

Linda Hogan. *Seeing Through the Sun.* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1985) 80 pp., \$16.00; \$6.95 paper.

A Chickasaw of mixed blood who grew up in Oklahoma and now lives in Minnesota, Linda Hogan writes spare poems pulled skin tight over the bones and blood and flesh they contain. She does not exploit her Native American experience to make poems; she does not need to. Her references to “the old sky woman,” “black corn dolls,” and “evicted grandmothers,” who walk “wrapped in trade cloth,” are integrated into the sense of life which fills her poems; yet the tensions which come from having inherited two distinct traditions are not ignored:

In my left pocket a Chickasaw hand
rests on the bone of the pelvis.
In my right pocket
a white hand. Don't worry. It's mine.
...
Girl, I say
it's dangerous to be a woman of two countries.
You've got your hands in the dark of
two empty pockets.

Linda Hogan's central concern in this collection is not to explore what divides people, but to see through what separates us and to discover the essence of things, the ordinary pain and joy of love. She invites a lover to “lie down on the banks of the river/and listen to water's pulse”; she brings to the suffering Senora of Hysteria “a cup of peppermint tea/and honey/it was fine blue/with marigolds growing inside the curves”; she teaches her daughters “to turn the soil/one grain at a time. They plant so carefully/seeds grow from their hands.” She wishes that all boundaries become permeable:

May all walls be like those of the jungle,
filled with animals
singing into the ears of night.
Let them be
made of the mysteries further in
the heart, joined with the lives of all,
all bridges of flesh,
all singing,
all covering the wounded hand
showing again, again, that the
boundaries are all lies.

Some of the best poems in this fine collection are found in its third section, “Daughters Sleeping.” These poems Hogan wrote for her daughters are full of mother's love but remain unsentimental:

The shriveled winter cactus.
One drop of water
raises it from dry sand.
This is what I teach my daughters,
that we are women,
a hundred miles of green
wills itself out of our skin.

The common events of human experience—planting trees, chopping wood, helping a friend, holding a child—she handles honestly with a sureness of vision and deft control of rhythm. The poems are filled with sharp images of sun, light, stars, trees, bones, dawn, rain. The voice we hear is conversational but never casual. At times it commands the reader: “take my hand,” “go in,” “speak, tell me everything”; at other times it eases us with surreal visions: death dancing, wearing a suede jacket, and taking liberties with her; “and the frogs, evicted for weeping,/falling out of Room 103,/their toes spread like stars.” Linda Hogan’s poems are a celebration of life that has moved beyond sorrow:

I am done with weeping
The bones of this body say, dance.
Dance the story of life.
Mothers, rise up from the table.
Watch me, I will dance all our lives.

—Victor Macaruso
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A. William Hogle. *Immigrants and Their Children in the United States: A Bibliography of Doctoral Dissertations, 1885-1982.* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1986) 491 pp., \$70.00.

All disciplines dealing with immigrants and their children in the continental United States since 1789 are represented in this compilation of titles of doctoral dissertations. This bibliography will prove invaluable for most scholars in ethnic studies. The title, unfortunately, may be misleading. It refers to the subject matter of dissertations, and, as such, the volume attests to and illustrates in a concrete way, the historical development of research in ethnic studies. A simple reference to ethnic studies in the title would have been less ambiguous.

An informative preface precedes the bibliography, and Hogle discusses here the text’s limitations (such as exclusions of titles on the native ethnic groups—Hawaiians, Eskimos, and American Indians—on black slaves brought to the United States in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and on Spanish-speaking residents in the Southwest before annexation), and he provides statistical analyses of 3,543 dissertations completed between 1885 and 1982 and dealing with immigrant topics in the period since 1789. These analyses confirm a steady increase in interest shown by academics and other Americans in