

demographics of the United States and the unique experience of Latinas/os.

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MARK RIFKIN. *When Did Indians Become Straight? Kinship, the History of Sexuality, and Native Sovereignty.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). 440 pp., \$99 (cloth), \$35 (paper).

Mark Rifkin's second monograph, *When Did Indians Become Straight*, is an intellectually rigorous and theoretically dense work that explores the relationship between Indigenous political formations and heteronormativity by presenting a literary history of sexuality that spans the last two centuries. Rifkin argues that the settler state's investment in, and enforcement of, heterosexuality as the basic organizing structure of society is a response to the fact that "Indigeneity puts the state in crisis by raising fundamental questions about the legitimacy of its (continued) existence" (37). As a result, Indigenous geopolitical alliances that exceed liberal state logics of what counts as "proper governance" are interpellated as "aberrant or anomalous modes of (failed) domesticity" in an political economy of privatization, where heterosexual coupling is portrayed as a natural expression of "the family" (37). Rifkin demonstrates that "heteroconjugality" is the condition of possibility for political

intelligibility within United States institutions for Native people. On the one hand, United States discourses of sexuality, work to selectively recognize Native social forms that align with liberal settler frameworks, and on the other they mark Indigenous difference as a threat to the national order. Therefore Indigenous political subjectivity, defined by affective networks of kinship relations, not only falls outside the scope of settler political reality, but it actively challenges the state's continued legitimacy by insisting on the preexistence of polities external to the state.

Rifkin also interrogates the ways in which Native social formations have been divorced from their inherent implications for Indigenous sovereignty and co-opted as queer alternatives to those opposed to heterosexual hegemony. Using the popularity of Two Spirit identity as an example, Rifkin illustrates how contemporary queers uphold Native sociopolitical formations as a "resource" to help non-Natives to articulate a more inclusive vision of society. In doing so, they position kinship networks (and Native peoples) as fitting comfortably within the political landscape of the United States, rather than engaging with Native nations as discrete polities or recognizing the havoc wreaked on those same networks by United States policy.

Throughout the book, Rifkin develops a queer methodology that depends on a critical redeployment of sovereignty and kinship – one that not only acknowledges how both terms can mark the interpellation of Native people into the heteronormative structures of the settler state, but also how they can also be used to stretch the terms of United States legal discourse to account for collective geopolitical alliances exterior to the state.

The book consists of three chronologically organized sets of paired chapters, the first of which examines novels written in the 1820s, in order to illustrate the imposition of heterosexual logics of inherited racial "blood" that superseded preexisting geopolitical kinship dynamics. The second set of chapters looks at how Native writers contested attempts by the General Allotment Act and the Indian Reorganization Act to "detrribalize" Native people by imposing heteronuclearity and rendering Native governance consistent with settler ideologies. Rifkin's analysis suggests that while these authors insisted on the validity and coherence of kinship networks as political formations, they fell prey to what he calls the "bribe of straightness" – seeking legitimacy from the state by disavowing aspects of Native social formations that did not align with the heteroconjugal norm. The fourth and fifth chapters use contemporary texts to depict the appropriation of depoliticized versions of Indigenous kinship forms by non-Native queers in ways that obscure the ongoing presence of Native peoples and the connection between sociocultural formations and struggles for Native self-determination. Conversely, this final section

also addresses the modern queer Native critique that links Native homophobia to the intrusions of US imperial policy, and insists on the coherence of longstanding clan networks as form of peoplehood.

While Rifkin's work is a significant accomplishment in its own right, it also serves as a valuable addition to the developing body of work that combines Queer Studies and Native Studies. Recent works by Jennifer Denetdale, Quo-Li Driskill, Chris Finley, Brian Gilley, Scott Lauria Morgensen, and Andrea Smith also link the operation of heteronormativity to settler colonialism and the denial of Indigenous sovereignty. In *When Did Indians Become Straight*, Rifkin critiques Queer Theory for its unacknowledged investment in settler colonialism, pointing out that queer challenges to heteroconjugality as the determining factor for the organization of resource distribution still position the settler state as the appropriate distributor of resources. Instead he advocates for a queer critique of heteronormativity that contests, rather than presumes, the existence of the nation state, and centers Indigenous peoples. While it could be argued that the book's considerable length limits its utility in the undergraduate classroom, its analytical depth and expansive scope certainly justify the extra pages. Overall, *When Did Indians Become Straight* represents a major intellectual feat and an important contribution to the fields of Native, Queer, and Literary Studies.

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H. SAMY ALIM AND GENEVA SMITHERMAN. *Articulate While Black: Barack Obama, Language, and Race in the U.S.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). 205 pp., \$25 (paper).

In his introduction to *Articulate While Black* Michael Eric Dyson frames Barack Obama as the Orator-in-Chief and the authors would certainly agree with that assessment. Alim and Smitherman argue that in order to have an open and honest discussion about race in the United States, we must look at its linguistic dimensions; we need to *language* race, to view the racial politics of the United States through the lens of language (xviii). This book seeks to untangle *how* we talk about race and what assumptions are being made based on a speaker's use of language.

Chapter one delves into Obama's ability to styleshift or move in and out of linguistic styles – between varieties of the same language" (5). By analyzing Obama's linguistic styles during a visit to Ben's Chili Bowl, Ray's Hell Burger, campaign rallies, and his famous race speech, Alim and Smitherman highlight the ways in which the president moves be-