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Lushootseed stories (*Haboo: Native American Stories from Puget Sound*, University of Washington Press, 1985). Fifth, neither is this a demonstration of how linguists would segment and gloss a text, since no analysis is provided. I refer the readers to Hess and Hilbert's segmented text, "How Daylight was Stolen" ("Lushootseed," *International Journal of American Linguistics*, 1978) and also a recently published book of texts (Crisca Bierwert, ed., *Lushootseed Texts*, University of Nebraska Press, 1996). And last, although a Lushootseed-to-English glossary of words and affixes is given at the end of the book, it is not intended as a dictionary of Lushootseed. In fact, many words in the text cannot be straightforwardly looked up in the glossary. Instead, it is sometimes necessary to segment the word to find the root and its meaning. Furthermore, only forms used in this work are given. Fortunately, an excellent dictionary, one of the best on a Salishan language, has recently appeared (Dawn Bates, Thom Hess, and Vi Hilbert, *Lushootseed Dictionary*, University of Washington Press, 1994).

Overall this is a wonderful addition to the University of Montana series dedicated to the presentation of research on Native languages of the Northwest. The other works in this series are mostly dictionaries, word lists, and grammars. This is the first, but hopefully not the last, publication in the series that is written for educational purposes.

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Mediation in Contemporary Native American Fiction. By James Ruppert. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995. 174 pages. \$29.95 cloth.

Four of the eight chapters in this book are versions of articles Ruppert has published elsewhere during the last ten years. The first two introduce his central theoretical concepts: mediation, implied readers, and multiple narratives. The remaining six focus these concepts to illuminate "some of the best known and most widely read contemporary Native American novels" (p. ix). Ruppert's "method is to observe how such works address implied audiences and to explore how the self-representations intervene in metropolitan modes of understanding" (p. xi). The book reflects Ruppert's exceptionally thorough knowledge of the novels he

discusses as well as his wide reading in cultural studies. It is dense, challenging, theoretical, and highly abstract, frequently annoying and obscure, but ultimately rewarding. It takes as its epigraph a fine quote from Silko praising "the boundless capacity of language which, through storytelling, brings us together despite great distances between cultures, despite great distances in time," and its thesis is that contemporary Native American fiction brings "differing cultural codes into confluence to reinforce and re-create the structures of human life: the self, community, spirit, and the world we perceive" (p. 3).

The first chapter defines mediation as "an artistic and conceptual standpoint, constantly flexible, which uses the epistemological frameworks of Native American and Western cultural traditions to illuminate and enrich each other" (p. 3). Mediation is an inevitable and especially prominent feature of Native American discourse because of "the Native writer's bicultural heritage" (p. 15). All the authors Ruppert discusses are "mixed-bloods" (he quotes Vizenor on the "creative potential" of "Métis earthdivers"), and he remarks that "Whether by blood or experience, Native Americans today, especially writers, express a mixed heritage" (p. 20).

Arguing from the premise of this mixed heritage, Ruppert applies Iser's concept of the implied reader to Native American fiction, finding that such bicultural writers as Momaday, Welch, Silko, Vizenor, McNickle, and Erdrich generate texts which "assign roles for [both] Native and non-Native readers to assume" (p. 6). Thus, "Native American writers write for two audiences—non-Native and Native American—or in many cases three audiences—a local one, a pan-tribal one, and a non-Native contemporary American one" (p. 15).

The second chapter develops a theory of "multiple narratives" based on the twin premises of mediation and Native and non-Native implied readers. Non-Native implied readers operate from the epistemological framework of traditional Western culture (p. 33), which is characterized by "linearity, nonassociative thinking, and a concept of rationality that rests on a psychological view of character" (p. 31). Native implied readers, on the other hand, operate from a very different epistemological framework, which Ruppert characterizes as "mythic," "apsychological," "immediate," and "communal" (pp. 25-30). Native American fiction, then, mediates these different epistemological frameworks, and "four possible types of stories are generated: the mythological story, the communal story, the psychological

story, and the sociological story," although not all Native American texts "will manifest all four 'stories' to equal degrees" (p. 33).

Subsequent chapters apply these theoretical perspectives with rigorous consistency to the analysis of *House Made of Dawn*, *Winter in the Blood*, *Ceremony*, *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles*, *Wind from an Enemy Sky*, and *Love Medicine*, but the degree to which this approach illuminates the texts is sometimes problematic. The following analysis of mediation in *House Made of Dawn* illustrates the turbidity which occasionally mars the book: "Momaday strategically foregrounds chants, peyote religion discourse, myths, memories, and oral history, and lets them interrogate existence until each field sees its discourse as without hegemony and as a translation of language of the Other. I would call this confluence the oral form of the novel" (p. 38).

Nor is Ruppert's handling of the implied reader without problems. Often he simply suggests how implied readers would respond without explaining why they would respond in that way: "The implied Native [reader] might appreciate Tosamah's discussion of the power of the word, but also note that he violates the very truth he would preach" (p. 48). Occasionally, Ruppert forgets that implied readers are not real readers: "As years of critical commentary on the novel have shown, an implied non-Native reader would not readily participate in the humor of the courtroom scene nor in [*sic*] Tosamah's description of Abel's behavior" (p. 48). The commentary of "real non-Native readers" can be cited to demonstrate how closely the response of an implied reader corresponds to that of a real reader, but the ground for the implied response must be sought in the text itself.

Ruppert points to his more than "twenty years of experience with students, writers, and educators, but especially Native students and writers, [which] form the basis of this book" (p. vii). But these students are readers, not implied readers. To examine the roles and responses of implied readers, Ruppert must demonstrate how their responses grow out of the text. Discussing *Winter in the Blood*, he writes, "The implied Native readers would most likely recognize the value of dreams and visions, sweat lodge-related activities, and the wisdom of elders, especially relatives." How do these "implied Native readers" differ from "Native readers"? Are implied Native readers the same as "potential Native readers"? And as Ruppert continues his analysis, it becomes clear that his implied readers, Native or not, are incredibly sophisticated. The implied non-Natives might

expect the revelation of his [the unnamed narrator's] true heritage to produce meaning. Yet the Native paradigm would resonate enough to keep the non-Native reader from closure because he or she would also sense the essentially mythic pattern of meaning here. Even in the question of revelation, enough of the Native notion of reality would disturb the non-Native's expected construction of meaning, misreading leading to rereading and reconsideration (p. 68). A more accurate term for these readers is "imaginary readers" because they are products of the imagination rather than of implication. And it would be rather arrogant of Ruppert to imagine that he understands so intimately the responses of these implied Native readers (and of implied non-Native readers, for that matter) were they other than products of his imagination.

The opening paragraph of Ruppert's discussion of *Love Medicine* provides an example of the problems that occur when the analysis combines the concept of implied readers with that of mediation: "Erdrich must mediate between two conceptual frameworks, non-Native and Native.... She endeavors to manipulate each audience so that it will experience the novel through the paths of understanding unique to each culture, thus assuring protection and continuance of a newly appreciated and experienced Native American epistemological reality" (p. 131). Why this mediation should result in a "newly appreciated and experienced *Native American* epistemological reality" is never explained, nor is the concept of "epistemological reality" ever defined or illustrated. Is it a way of knowing or is it something known, and what specifically is it in *Love Medicine*? Annoyingly, Ruppert simply drops the point and moves on.

It is disappointing to find Ruppert, especially in the more theoretical chapters, perpetuating a generic view of one homogenous Native American culture that ignores tribal differences. He fails to provide evidence that there is just one epistemological framework, one path to understanding, unique to all Native cultures (or non-Native cultures). It is stereotyping to attribute to all Native readers one epistemological framework and to all non-Native readers another, different framework. It is arguable, I suppose, from a theoretical point of view, that not all stereotyping is socially negative, but by definition stereotyping is logically fallacious. And these epistemological frameworks and paths of understanding are as stereotypical as are the implied Native and non-Native readers who are supposed to have them. If it is argued that the epistemological perspectives

which Ruppert attributes to Native cultures and traditional Western culture have significant validity, such validity must obtain at a higher level than that of ethnicity—at the level of literate and nonliterate cultures perhaps. But at this level, the distinction ceases to be valid with respect to the literate Native American authors whom Ruppert discusses.

Why is Ruppert so committed to these stereotypical imaginary readers and epistemological frameworks? The answer can probably be found in his eagerness to demonstrate the applicability of Bakhtinian dialogic to Native American texts and his understandable desire to demonstrate for contemporary Native American fiction a positive social function—the “bringing together” that Silko attributes to storytelling in general and that Ruppert identifies as the peculiar *métier* of contemporary Native American fiction. The mediational approach allows Ruppert to show that Native American texts, which he obviously and rightly values so highly, affect readers, Native and non-Native alike, in ways that promote his desired sociopolitical agenda.

Few readers of either or any ethnicity, I suspect, will object to this agenda, but many readers, I equally suspect, will emerge from these chapters feeling encumbered rather than enlightened by Ruppert’s analysis. Enlightenment there is, but it is not easily had.

Ruppert’s book needs to be read in the context of other recent studies of Native American fiction. Lewis Owens, in *Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel* (1992), and Robert M. Nelson, in *Place and Vision: The Function of Landscape in Native American Fiction* (1993), have both provided clear, sensible, insightful discussions of contemporary Native American novels, and Alan R. Velie’s *Four American Indian Literary Masters* (1982) remains a reliable resource, especially for students.

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The Native American in Long Fiction: An Annotated Bibliography. By Joan Bream and Barbara Branstad. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 1996. 359 pages. \$56.00 cloth.

According to its authors, *The Native American in Long Fiction: An Annotated Bibliography* has been designed as a current and extensive resource for locating works of long fiction that offer alternatives to