

Laguna land, Archuleta employs race and space to conjecture Silko's sense of land as multispaced and transnational—a fact due partially to the un-landedness of Native peoples in the Americas.

In her essay “‘The Web of Stories’: Reading and Change in Leslie Marmon Silko’s *Storyteller*,” Linda Krumholtz considers Silko’s text in conversation with poststructuralism. Intriguingly, Krumholtz points out the congruences between the Derridean notion that language is world and Silko’s assertion that narrative and stories make up reality. David Stirrup’s “‘This Story Is Found’: Silko’s *Storyteller* and the *Roots* of Native American Literature” takes a materialist perspective. From the peritext of *Storyteller*’s original jacket copy that likened it to Alex Haley’s *Roots*, Stirrup embarks on a nuanced and useful analysis of *Storyteller*’s context in publishing and literary culture, noting the universalizing dangers of multicultural rhetoric. Finally, Ami Regier’s “*Storyteller* in an Undergraduate Theory Course” is a pedagogical essay recounting Regier’s experience teaching four critical methodologies through Silko’s text—undoubtedly beneficial for instructors interested in bringing Silko into the classroom.

Rainwater has edited a wide-ranging collection. The application of new critical paradigms to an under-considered Silko text not only offers persuasive new readings but also gestures toward directions for further scholarship.

Nancy Marie Mithlo. *Knowing Native Arts*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2020. 272 pp. Hardcover, \$34.95.

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Knowing Native Arts, an essay collection spanning thirty-five years of scholarship, makes several contributions. Scholars studying the art of Emily Arthur, Marie Watt, Tom Jones, Edward Curtis, and Jimmie Durham will gain from how Nancy Mithlo reads these texts with a focus on questions of political histories, Indigenous self-determination, and cultural authenticity. For instance, she highlights how Arthur’s screen print *Re-Remembering (Not History)*, hosted first by the Crisp-Ellert Art Museum at Flagler College in Saint Augustine, “inserts the veiled histories of assimilation and imprisonment into Saint Augustine’s celebratory anniversary” (54). Accounting throughout for differences in theoretic-

cal approaches as well as media, Mithlo underscores a different method in Watt's *Witness*, a reclaimed wool blanket: "While Arthur brings the past forward into a contemporary Florida landscape, giving Southern Plains leaders a chance to return home, Watt has traveled backward in time, bringing along her two daughters to witness the deeply infused cultural protocols of First Nations peoples" (58–60). And in her chapter "Decentering Durham," one of the multiple essays she has written on the Durham controversy over the years, she insists that "supporting a political cause does not require that you fabricate your identity" (200). Following the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association statement on "Indigenous identity fraud," she adds that belonging is not merely a matter of who you claim to be; it is about who claims you (201).

Through Mithlo's perceptive lens, page by page *Knowing Native Arts* becomes more than a book about aesthetics. It operates less through a central claim and more as a constellation: taken together, the essays illuminate media, methods, and histories of fine arts often excluded from museum spaces and academic discussions. Read this way, *Knowing Native Arts* becomes about ethics and politics. The idea in art history that "aesthetics are nonpolitical," Mithlo writes, "privileges the art object as separate and detached from considerations of statehood, nation, and citizenship" (102). But this is not to say that political art is "akin to a propaganda poster" (103). Rather than proceed via such an "unambiguous reading," *Knowing Native Arts* offers a "broader reading," arguing that "political art is art that is meant to disturb, question, and undermine social standards" (103). It is the way that Mithlo's set of readings speaks to broader political questions today that I want to consider in the rest of this brief review. Perhaps more interesting to readers of this journal than continuing to summarize her discussion of the aforementioned artists, I think, will be a sense of the politics *Knowing Native Arts* both suggests and performs.

Mithlo is an expert on material culture in more ways than one. "The field of Native arts is a tough gig," she states in her conclusion. "There is a lack of recognition, a lack of resources, simply a lack" (229). Her chapters consistently attend to the material conditions that permitted or precluded her scholarship. She does this in a substantive, not symbolic way. Many academics, even and especially those trained to write about political economy, discuss the production of their books at most by citing a

prestigious grant in the acknowledgments section. Like many academic books, Mithlo's emerged from a series of presentations she gave around the world. Unlike most academic books, Mithlo acknowledges this genesis, beginning her chapters by detailing where she first presented the materials. In her final chapter, she even includes a section of email correspondence, which shows the reader how ideas and interventions actually travel and gain traction (218–21). The effect of this writing style, chapter after chapter, is to provide a way into the actual proceedings of an academic's life. It would be difficult to overstate the importance of Mithlo's style with a view toward actual changes in the accessibility of the academy. She provides a point of relatable entry in what is otherwise a competitive and often demeaning context.

"The academy is not neutral," Mithlo says early on (9). She begins by reflecting on whether or not her academic work "has resulted in anything substantively meaningful" (1). If we ask ourselves this question, in a context where the world is on fire, where police states rule that world, and if we acknowledge, as she asks us to right away (1–2), that our pedagogy often has a very limited effect (our students become business consultants or corporate lawyers instead of artists and activists); and if we acknowledge still, as Mithlo again does, that our radical papers are given at conferences whose main purpose is finding out about grants, jobs, and publishing opportunities (11), then why do we keep doing the same thing year after year? Mithlo's point is that "success" in the Americas in general, including the near-constant, uprooted and uprooting travel that is part of contemporary US academic success, is so often "built upon the death and dispossession of Indigenous peoples and their homelands" (188).

In other words, Mithlo argues that academics are not immune from proceeding, as she writes about the reception of Native arts, "in the context of a nation that has forgotten the imprisonment, has forgotten the genocide, has forgotten the war waged against American Indian people in defense of their homelands" (102). These gaps are all part of a "lack of critical engagement" (7). She asks us to consider how "heightened visibility"—and I am thinking here of land acknowledgments at the beginning of the aforementioned successful conferences—can without a larger sense of responsibility become part of "event-based publicity" that, despite its signal and "periodic attention to the cause," is "a compo-

ment of a larger system of reception that simply consumes, regurgitates, and then ignores an awareness of Native rights rather than a building movement with increased power of self-representation over time” (35).

Importantly, Mithlo does not give the critical impulse the last word. She goes on to outline a path for broader, positive engagement: “Indigenous arts today exceed the parameters of what constitutes art and challenge art critics to learn new modes of perception, frames of reference, and notions of reality” (82). In the same way, *Knowing Native Arts* exceeds the parameters of an academic publication, challenging its readers “to creatively manifest a different reality” in their most basic daily orientations and practices (118). It is about “being of service to community,” Mithlo explained to me in our own email correspondence, from which this review emerged.

Overall, Mithlo sees art as “a means by which we can collectively think through current global realities” (4). While she leaves this “we” undefined, perhaps allowing the reader to read themselves into it, her focus is clear all along: “Knowing Native arts means knowing something of the perspectives, histories, and challenges of Native lives” (4). *Knowing Native Arts* deserves acknowledgment at least for the style in which it advances this knowledge. It is rare for an academic writer to share so much of their own story, of the actual complicated process of their book’s and their own cultural production, because each point of disclosure often becomes a point of vulnerability from which a “critical reader” begins an attack. *Knowing Native Arts* always risks being subject to this narrow reading for the sake of sharing its insights. In doing so, *Knowing Native Arts* was the most sophisticated book I read in 2020: it is more rigorous than most academic books in actually trying to respond to the questions it raises; more thorough in detailing how concrete material practices travel, uplift, and oppress; more difficult in inviting its readers into new practices instead of dismissing those it finds insufficient in some way; and more demanding in staying close to the communities it serves.

What matters, I am suggesting in reviewing this book from my position not within the field but at a center for ethics, is how this knowledge is taken up in turn. “Native contributions to global dialogues are not solely for the benefit of Native communities,” Mithlo reminds her reader (93). To stay relevant, she continues, cultural institutions from muse-

ums to universities “will need to accommodate these new interventions” (93). Writing from this position, I suggest that *Knowing Native Arts* offers a necessary perspective not only for undergraduate and graduate courses on Indigenous art, art history across the Americas, and so on, but also for introduction to ethics, advanced classes on the philosophy of art and on value theory, and graduate seminars on aesthetics.

Siobhan Senier. *Sovereignty and Sustainability: Indigenous Literary Stewardship in New England*. 2020. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2020. 233 pp. Hardcover, \$55.00.

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Siobhan Senier’s *Sovereignty and Sustainability: Indigenous Literary Stewardship in New England* is an accessible treatise on why sustainability cannot exist without Indigenous sovereignty. With attention to the continuous traditions introduced in its title, Senier curates a regional archive of Native authors writing in what is currently called New England who have, despite their relative obscurity in the broader context of American literature, stewarded their own literary traditions as a means of sustaining tribal sovereignty, community health, and environmental relations. Senier shows, in the context of the ongoing violences of settler colonialism, the revolutionary nature of tending traditions of sovereignty and sustainability across time and space.

The book skillfully balances literary analysis, the historical detail necessary to understanding the project at hand, and the participant-observer character of Senier’s relationship to the work as the editor of *Dawnland Voices: An Anthology of Indigenous Writing from New England* (2014). *Sovereignty and Sustainability* masterfully mingles the politics of literary study, the ethics of methodology and canon-building, university knowledge production, and the community-accountability necessary for non-Native scholars working in Indigenous studies. The introduction offers a genealogy of the book’s titular concepts with precise examples, clear organization, and transparent citational practices. This clarity continues throughout, evidencing a depth of theoretical and historical understanding for each writer, community, and literary form it considers. The book places those specificities in relation to the