reflect the perspective of only a single author and are of restricted geographical scope. On the other hand, the recent collections of essays by various authors—Dennis and Barbara Tedlock's *Teachings from the American Earth*, Karl Kroeber's *Traditional American Indian Literatures*, and Brian Swann's *Smoothing the Ground*, for example—while excellent given their intended scope, do not include any essays on the written literature of the Indians. Among older collections, Abraham Chapman's *Literature of the American Indians* remains useful, but is now out of print.

Two other recent books—Wiget's own *Native American Literature*, in the Twayne's United States Authors Series, and Kenneth Lincoln's *Native American Renaissance*—like *Critical Essays*, cover both oral and written literatures and give complete geographical coverage, but they represent the methodologies and perspectives of only a single author writing at a particular stage in the development of the discipline. *Critical Essays*, on the other hand, reprints hard-to-find seminal articles by various authors writing at various times.

A glance at Wiget's plan indicates its uniqueness. The essays deal with both oral and written literature, they give broad geographical coverage (from Chamula to Eskimo), and they also provide complete chronological coverage of the scholarship as well as the literature. Thus, in the first of the book's three main divisions, "Historical and Methodological Perspectives," Wiget

includes Schoolcraft's "Preliminary Observations on the Tales" (1839), as well as excerpts from Boas (1914), Levi-Strauss (1963), and Melville Jacobs (1959), and essays by Regna Darnell (1974), Gary Goosen (1974), and Arnold Krupat (1982). Most of these essays or selections are sufficiently difficult to locate that there is a significant advantage to having them reprinted here. Obviously, Wiget has gathered in this section materials that have great significance if the reader is interested in pursuing the development of the *study* of American Indian Literature.

The Schoolcraft excerpt is of interest chiefly for what it reveals about the state of scholarship in the first half of the nineteenth century, and the Boas and Levi-Strauss excerpts are still sound statements not only about methodology but about the literature itself. The Darnell and Gossen essays were new to me, and the Darnell essay, especially, gave interesting insights into storytelling and the way it is adapting to a changing world.

Some readers may wonder why Wiget has devoted almost half his space to what he calls "Historical and Methodological Perspectives." It is just this feature of the book, however, which I find to be the most valuable. First of all, it, by implication at least, makes the point that the study of Indian literature is a separate academic discipline, and that this discipline has a well-defined history and methodology (or methodologies) such that it deserves the respect of the rest of the academic community, and especially of the literary community. Secondly, these essays also demonstrate fruitfully and conclusively the eclectic nature of the discipline, and especially the importance of anthropology and linguistics. A collection such as this one will be used mostly by scholars who already have some interest in the field, but who are not specialists, and one of its most important functions is to educate them. This it can do by bringing to their attention scholarship which is valuable and which is either hard to find or not well known, and by arranging that scholarship according to some scheme which makes order out of it for the reader. In these respects, Wiget does a fine job in the first half of the collection.

The second section, titled "On Traditional Literature," is also excellent. It contains three essays: William Fenton's "This Island, The World on Turtle's Back" (1960/1962), an excellent introduction to traditional Iroquois literature and life; Barbara Babcock's often-cited "'A Tolerated Margin of Mess': The Trickster and His

Tales Reconsidered" (1975), an interpretation of the Trickster figure in general and of the well-known Winnebago cycle in particular; and a shorter, but very informative, analysis, written by Tom Lowenstein (1973), of Eskimo poems collected by Rasmussen. This section, as can be seen from the above description, follows the principle of geographical distribution, though not that of the chronological survey, established in the section on "Historical and Methodological Perspectives," and it also reflects a preference for scholarship grounded firmly in a specific culture (eg. Iroquois and Eskimo) rather than for overviews of Indian literature in general.

The final section of the book, "On Literature in English," is also quite successful. It contains two essays especially prepared for this collection, A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff's "American Indian Authors, 1774-1899," a survey designed to provide historical perspective, and Dexter Fisher's "The Transformation of Tradition: A Study of Zitkala Sa and Mourning Dove, Two Transitional American Indian Writers," which deals with the efforts of two women who were raised in the traditional way to transpose stories from the oral tradition into written literature.

These two essays provide the background for the last four in the collection: Lawrence J. Ever's "Words and Place: A Reading of *House Made of Dawn*" (1977), Kathleen M. Sands' "Alienation and Broken Narrative in *Winter in the Blood*," Elaine Jahner's "An Act of Attention: Event Structure in *Ceremony*," and Ever's "The Killing of a New Mexican State Trooper: Ways of Telling an Historical Event." The first three essays deal, respectively, with N. Scott Momaday, James Welch, and Leslie Silko, undoubtedly the three most important Indian writers of fiction at the present time, and the last article deals with how Silko, Simon Ortiz, and possibly Momaday embodied in their fiction the facts of the widely publicized murder of a New Mexico State Policeman by two Acoma Indians in 1952. Again Wiget has chosen his selections wisely; not only are these essays among the best, if not the best, on these authors, but taken together they provide very thorough coverage of literature written by Indians. Where there are gaps—Black Elk, for example, is not even mentioned in the book—it is due to the easy availability of criticism on the subject from other sources rather than to oversight.

Specialists as well as newcomers to the study of Native American literature will find this a valuable addition to their personal

libraries and will want to make certain that their institutional libraries have it as well.

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Psychological Research on American Indian and Alaska Native Youth. By Spero M. Manson, Norman G. Dinges, Linda M. Grounds, and Carl A. Kallgren. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984. 228 pp. \$35.00 Cloth.

This volume is a compilation of dissertations from 1960 to 1985 on various psychosocial research topics with American Indian and Alaska Native youth. It is intended to be a companion volume for *The Handbook of Psychosocial Research with American Indian Youth* (Dinges, Manson, and Trimble), which at the time of publication was forthcoming. The introduction provides the user with the rationale for collecting the information and the procedure employed for the cross-indexing of the dissertations. It also presents a brief commentary on research coverage and political trends in psychosocial research with American Indian and Alaskan Native youth during the period of time covered. The guide presents in a systematic fashion the title, author, abstract, and necessary retrieval data for 345 dissertations. The summary given for each dissertation, published originally in part or verbatim in *Dissertation Abstracts International*, includes standard information such as subject population sample size, sampling techniques, research questions, data collection procedures, results, and conclusions.

The material is organized into thirteen chapters under general topic heading as follows: 1) childrearing and socialization; 2) values and personality development; 3) mental health and adjustment; 4) language, bilingualism, and communication behavior; 5) intelligence; 6) learning abilities and cognition; 7) perceptual processes; 8) social perceptions and attitudes; 9) self-imagery; 10) achievement; 11) school environment; 12) educational policy; and 13) intervention. Within each chapter the dissertations are listed alphabetically by author, and each of the 345 dissertations is numbered sequentially throughout the text.

The technical means of accessing dissertations was patterned after a list of descriptive index terms taken from Dianne Kelso