

Rayna Green, ed. *That's What She Said: Contemporary Poetry and Fiction by Native American Women*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984) xix, 329 pp., \$29.95; \$12.50 paper.

This book begins to meet a significant need; ignorance of writings by women of color prevails throughout the American academic/literary establishment, most instructors being unacquainted even with writers like Leslie Silko and Louise Erdrich. Rayna Green's most important accomplishment may be that her anthology introduces serious readers to Native American women's writing. The collection comprises generous samplings from seventeen contemporary authors writing in English: seven pieces of fiction and almost 200 poems. Silko's work is absent, apparently because of copyright problems; writers represented include Erdrich, Paula Gunn Allen, Wendy Rose, Shirley Hill Witt, Linda Hogan, Joy Harjo, Carol Lee Sanchez.

Despite diversity in authors' ages, residence and tribal/cultural/descent affiliations, their works show surprising stylistic uniformity. If Native American women write sonnets, blank verse, heroic couplets, ballad measure, political satire, invective, odes, or other metrical forms, we don't find it here. The poems are all free verse short lyrics, usually in first-person Standard English. Some cautious experimentation appears, notably in Sanchez' work, Nora Dauenhauer's concrete poem, and a few haiku. Nor do these writers explore traditional forms: Green's short fiction is indebted to story-telling modes; a few poems hint of chant forms, a "forty-nine," macaronic usage, perhaps Northwest lyric forms—that's all. Even Erdrich, who brilliantly captures unique speech rhythms in her prose, resort to all-purpose "poetic" first-person for poems.

The scholar's major interest may be the collection's thematic consistency. From invention of a "typical" Native American woman in the introduction, through a glossary giving "usages common to the authors," to attributions of mixed affiliation (e.g., Laguna/Sioux/Lebanese) in contributors' notes, the text as a whole documents the construction of a new (self)consciousness—trans/cultural?—among these writers. Many poems reflect preoccupation with identity (e.g., Sanchez: "yo soy india/ pero no soy . . . yo soy anglo/ pero no soy . . ."). The writers themselves are socially active—involved in feminism, education, tribal, community and other organizations. These choices may reflect the preference of the editor (anthropologist, feminist, former Peace Corps volunteer, all-around consciousness-raiser) for social commitment, or the condition of being Native American, or both.

Production is excellent: good paper, binding, typesetting, proofreading (except the egregious inclusion in Mary TallMountain's "The Ivory Dog . . ." of stanzas from another poem), but the portrait photos do not always reproduce well. The Bibliography, perforce selective, is irritatingly inconsistent: some (not all) works have evaluative annotations (the longest on the editor's bibliographical monograph). Annotations are

inconsistent: it is possible, for instance, to find out that Anna Walters' work appears in *Frontiers* but not that it is in *The Man To Send Rain Clouds*. The important anthology of Southwest writing, *The South Corner of Time*, appears in the acknowledgments but not the bibliography. On the plus side, it includes audio and videotapes, presses and journals relevant to Native American women. As with any anthology, every reader will lament some omissions; my choices—Ofelia Zepeda, Marnie Walsh and Irene Nakai—might at least be mentioned in the bibliography. And, texts should be dated. These, however, are minor problems, to be addressed in forthcoming works. Rayna Green has taken an important and much-needed first step in this anthology, and we are all in her debt.

—Helen Jaskoski
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David Greenslade. *Welsh Fever*. (Cowbridge, Wales, U.K.: D. Brown and Sons, 1986) 258 pp., \$16.95.

Greenslade's rather mod title underlines his main thesis—namely, that ethnic consciousness among Welsh descendants in North America is very high indeed. Both his own evidence and my own observations convince me that he is perfectly justified in his assertion. The one thing he does not really address is “why?”

Greenslade documents the revival of many clubs and sponsors of hymn-singing sessions which had lapsed in the 1940s and 1950s, and is particularly clear in showing the degree to which Welsh-language learning classes throughout the continent are flourishing.

At the center of Welsh affairs in North America is the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association which sponsors a national meeting at which hymn singing in Welsh and English is featured. The group, despite rather ineffectual efforts to encourage younger Welsh-Americans to take an active part, still attracts some two to three thousand people to its yearly meetings. Local groups are equally vital.

Based on over a year of traveling throughout North America to get first hand accounts of the over eighty local Welsh societies as well as the relatively few national organizations, his book is fully detailed. At times it is too detailed, mentioning as it does the existence of the American Daffodil Association and the fact that Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton were married in Toronto and that when she sent congratulations to them, a Welsh *grand dame* there received an autographed picture from the stars.

I am not sure how many students of ethnicity would be likely to read