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Dye's attention through the efforts of Rick Gwydir, the grandson of Rickard Gwydir, who provided Dye with additional family background materials. Dye offers a solid introduction to the entire manuscript, with a biography of Rickard Gwydir and a discussion on the nature of the text itself, including consideration of such topics as the "authenticity" of tribal narratives and the audience Gwydir sought to address. In a preface to each chapter and with the extensive use of footnotes, Dye also does a great job introducing background information that contextualizes the particular events and personalities introduced in each chapter. Any reader not well acquainted with the historical context of mid-1880s Plateau Indian affairs will find Dye's efforts at providing background materials particularly helpful.

While there can be unwarranted typographical errors discovered in any newly edited work, *Recollections from the Colville Indian Agency* has a fair number of obvious misspellings and other typos that can be rather distracting for the reader. In addition, there seems to be a missing section of the "Annual Report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1888" related to the Coeur d'Alene Reservation (appearing in Appendix 2). While references to other books are provided in the footnotes, it would have been helpful to the reader if Dye had included a complete bibliography or reference list of those sources at the end of the work. In addition, the curious reader would be well served with the inclusion of a brief biographical sketch of the book's editor, Kevin Dye. Nevertheless, these annoying editing-related errors and omissions should not be held against the overall value of this important contribution to the literature on the history of Indian-white relations among the Plateau peoples.

Recollections from the Colville Indian Agency 1886–1889 is a readable and accessible work, recommended for all audiences, which offers insights into an Indian agent and the tribal leaders he worked with at a critical time in Indian-white relations.

Rodney Frey

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Sister Nations: Native American Women Writers on Community. Edited by Heid E. Erdrich and Laura Tohe. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2002. 230 pages. \$24.95 paper.

Sister Nations is a new collection of poetry and short stories that fits neatly into the genealogy of edited collections of creative work by Native writers. It is, however, in Laura Tohe's estimation, one of only three books in the past three decades that have specifically collected Native American women's writing. Like Rayna Green's *That's What She Said*, *Sister Nations* does not aim to be comprehensive, but works to open the world in new and unvoiced ways. Tohe notes the book's debt to Green's early collection, and to the comprehensive and sizable anthology *Reinventing the Enemy's Language* edited by Joy Harjo and Gloria Bird. But while Harjo and Bird's text weighs in at 576 pages and covers a broad range of voices, visions, and topics, Tohe and Erdrich's volume is

selectively defined by the theme of the collection, that of community. Both strategies are important; the new volume offers the reader a close reading of some of the themes raised in the larger volume. There is also an important relationship between *Sister Nations* and collections of writings by women of color, a much larger group of texts. For instance, the new edition of *This Bridge Called My Back* and the recently published collection of essays reviewing the impact of that volume, *This Bridge We Call Home*, assert a community of women in ways similar to *Sister Nation*, but defined by politically and socially constructed contexts of nation, state, and economies. The volume under review here amplifies a community of women/sisters that is clearly defined by affiliation and commonality of experience from a very specific identity location.

Winona LaDuke writes the forward to the book, and remembers fondly the women who have been included in the collection. She begins by reminding us that “the women are telling stories, the women are singing” and admonishing us to listen. And this is important, to listen to these voices as they sing the community of Native women into being in the twenty-first century. In their introduction, editors Heid E. Erdrich and Laura Tohe offer unique insights into the process of making a book happen. They talk about the editorial process—of choosing, of designing, of talking and reading, of categorizing and defining in new ways the ideas, insights, and artistry of a wide range of writers. The book itself is divided into four sections, with a mix of poetry and short stories. Each section opens with a two-page introduction that carefully frames the material, and moves the reader into the ideas that are being explored.

The first section, “Changing Women,” expresses the “transformative and re-creative abilities of being female, of being changing women” (p. 4). Kateri akiwnzie-damm (Anishinaabe) opens the book with an amazing poem, “Sleepwalker”: “I / fall / asleep / in a house of old bones” (p. 7), then works to bind the wounds of separation and decay, calling on grandfather and grandmother to see her and lead to the medicine and the healing. So the journey of this collection begins as a dream state, a call to the gathering of the community here and beyond. The language of the poems in this section is brilliant, from the “cauldron womb” of Ester Belin’s “First Woman” to Susan Deer Cloud’s “Land of Ma’am.”

In the second section, “Strong Hearts,” poems and stories “are at once political and personal,” organized “around the notion of strength, the strength of bone and of that most powerful muscle in our bodies, the heart” (p. 65). In “The Shawl” Louise Erdrich returns again to the themes of her longer work—unimaginable pain and women’s brilliance in the face of chance and destiny. These first two sections replay and amplify explorations of community, blood, and history found in a number of Native collections, all the while focusing on women’s voices that are full of strength and hope in the face of cultural change and transformation.

Section Three, “New Age Pocahontas,” returns to the problems of the stereotypes of Native women circulating in mainstream cultural practices, the images in popular movies, the press, and in the new age spirituality movements. Some of the strongest work is here, refusing simple responses of denial

and anger. Marcie Rendon asks, “What’s an Indian woman to do / when the white girls act more Indian / than the Indian women do?” It’s a brilliant reversal, throwing into relief the problems of just what the categories “Indian” and “white” might really mean in the everyday. Pocahontas, Butter Maiden, Maize Girl all make appearances in this section, only to be vividly deconstructed and reconstituted as The Frybread Queen, Fleur, and White Buffalo Calf Woman among others.

The collection includes a widely representative set of women writers, but highlights clusters of tribal groups. There are excellent writers here—several are nationally and internationally recognized as among the best tribal voices of our time. Some of the writers are clearly known in other less mainstream circles. But the differences in market reputations do not indicate a disparity in the quality of the work. Joy Harjo’s beautiful short story, “How to Get to the Planet Venus” stands next to Esther Belin’s brilliant poem “Emergence” in respectful and joyous dialogue. Belin, like many of the newest generation of Native poets and writers, upends easy assumptions about mothers and daughters, fathers and geography, sex and cars (well maybe not about sex and cars). Both works are included in the final section, “In the Arms of the Skies,” a section that stands out in the book as one of the rare moments in Native fiction when “sensual and erotic love” is explored, one of those moments that Laura Tohe, in the section’s introduction, describes as “few and far between” in the body of work written by Native women.

The prose pieces included here are wonderfully chosen: brief and shiny, each one intense, condensed. The shortest is less than half a page long, and juxtaposes past and present, traditional and Christian, masculine and feminine brilliantly. Diane Glancy’s “The Abandoned Wife Gives Herself to the Lord” first quotes Chief Mark on monogamy as epigraph, then revisits the notion of wives as seen from the perspective of a woman thinking of becoming a bride of Christ. There are remarkable prose pieces here by Haaland, Smith, Harjo, Toledo-Benalli, Coke, and Danforth, and two by Louise Erdrich.

Yes, the narrative thread of this collection is that of community. But the community Erdrich and Tohe reveal here is one made through memory and remembrance, through affinity and affirmation, not only through geography and blood. Urban and reservation life are bound here by the common ground of storytelling and sisterhood. As Heid E. Erdrich remarks on the process of making this community, “So we began to gather voices that would explore the warmth, the fierceness, the cutting humor, and the tough love that is the heart of ‘Indian Country,’ that is the Native American woman in her world, our world” (p. xiii).

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