

PERIODICAL RESOURCES

# GATHERINGS

THE EN'OWKIN JOURNAL OF FIRST  
NORTH AMERICAN PEOPLES



**Volume 1**

**Issue 1**

**Fall  
1990**

**PREMIERE ISSUE**

# EN'OWKIN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF WRITING

The En'owkin International School of Writing assists First Nations students to find their voices as writers. Through this process, we promote understanding of the complexity of First Nations peoples.

Students work directly with a team of renowned First Nations writers. The program explores the unique cultural environment of First Nations peoples as reflected in their literature. The courses develop skills in the use of metaphor such as the coyote, the horse, and the owl. Student writers develop their skills in a stimulating atmosphere of encouragement and discovery.

## **Admission Criteria:**

North American First Nations Ancestry.

Eligible for university entrance, or have completed one or more years of an undergraduate program.

A submission of 10-15 pages of original written work at the time of application.

Tuition: Tuition is \$2000.00 each year. Books and supplies are estimated at \$400.00.

Classes begin the first week of September.

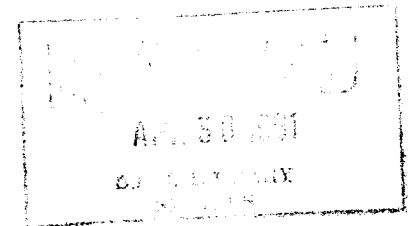
*For full calendar and registration information contact:*

**Admissions,  
En'owkin Centre, 257 Brunswick Street  
Penticton, B.C. V2A 5P9 Canada  
Telephone (604) 493-7181  
Fax (604) 493-2882**

# GATHERINGS

*The En'owkin Journal of First  
North American Peoples*

SURVIVAL ISSUE



Theytus Books, Penticton, British Columbia

**GATHERINGS:**

The En'owkin Journal of First North American Peoples

Volume 1 Issue 1 August 1990

Published annually by Theytus Books Ltd. for the En'owkin Centre  
International School of Writing

Managing Editor: David Gregoire

Associate Editors: Maria Baptiste                      Arnie Louie  
Forrest Funmaker                      Leona Lysons  
Conrad George                      Jeff Smith  
Brian Scrivener

Guest Editorial: Ann Wallace

Page Composition: Jeff Smith, Manager                      Forrest Funmaker  
Theytus Books Ltd.                      En'owkin Centre

Cover Design: David Gregoire/Jeff Smith

Cover Art: Jeannette Armstrong/Lee Maracle/Forrest  
Funmaker/Jeff Smith

Subscriptions are \$13.00 for individuals and \$14.00 for institutions. A price list  
will be mailed on request.

Please inquire about our advertising rates and contributors' guidelines.

Please send submissions, letters, and subscriptions to 'Gatherings, c/o En'owkin  
Centre, 257 Brunswick Street, Penticton, B.C. V2A 5P9 Canada. All submissions  
must be accompanied by self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE). Manuscripts  
without SASEs may not be returned. We will not consider previously published  
manuscripts or visual art.

'Bicenti.' by Anna Lee Walters has previously appeared in *Tarasque II*,  
published by Albuquerque United Artists 1985, Albuquerque, NM.  
Reprinted by permission.

Copyright remains with the artist and/or author. No portion of this journal may be  
reproduced in any form whatsoever without written permission from the author  
and/or artist.

Typeset by Theytus Books Ltd. Printed and bound in Canada

We gratefully acknowledge Canada Council for their financial  
assistance in the production this premiere issue.

Copyright © 1990 for the authors

ISSN 1180-0666



**WILLIAMS-WALLACE PUBLISHERS**

*New literary works from Canada's leading  
Multicultural publisher.*

**Daughters of the Sun, Women of the Moon  
Anthology of Canadian Black Women Poets  
Edited by Ann Wallace**

*This major anthology brings the richness and diversity of  
writings from the diaspora.*

ISBN 0-88795-091-4

\$11.95

**Another Way to Dance  
Anthology of Asian Canadian Poets  
Edited by Cyril Dabydeen**

*A celebration of life and living by some of Canada's  
finest poets.*

ISBN 0-88795-084-1

\$11.95

**Coyote City — A Play  
by Daniel David Moses**

*This enthralling play looks at the lives of Native people  
caught in a life and death struggle for spiritual survival.*

ISBN 0-88795-090-6

\$7.95

TO ORDER BOOKS: DEC Book Distribution, 229 College  
Street, Toronto M5T 1R4, Canada  
INLAND Book Company Inc.  
254 Bradley Street, East Haven, Conn.  
06512 U.S.A.



**FIRST NATIONS HOUSE OF LEARNING**  
UBC

- \* Dedicated to quality preparation in all fields of post-secondary study.
- \* Quality education means relevance to the philosophy and values of First Nations.

**COURSES AND PROGRAMS AVAILABLE**

- \* Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP)
- \* Ts'kel Program (M.Ed., M.A., Ed.D., Ph.D)
- \* Native Law Program
- \* First Nations Health Care Professions Program
- \* Courses related to First Nations are available in a variety of Faculties, Schools and Departments.

**OPPORTUNITIES IN CREATIVE WRITING!**

*The Department of Creative Writing at UBC and the First Nations House of Learning invites you to explore creative writing opportunities leading to a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts.*

**Interested? Write for our Calendar!**

First Nations House of Learning, UBC  
6365 Biological Sciences Road, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1W5  
Telephone: (604) 222-8940/ Fax: (604) 222-8944

## En'owkin International School of Writing



A message from  
**Jeannette Armstrong**  
and  
**Joy Kogawa**



*"As writers we want to ask  
you to consider the following  
and invest in a dream  
we both share"*

The wisdom and strength  
of ancient cultures should be written,  
First Nations story-tellers  
should be heard,  
the path of healing should be shared,  
the dominant world-view  
should be challenged.

We ask you to share in our dream to teach and train First Nations writers. Each year 40 First Nations student writers are immersed in an "apprenticeship" at the En'owkin International School of Writing.

This is a unique and exciting 2-year, university-credited special program; with the added attraction of a First Nations Writer-in-Residence and full complement of Indigenous writers.

All students must qualify to attend, all students are from First Nations, and not all students have financial support.

We believe that Canada will be enriched by hearing the voice of First Nations through literature, we also believe that there are individual Canadians who wish to make this possible.

We invite you to invest in the future. Invest in the development of First Nations literature. Invest in these student writers. \$8,000 is needed by each student for each semester. Some students qualify for government aid but many gifted potential writers do not.

**Please join us!** We offer you the opportunity to become a supporter of the En'owkin International School of Writing.

Please fill out and return the attached form

**Yes!** I'll Help With a Tax-Creditable Donation of:

\$25     \$50     \$100     \$250     \$1000

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your cheque payable to:

**En'owkin International School of Writing at:**  
257 Brunswick Street,  
Penticton, B.C. V2A 5P9

Please put my name on your supporter, mailing list!

Tax Registration Number:  
Revenue Canada:  
070604-5026



Table of Contents

Introduction	
Editorial .....	6
Guest Editorial .....	7
Ask Me Again	
Kerrie Charnley	Concepts of Anger, Identity and Power and the Vision in the Writings and Voices of First Nations Women ..... 10
Joseph Bruchac	Routine Check ..... 23
Anna Lee Walters	Bicenti ..... 24
Annharte	Cheeky Moon ..... 38 Bloody Jig ..... 39 One Way to Keep Track of Whose Talking ..... 40
Lee Maracle	Review: Being on the Moon ..... 41 For Elijah Harper ..... 43
Daniel David Moses	Last Quarter Song ..... 44 Tired Song ..... 44
Forrest A. Funmaker	Nokomis ..... 45 The Story of Harry Loon ..... 46 Bear Mirror ..... 47 You Rattle We Hum ..... 48
Alice Lee	Flower Day ..... 49
Maria Baptiste	Dream Maker ..... 50 Lacquer Red ..... 51
Greg Young-Ing	In Another World ..... 52
Redhand	The Fire Is My Mother ..... 54
Spirit Deer	
Richard Armstrong	Spirit Deer ..... 56
Tim Michel	Ravensky ..... 61
T. Mitchel Staats	The Buffalo Man ..... 62
Mary Lou deBassige	Bear With Me ..... 63 Alive Spirits Simplicity ..... 67
Armand Garnet-Ruffo	Bear Death ..... 69 Creating A Country ..... 70

Shirley Eagle Tailfeathers	Red and White	72
Myrtle Johnson	Bright White One	73
	Like A Child	74
	This Windy Day	75
L. Cheryl Blood	Pow Wow Fever	76
Seagull		
Arnold Louie	Seagull	78
Nana	Seduction	81
Mary Ann Gerard	Christmas Day	82
	Christmas Day Part 2	83
Deb Clement	Eon Ago	84
	We Cry	85
Colleen Seymour	Just Beginning	86
Donna K. Goodleaf	I Know Who I Am	87
Kerrie Charnley	Journey	88
Gooseneck		
Art Napoleon	Gooseneck	90
Cody Williams	Niemiah	94
Joann Thom	Training For Motherhood	95
Leah E. Messer	Untitled	96
Eriel Deranger	Life	97
Milk Runnin'		
Leonard Fisher Jr.	Milk Runnin'	100
Kateri Damm	Suicidal Tendency	103
Margaret Warbick	A Dear Friend's Battle	104
Conrad George	Testimonial	105

Don Wynde	A Childhood or Was It	109
Andy P. Nieman	A Native Elder's Solitude	111
Sheila Dick	My Companion	113
Karen Coutlee	To Mom	115
	Thank You For Giving Me Birth	116
Fishermen		
Glen James	Fishermen	118
Gerald Etienne	Granny	122
Davey C. Maurice	Plenty of Lore, Plenty of Land	123
Cecilia Lake	Rain Thoughts	127
	Chris and Gary	127
Changing Song		
Leona Lysons	Changing Song	129
Duane Marchand	Warrior's Winter	130
	Diptera	
	Hey, Mr. Music Man	131
Tracey Bonneau	Concrete City	133
	Stranded On An Island	134
	Doorway	135
Garry Gottfriedson	Bureaucrats	136
	Crystal Globe	137
Randy Fred	Downtown Main Drag	138
Alvin Manitopyes	Sweet Romance Junkie	139
Eileen Burnett	Indian Lad In The City	140
Oratory		
Jeannette Armstrong	The Disempowerment of First North America Native Peoples and Empowerment Through Their Writing	141
Author Biographies		147

## EDITORIAL

**G**reetings to all readers of the premiere issue of "Gatherings": The En'owkin Journal of First North American Peoples". It gives me great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you. As a Native individual of the Okanagan Indian Nation, I am pleased to have been given the opportunity to read and enjoy all the writings that were submitted for consideration for inclusion in this journal.

The theme of 'survival' is symbolic of the struggle of our people to retain traditional values. All of the people who submitted work are themselves survivors of the oppression we have all faced. The writings contained in this issue reflect that survival culturally and physically. They also show that we continue to rely on the guidance of the creator, and the genuine kindness, encouragement and understanding that we share with each other.

Through our oral tradition, we have always shared our knowledge, wisdom, pain, joy and suffering. The written words in this journal are an expression of our oral traditions. These written words offer greetings and help in the process of cleansing and healing.

The selection of the following pieces was difficult. There were a number of excellent pieces that were turned down because they did not fit the theme. We urge those people who submitted work to re-submit for the next issue of the journal. Though these are a few selected writings by our people, I am sure there are many other Native writers out there who are a part of this literary cultural renaissance. I encourage you all to continue writing and to share with others.

Enjoy and may our Creator guide you always.

David Gregoire  
Managing Editor

## A Gathering of the Spirits by Ann Wallace

"A People without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots."

Marcus Mosiah Garvey

In this Premiere issue of "Gatherings: The En'owkin Journal of First North American People", there can be no doubt that the First Nation People have come into their own as writers. This should quell, once and for all, the debate that they are incapable of retelling their myths and legends or writing their own stories.

This issue has brought together the writing of both men and women writers, new and established, and covers a wide range of genres.

One of the major essays in the journal: Concept of Anger, Identity, Power and Vision in Writings and Voices of First Nations Women, gives an in-depth look into the loss of language. The silence of Native people is fully explained because to lose one's language is to lose one's humanity. It is this loss that has made this new generation of writers embark upon the road to both cultural and self-discovery. They will no longer accept being stereotyped or being positioned as orphans in their own homeland. For in this land their history and culture bloomed. They developed highly sophisticated political systems; they were the first ecologists and their spirituality continues to provide them with strength.

With the coming of the white man, their world was shattered, their sacred words denigrated. However, something wonderful and positive is beginning to happen - the First Nation Peoples have decided to take back control of their lives and their culture. The glaring and falsifying of history will be corrected.

The En'owkin Centre, in British Columbia, is at the centre of change. Writers and students can attend classes to improve their writing skills, learn forgotten languages, do research and listen to the legends and myths of their Elders. This remarkable writing centre, the first of its kind in North America, is the culmination of years of hard work by many people. This is not just a school - but a spiritual space - where many people are dedicated to preserving their culture, religion and language, where they know the torch of knowledge is powerful. A torch that cannot be allowed to be dimmed, a torch that ensures their future. These visionaries and



their communities have created their modern kiva, where heritage is once more protected and safe.

On a personal note. In March of this year, I was privileged to experience the En'owkin Centre. This visit will go down as one of the most memorable days I have spent anywhere in a very long time. What made it so memorable was the warm welcome I received, the prayers of the Elders, the hospitality of the women and men who work at the Centre and the many visitors who dropped in. As the day progressed, I was given manuscripts to read, and the talent and creativity of the young writers overwhelmed me. Towards the end of the day, I sat beside a young girl of about four years old. She was reading a book and as I looked over her shoulders, I realized that the book was written in English and the Okanagan language. How lucky these children and writers are to have an environment that will not only nurture them but will also stimulate their creativity and whet their appetites for more knowledge about their world and their people. This wonderful journal is a celebration of the human spirit which has overcome adversity and pain.

To the visionaries and the benefactors - May you always walk in Beauty.

# ASK ME AGAIN

Concepts of Anger, Identity and Power  
and the Vision in the Writings  
and  
Voices of First Nations Women

by Kerrie Charnley

For the past five hundred or so years the voices of Native women have been silenced by the onslaught of European immigration to Turtle Island.<sup>(1)</sup> These new immigrants brought a new order of governing structures and belief systems with them and they imposed these on the land and the nations of people living here, who already had their own governing structures and belief systems honed over thousands of years. The First Nations were matriarchal and co-operative while these new people were patriarchal and individualistic. These two differences continue to have an impact on all peoples and nations living on this land today. In order for the Europeans to obtain control over the First Nations peoples and get control over the land and her resources they silenced what was central to the perpetuation of the matriarchal and co-operative spirit and values of First Nations: the voices of First Nations women.

The catalysts that helped break the silence for Native women were the far reaching and liberating forces of the women's movement and the influences of Marx's analysis of class oppression. Other catalysts that helped pave the way for Native women breaking silence were the American Indian Movement, the growth of Native political and cultural organizations and the environmental movement.

At this point one might ask the shadowed question "If so much liberating action was happening for women and Native people in the sixties and seventies why weren't Native women being heard then?" The answer to this question lies in the happenstance of First Nations' five hundred year history. The voices of Native women continued to be silenced in the sixties and seventies by the racist and patriarchal children of colonialism. By this time the racists and patriarchy adherents dressed in both white and red jackets. Weakened and weathered over the years, Native men and women had begun to believe and use the racist and patriarchal tools of colonialism for their own individualistic bartering for a place within the competitive neo-european status quo. There were a few

1. Before the last five hundred years of European occupation the differing First Nations had their own names for this continent. For instance the Haudenosaunee called the continent "Turtle Island" in it's English translation. It is probable that all the nations had a name for the continent since there were trade routes known to go as far as South America in pre-colonial times.

fire weeds however who resisted the brainwashing and refused to be silent. Those who wrote published and spoke to a small audience. Nevertheless they harboured a voice for those of us who did not have one. The traditional values of co-operation, womanpower and the sacredness of words has persisted subversively over the course of five hundred years of silence. In combination with Marxism and the liberation movements of the sixties, these word warriors are being heard.

In the seventies the autobiography Halfbreed was published by Maria Campbell. This marked the beginning of a movement. Lee Maracle published her autobiography, Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel, at about the same time but due to politics and bookmarket trends her book did not reach the wide audiences Halfbreed did. In 1983 Native women writers got public attention at the Women and Words Society's inaugural women writers' conference in Vancouver. This conference marked a path towards the history-making workshops and readings hosted by Native women writers at the 1988 3rd International Feminist Book Fair in Montreal. Lee Maracle, Jeannette Armstrong, Paula Gunn Allen, Janet Campbell-Hale, Chrystos, Joy Harjo, Lenore Keeshig-Tobias, Midnight Sun, Beth Brant, Barbara Smith, Gloria Anzaldúa and Marilou Awaikta have all published within the past three years. Some of these Native women are participating in writer's conferences such as those already mentioned and others like the Vancouver Writer's Festival, and the "Telling It" conference held in Vancouver recently.

This paper will look at the words of recently published Native writers Lee Maracle, Jeannette Armstrong, Chrystos, Paula Gunn Allen and reflect on some of the concerns these women have about themselves, their people, and the world. This paper will reflect particularly on the silence and anger of oppressed people, the function of image-making, identity creating and erasing of invisibility that are a part of writing. Also discussed will be the world view of First Nations people that has empowered them throughout their long history. For the purposes of this paper because some Native women writer's also call themselves "women of color" there will be points where this term will be used when referring to a concept that has been discussed by a writer who identified herself as a "woman of color". It will reveal the philosophical and political base the writers are writing from. This paper will not address the mechanics of Native women's literature. To understand those mechanics it is crucial first to understand the forces that brought those words into being.

The beginning will look at what silences us; the second part will look at our response to the forces which silence us, anger and anger's relationship to writing. The third part will look at how Native women writers are creating their own images of themselves through the written word. The last part will look at the world view of Native people and how a peoples' world view is reflected in the language of that people. As well this paper will look at how the relationship between language and world view is a fundamental concern and force in Native women's literature.

#### WHY ARE YOU BEING SO SILENT?

In silence there is no movement, no change. Good odds for victimization, powerlessness. In breaking silence, there is movement, change, transformation. Creation and birth. Breaking the silence for Native women is a major step towards stopping the forces that have been silencing us. However it must be done on our own terms or the voice will not be our own and it will not truly empower us.

A white woman at a women writers' conference made reference to the question why are some women silent. The majority and the only ones who did not speak were the women of color. This woman said it was probably due to the fact that these women were not used to speaking! This is typical of what a woman of color must put up with over and over again. White people speak and make assumptions about us right in front of our very faces and ears as if we don't even exist or have a voice and all the while taking up the space we could be using for our voices. Chrystos' poem "Maybe We Shouldn't Meet If There Are No Third World Women Here" expresses a rhetorical question in response to this kind of familiar experience: "How can we come to your meetings if we are invisible". (Chrystos, 1988, 13) The workshop's topic of discussion "Living the great novel versus writing one" did not seek the perspective of women of color who know most the meaning of living the great novel. It is our silence that is addressed more often than our voices. There is many a message to be found in silence if one chooses to hear them. Finally, at the end of the workshop, out of the body of a brown woman a voice rose. It was a voice of frustration, anger, pain, sadness and it was our voice. Too often the only voice white women actually hear is the hurting or angry voice of women of color. It is sad this woman was forced into her

unvaliant and lonely position without a functional structure of colored support. Instead she fled from the room, and the topic of the one-sided discussion continued as it had before, in our silence.

This is the kind of thing that impacts every single woman of color who is conscious of that color-white dynamic; this is the kind of thing that makes us angry. In Chrystos' same poem she reflects on this situation and the anger that she consequently feels: "My mouth cracks in familiar shock my eyes flee to the other faces where my rage desperation fear pain ricochet a thin red scream How can you miss our brown and golden in this sea of pink...Bitter boiling I can't see you." (Chrystos, 1988, 13)

Someone at this same workshop said that anger is something women writers should address because of its paralyzing effect on one's ability to write. She also said that anger stems from fear. It is true that anger is something Native women writers should address because it is a very significant theme and force in our writing. However the concept of fear as a root of anger is not true for women of color. The anger is a direct result of feeling and in fact being powerless and unheard by the dominant European.

Much of our writing has as its theme anger at those conditions and forces that have sought to render Native people powerless and voiceless: Residential schools, the Church and its missionaries; white tyrannical teachers trying to make Indian students believe their ways, beliefs, language, religion, and physical being are of no value; child abduction, rape, murder, sterilization, germ warfare in the form of diseased blankets, and even up until just thirty short years ago the denial of legal and political representation. We were not allowed to vote for the leaders of our own land.

In terms of this struggle we are engaged in Paula Gunn Allen says, in her book The Sacred Hoop, that "For women this means fighting ...sometimes violent and always virulent racist attitudes and behaviours directed against us by an entertainment and educational system that wants only one thing from Indians: our silence, our invisibility, our collective death." She goes on to cite an example of what kinds of things are being done to us collectively: "It is believed that at least 80 percent of the Native Women seen at the regional psychiatric service center...have experienced some sort of sexual assault." (Gunn Allen, 1987, 119) Not only do native women have to deal with the hardships the average white person has but our load is magnified by the poverty, racist sexism, without the benefit of coping mechanisms, because our family structures

were decimated. If there is fear beneath our anger it is the fear that our multi-generational anger might be unjustly and accidentally hurled on to one of our own or on the innocent or on one of the truth seekers in our lives.

In I Am Woman Lee Maracle articulates the condition of this anger: "I am torn apart and terrorized, not by you, my love, but by the war waging inside me...Now you will be watchful, wary, waiting for my hysteria..Just as I am on guard against your anger." (Maracle, 1988, 39) The victim of our large and looming anger, is our very selves. We are powerless to act out anger any other way. The suicide rate of young Native people is now eerily famous and this occurrence is mourned in Slash, I Am Woman, as well as in Paula Gunn Allen's The Sacred Hoop. We turn anger inward because it is hard to make out who the one real enemy is — a belief system, there is no target at which to aim our very reasonable and natural anger. This dilemma is found in Lee's poem "Hate": "Blinded by niceties and polite liberality we can't see our enemy, so, we'll just have to kill each other." (Maracle, 1988, 12) By illuminating the real enemies, real sources, from which our self-inflicted pains/violence stem Lee clarifies for Native people, what is clearly going on and what the dynamics and forces are which have shaped our history and which are shaping our lives today. We have a place to start to change those conditions in our lives which oppress us, a place and knowledge with which to empower ourselves. Perhaps the fear that woman was speaking of was the fear of where the power of one's anger will be directed. Let it be clarified that the real root to all of this silence, anger, fear is the very real racism Native women are trying to survive. Racism and sexism implicate one's whole being, it is hard not to reflect on these experiences frequently and almost obsessively. Much of Lee Maracle's book I Am Woman addresses the reality of racism and internalized racism. In speaking about the people she loves she says: "In all of the stories runs a single common thread; racism is for us, not an ideology in the abstract, but a very real and practical part of our lives. The pain, the effect, the shame are all real." (Maracle, 1988, 2) We are able to survive through writing.

In breaking silence we can transform anger and combat racism. The act of writing is an incredibly liberating force. An illustration of this is seen in Lee Maracle's story about the "L'ilwat Child" who was denied a seat on the school bus until the teacher's authority, not the child's human rights, coerced the rude European

children to move over for the child. Lee's response to this exemplifies how writing out one's anger can be useful when she says, "I let the scream sink slowly into oblivion. I went home to scream my rage to a blank sheet of paper. I had not moved to comfort that child either. I betrayed myself yet again. For my hungry, aching spirit, the pen is mightier than the sword." (Maracle, 1988, 109)

Through expressing our anger towards what is really working against us we can prevent it from turning inward on ourselves. Chrystos illustrates the many sources of her anger and how this anger is a strength in her poem "I Walk In The History of My People": "In the scars of my knees you can see children torn from their families bludgeoned into government schools. Anger is my crutch I hold myself upright with it my knee is wounded see How I Am Still Walking." (Chrystos, 1988, 7) In order to know what is really working against us we have to be able question, reflect on one's experience and see it in relation to and in dynamic with other people and environs. What better a place to paint the picture of one's experience and relationships than on paper. On paper we can do something at times and in situations where it may not be possible to do anything else. On paper we can confront the enemy who is not embodied in any one human being. We can question our thinking, we can address someone who is simply too powerful to confront in person. This is the power of writing, taking action with the voice and hand, moving thought into physical being, taking it further than one's mind will allow and giving it away to other people. We nurture thought and re-create the world: Woman-word-uniting power.

#### ERASING INVISIBILITY AND CREATING OUR OWN IDENTITIES IN WORDS

Besides transforming anger and combatting racism writing is also an excellent way to create our own images of who we are and, erase invisibility and proclaim Native men and women as distinct and valuable people. In a world where Native people are more or less invisible in all modes of reflection - media, decision-making positions, positions of power, education curriculum, etc. — and are viewed as secondary citizens, media communication is an effective way of breaking the silence and changing the false images of native people. Communication allows and sometimes encourages alternatives to the institutional political and social structures which maintain and reflect the racist and patriarchal attitudes of the European

culture. In creating one's own images and getting one's word out to the public "at large" validation is experienced by the author and the reader. The writer is reflected within the word on the page and the reader's self image is reflected in common experiences and views shared by the author. Alienation and isolation are broken, transformed into camaraderie. Validation is experienced when the reader is stimulated by the author's words to make active changes in her own life and world, as well as changes in the way one thinks.

Lee Maracle creates a positive image for Native people when she says "I want to look across the table in my own kitchen and see, in the brown eyes of the man that shares my life, the beauty of my own reflection...I want the standard for our judgement of our brilliance, our beauty and our passions, to be ourselves." (Maracle, 1988, 19) She also says that "By standing up and laying myself bare, I erased invisibility as a goal for the young Native women around me." (Maracle, 1988, 9) Chicano writer Gloria Anzuldúa says,

For a woman of color to write... personally and also about her culture...she goes back to her past... states of depression...of anger...of being violated...and she has to recreate them. She's got to reckon with these things that make up the abyss. ("Remembering and Subverting Strategies in the Literature of Women of Color". June 1988)

Gloria also says that women of color have many different states of consciousness.

Between subculture and mass culture, between male and female, between the ideologies that are feminine and the ideologies that are patriarchal, the splicing of different culture shifting events.. shifting perspectives, and woman of color does this in her writing. (ibid. June 1988)

We are a different people even from our ancestors but we are still First Nations people, Sto:lo, Dene, Okanagan, Cree etc. Cultures are not static they are in constant movement and change and development and so it is with First Nations cultures. Gloria Anzuldúa says that because our culture has been segmented by the genocidal actions and we have become so overloaded with misbeliefs about

ourselves "we've taken the occupied self and tried to recover the essential self by deconstructing history and deconstructing cultural theories according to white people and then putting all the pieces of ourselves together in our writing, in our art, in our thought." She says that somebody who reads her writing might say "it's really disorganized, it's not structured. But the structure is a different kind of structure. It's not a linear structure, it's not a common logical structure, it's not a hierarchical structure but it is a..." circular and organic structure based on the matriarchal and co-operative, cultural thought of her *Indianness*. Native women are faced with the limits of the English language to express their experience and world view.

#### BREAKING SILENCE AND PERPETUATING THE POWER OF THE INDIAN WORLD VIEW

Besides transforming anger and combatting racism through creating new images and expressions of who we are, by writing we can make changes in the thinking of Europeans. We can reinforce and perpetuate the values and belief systems, our traditions — the fundamental power of our existence. One cannot understand or define in its entirety the philosophy of entire nations of people in a paragraph however important fundamental differences can be explained. In Indian thought things are whole co-operative and balanced. In European thought things are separated and put in a hierarchical order. The European sees spirit as a human derivative and associated with death. The Native person sees spirit as being the essence of the physical. It comes from within and is associated with life force. Spirit never comes or goes. It always is a matter of existence. Paula Gunn Allen points out

In English, one can divide the universe into two parts: the natural and the supernatural. This necessarily forces English-speaking people into a position of alienation from the world they live in. Such isolation is entirely foreign to American Indian thought. (Gunn Allen, 1986, 60)

It is spiritual connectedness between and within all that exists that has been one of our greatest weapons, healers, liberators in our battles against genocide. This view of the world persists.

Lee Maracle talks about how she relied on spiritual healing

at a point in her life when white doctors told her she was dying. She connected and worked with and for her community and undertook spiritual healing and this coupled with the love she shared with her partner brought her back to life. Jeannette Armstrong's character Slash reaches into his spiritual understanding and goes into his past to bring forth his song at a time when all his physical, emotional and mental resources are spent. At this time when life was unbearable, suicide seemed to be his only alternative but it was his spiritual understanding that empowered him to carry on, eventually uniting all aspects of his once torn apart life and reconciling the past with the present: "The song vibrated through every fibre of my body like a light touch of wings, and the hard ball inside my chest seemed to melt and spread like warm mist across my chest...I couldn't stop for a long time...I felt okay for the first time in about three or four years." (Armstrong, 1985, 68)

Paula Gunn Allen quotes Laguna/Sioux writer Carol Lee Sanchez as saying, she,

"writes as a way of connecting to her people...What she does is ...knit the old ways to the new circumstances in such a way that the fundamental world-view of the tribe will not be distorted or destroyed. In her task she uses every resource of her present existence: technology and myth, politics and motherhood, ritual balance and clear-sighted utterance, ironic comments and historical perspective." (Gunn Allen, 1986, 180)

The work of expressing a highly sophisticated world view into the limiting structures of the English language is arduous. It is undertaken by those with courage, self-reliance, imagination, and a need for justice, balance, wholeness. The powerful connection between language and thought is exemplified by Jeannette Armstrong's statement,

"Non-sexist thinking is deeply imbedded in our cultures and must be seen from a broader perspective than the warped point of view of a culture whose orientation is always male or female oriented rather than human oriented. (Armstrong, 1988, "Voices of Native Women in Literature")

This is reflected in her Okanagan language which has no "pronouns to refer to he or she. There is no way we can refer to he or she in any sense of the word. People are addressed and referred to by name, by occupation, by familial role, or by clan." (Armstrong, 1988, "Voices of Native Women in Literature") Further, the power of her people's thinking and language is reflected by the fact that "Rape was totally unheard of in pre-contact cultures. In particular in Okanagan culture it was totally unheard of not because of the punishments but because of the high elevation of human dignity and personal freedoms that we enjoyed." Jeannette ends by saying that writing is itself a sacred act because,

"...it manifests thought which originates within the spiritual world and manifests itself into the physical world through word. It makes it physical by transferring by word, understanding'. Understanding being the foundation of our Beings, therefore being holy. So we say to people speak softly but truthfully, when it is necessary, and it is now necessary." (Armstrong, 1988)

We understand that to truly change this world we cannot react in a European way. We do not want this world to continue its debasement of humanity and the natural balance of the earth. We do not want to continue the violence and oppression that has become the way of the European. Lee says in her "L'ilwat Child" story that "Europe has much to learn from our example. Be ever so thankful that I have not forgotten my ancestors and looked upon myself as just a person or I should have exploded in good European style on those children. I should have slapped them both." (Maracle, 1988, 109) We must use our own understandings of wholeness and balance and not bend to the violent means of domination and separation that history has proven are the European's goals: "divide and conquer" as the old adage goes. "Unite and nurture" would be more to the First Nations person's way of thinking.

#### SUMMARY

To a people whose word has such fundamental significance to their lives, to be stripped of their language is a devastating act of genocide. The significance of being denied the physical and spiritual power of language is to be denied that which is at the core of

one's being and existence. The loss of much of our languages, has greatly silenced Native people. The English language is limiting in its patriarchal definitions and structures which leave very little room for ceremonial or spiritual understandings of relationships. The English language does not fit well with the belief systems and world view of Native people. We were supposed to forget our own world view and language and adopt the language and world view of the European. Some bought it and some didn't, many didn't survive the brutalizations but some have and are seeking justice for our people. Paula Gunn Allen states "the fragmentation of consciousness that might be expected to result from...massive cultural breakdown is a surface breakdown...Indian values, perceptions, and understandings have clung tenaciously to life, informing the work of writers and artists as they inform the lives of all Indian people. (Gunn Allen, 1986, 182-183) The battle is still going on and the front seems to be ideology, the weapon the word, and the action, informing both First Nations people and people from other nations who we live with about the healing and empowering values of our traditions and world view. With history being made up of the voices of all nations, all peoples instead of just one European people, the sand will be taken out of the eyes of Europeans showing them what their own history and world view has been doing all these years. A real new world shall be born.

#### CONCLUSION

In referring to the words, artistry, and political sight of Lee Maracle, along with other examples from the works and words of Crystos, Jeannette Armstrong, Paula Gunn Allen, Gloria Anzuldud, it is apparent that embodied and working within the written testimonies of Native women are empowerment and healing bound to the spiritual power essence that exists within all that is and all that connects. In their writing they are breaking silence, fighting racism and patriarchy, subverting English and creating their own language, putting the English word to the test of an Indian world view, reconciling their tribal pasts with their individual presents, empowering and transforming anger into knowing, self-inspiring and inspiring others, dealing with the internalized racism, uniting powers, transforming the spiritual to the physical, maintaining the

world view, values and responsibility to the oral/word sacredness perpetuated by their grandmothers, maintaining and enlivening their spiritual understanding and connectedness within all that exists, organic or not.

The boundaries of essay writing prevent further and more in depth analysis and celebration of Native women's recent written works. However it is hoped that further studies and scrutinies and appreciation of these works will soon be undertaken by those who are looking for healing, empowerment, and hopeful visions of a universe where there is humanity; where there is spirit; where difference is celebrated, lived and loved. These women's words are recreating and creating their individual selves, the nations and communities they are members of and the world of all that exists.

#### SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

##### BOOKS

Allen, Paula Gunn. *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1986.

Armstrong, Jeannette. *Slash*. Penticton: Theytus Books, 1985.

Chrystos. *Not Vanishing*. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1988.

Maracle, Lee. *I Am Woman*. North Vancouver: Write-on Press Publishers Ltd., 1988.

##### SOUND RECORDINGS

Anzuldua, Gloria. *Remembering and Subverting Strategies in the Literature of Women of Color*. Cassette of workshop, Third International Feminist Book Fair. Montreal: June 1988.

Armstrong, Jeannette. *Voices of Native Women in Literature*, Cassette of workshop, Third International Feminist Book Fair. Montreal: June 1988.

#### Routine Check by Joseph Bruchac

Late winter snow  
feathers the sky  
as a voice on the line  
from some place  
I have never been  
asks me if I remember  
who called my number  
from Des Moines, Iowa  
on the 17th of September

I don't know anyone  
in Des Moines,  
but then, disembodied  
that business-like voice  
suggests the caller  
may have been  
an Indian  
from Rosebud, South Dakota

Leonard Crow Dog,  
I think,  
but before I can speak,  
I am asked this question:  
By any chance,  
do I belong  
to their religion?  
What religion is that?  
You know,  
The Sun Dance.

May I ask, I ask  
What this is for?

Just a routine check,  
just a routine check,  
just a routine check  
on a credit card number.

Late winter snow  
falls on the Paha Sapa  
the sacred Black Hills  
which know no religion  
which cannot be owned  
like credit card numbers

There, routine checks  
at Pine Ridge and Rosebud  
turn up Indians,  
snow in open mouths  
government bullets  
in their backs

There, at roadblocks  
manned by BIA ghosts  
voices ask  
in that efficient tone  
neutral as white paper  
Do you belong?

They receive no answer,  
only the wind  
the spirit of Crazy Horse  
thrusting his pony  
against the snow,  
believing in spring



## Bicenti by Anna Lee Walters

*Things weren't right.*

Maya sat on the mattress and sank into its springs and lumps. She contemplated the squareness of the small room, sharpened by the afternoon shadows strewn across the floor. The angular walls, the floor and ceiling tiles cut impotently into infinite space and time, but the fragile structure confined her there indefinitely. She stared out the rectangular window to an identical house across the street, and closed her eyes tightly.

"I have this feeling that something is wrong," Maya said sheepishly to Wilma, when Wilma entered the room. Wilma was round and her circular shadow broke up the box space in the sparsely furnished room as Wilma gestured and moved around.

"Oh? What's the matter?" Wilma asked with concern. Her eyebrows lifted in a question.

Maya's oval brown face cracked slowly into a crooked smile. She asked, "Did you ever look at this room, Wilma? The squareness of our little worlds? The insignificant walls? Have you ever wondered if there were a futility and senselessness in these structures? Why are we so infatuated with squares? Are there squares in the real world?" Maya giggled at herself and pointed out the window with her last question.

As Wilma sipped her coffee noisily, she studied Maya's face. It wore a nervous frown that was there one minute and gone the next. "You didn't come here to ask me about this room," Wilma said matter-of-factly. "You didn't drive all the way from Albuquerque to Santa Fe, to question me about this room. Huh-uh."

Maya put down her own mug of coffee and looked into the eyes of her old friend intently for a few seconds, making a decision to tell Wilma everything. She dropped her voice to barely a whisper. Wilma had to lean toward Maya to catch the words Maya let go. The words visibly hung in the air between the two women for seconds. Maya said, "Things have been happening to me lately. I've lost some things. Well..., actually they were taken, you know, uh... stolen." Maya watched Wilma's response. Wilma's face was blank. Maya continued, "Then, there have been accidents on the highway, traffic accidents, all occurring within seconds from me. Too close!"

Wilma was sipping coffee. Her shadow slipped under

her and stayed a step ahead of her as she glided to a chair, one of three pieces of furniture in the room. Maya bent and leaned even closer to Wilma. The wooden chair holding Maya's weight made a little sound. Planes of light and shadow played over Maya's face as she asked Wilma, "Do you know what I am talking about?" The frown was laying over Maya's face again.

Wilma nodded her head decisively. "Yes.... oh sure. I was just thinking about things you can do about it. First, tell me about the items you've lost. Did you get anything back? Returned to you?"

Maya leaned forward and held her oval face in her long fingers. Her pointed elbows were on her knees. "Well, first two blankets disappeared. That pretty purple one with the tan and black stripes. Then I missed a red one with green fringes, both taken from the place I am now staying, in Albuquerque."

"Go on," Wilma encouraged. Maya looked thoughtful and far away. Maya's round figure stood before the rectangular window. Clouds floated on her shoulders and through her black hair.

"A purse was taken next. Everything in it," Maya said. She waved her purse with a soft bare arm. A streak of sunlight radiated under her arm.

"And the accidents?" Wilma prodded.

"Always to other people, just ahead, or just behind me, a split second from me. As far as you are to me. It's happened three times now, people died each time." Maya poured the remaining coffee into her mouth and sat back on the chair.

The room became quiet. The sunlight on the floor crawled from Wilma's feet to Maya's, half-way across the room. Maya's face went through a variety of expressions in this silence, while Wilma's face stayed blank, non-committal.

Then Wilma soothed Maya's prolonged frown. "Stay here tonight, you can - can't you? We'll talk and think this thing through. Okay?"

Maya nodded her head, though she did not speak. She went again to the window, staring beyond the house across the street, into infinite space and time.

"If we can't come up with any solutions, then you go to Bicenti. You ought to anyway, to find out about your missing things. He will locate them for you. Okay?" Wilma asked while Maya nodded her head again. Their shadows had stretched

longer by then, and the planes of the room were elongated, distorted by the hour at hand.

The Sangre de Cristo Mountains loomed in the east, soft and rolling cones, under a melting orange and purple sky. This evening was cool, a gentle wind from the south played on the two women.

Maya and Wilma sat on the porch. Wilma hummed a tribal song as the two watched the mountains, and the sky and clouds dissolve into darkness.

Maya said, "Wilma, you've been listening to my problems all day. I didn't even ask you about the vandalism you have been experiencing out here. What's happening?"

Wilma answered, "Well, we are about ten miles from town. I guess distance may have something to do with it. But things have been quiet lately. If you don't count the weird incident that happened next door." She raised a finger and indicated her nearest neighbour's house. Then she continued, "It happened about a month ago. And Maya, you can't really call it vandalism. All that can be said about it is that it was *very strange*. Bizzare might be the word to describe it. That reminds me, Maya, you ought to park your car up here by the house."

"Well anyway," she went back to her story, "this lady and her husband next door, they're Spanish people...One evening they came home and parked their car out in the parking lot in front of their house. See? The next morning, *the car was upside down*. It was pretty strange. No one heard a sound during the night. But sure enough, the next morning there was this car sitting in the exact spot where it had been parked the evening before, but it was upside down!"

Maya laughed, "I guess so! I hope things like that don't happen too often. Are you afraid living out here by yourself?"

"Not at all," Wilma chuckled. "I usually enjoy it. I can't stand the thought of living cooped up in town. The houses are so close together. We're close here too - but it's different. Besides Raoul is here more often than not. You haven't met him but you'll like him, Maya, when you do meet him. He's mostly Spanish, but he's part Indian too."

"Is everyone here Spanish?" Maya wanted to know.

"Mixed, but mostly Spanish. There's a Taos family on the other side, and old Comanche woman down the street, and then there are *Din'e* - Navajos." She laughed. "The rest are *Bilagaana* or

*Nakai*." As an after thought, Wilma said, "Indians are everywhere, no matter where you go."

Maya smiled. "It's a nice, peaceful community," she said. "Too bad about the vandalism. As often as I've been here, I would never have known the problem exists out here - if you hadn't told me."

The two women sat there for a while longer until Wilma asked Maya if she were tired. Maya admitted that she was, stress had taken its toll. Before they retired, Wilma said, "Maya, why don't you move your car up here, beside the porch?"

Maya stretched out on top of a sleeping bag in the middle of Wilma's square floor. Her eyelids soon twitched in a deep sleep.

Wilma stood over her friend for a long time that night, thinking of the words Maya had dropped in the next room. A frown creased Wilma's forehead now that Maya couldn't see. Wilma went to the only window in this room to close the drapes. She raised the window several inches to allow a breeze to circulate. She saw Maya's car sitting under a streetlamp that emitted a yellow circle of light around the car.

About midnight, Maya woke. Her eyes stared into the blackness of the square room. She was fully conscious. Her thoughts went immediately to her car. "They're doing something to it," she whispered. She rose, went to the window and looked out. The car sat safely under the high beam of the streetlamp. Maya breathed a sigh of relief. She sat in the rocking chair beside the window and kept a vigil over her car for a few minutes. Then, satisfied that for the moment it was safe, she lay back inside the sleeping bag. The breeze was stronger, billowing the drapes.

At 5:30 the next morning, the alarm clock buzzed.

The Sangre de Cristo Mountains were a faint shape outside Wilma's house. A white line curved around the horizon of the mountains, sun streaks spread fan-like at one end of the range.

Wilma got out of bed and stopped the buzzing alarm. The house was all dark. She walked from her room to the one where Maya slept. She pulled the cord at the window. The drapes, like stage curtains, parted on the glowing horizon. A cold wave slid into the room. The window was still open. Outside in the parking lot, the streetlamps were dark. Wilma could see the

faint blue mountains in the east, the silhouette of night in the west engulfed nearby houses.

Wilma went to the kitchen to put coffee in the percolator. She turned on the radio. Its dials were florescent when Wilma flipped off the light switch.

Then she went into the bathroom, stripped off her clothes, and went naked into the bathroom. In a few minutes, the shower could be heard.

Maya woke to a country and western singer moaning on the radio and the shower beating into the bathtub. She lay there a moment with her eyes closed listening to the music drift into the room. The odor of perking coffee followed the music.

When Wilma entered the room in a long white terry-cloth robe, Maya asked, "What time is it? I have to be in Albuquerque by 8. I have one of those awful early classes today."

"It's about 5:45," Wilma answered drying her long hair with a red towel. "I set the alarm a half hour early, so we can visit a little longer. I have to go to work too. I hope you don't mind my getting you up so early."

"Oh no, I'm glad you did," Maya said. She sat on the sleeping bag and added, "Wilma, thanks for everything. I feel much better, refreshed, and in a clean frame of mind. I'll go to Bicenti this weekend."

"Good, I'm glad that's settled," Wilma answered, shaking out her long wet hair that had fallen to her waist. She said, "Maya, I think the coffee's ready. You want some?"

But Maya held up a hand and said, "I'll jump in the shower first." She gathered her clothes and carried a small suitcase into the bathroom. The light in there escaped from under the closed door. The rest of the house was dark.

Wilma went to lower the open window in the room. Her wet hair had chilled her. While she was pulling down the window, she looked toward Maya's car. It was assuming a vague shape in the dawn. Wilma paused momentarily straining her eyes at the car. "Hmm," she said and went into the kitchen. She poured a cup of coffee and looked at the radio when the female announcer came on and said in a seductive voice. "Good morning, sleepyhead. It's six a.m."

Not too long after, Maya's feet padded into the room. Her hair was wrapped in a towel turban-style. She wore blue jeans and a turquoise blouse. Her toes stuck out of her house shoes. She

poured herself a cup of coffee and took a taste. That's when Wilma said, "Maya, it looks like there is something on your car."

"Oh?" was Maya's response. Her feet padded to the open window. The sun had not risen yet, but the mountains were purple and the sky above them was a delicate pink. Daylight was spreading tentatively toward Wilma's community. The community buildings however were still square silhouettes against the fingers of dawn. "It's a beautiful morning," Maya's first observation. Then her eyes went to the car.

There *was* something on it, but she was near-sighted and without her glasses. She said, "Yes, Wilma, there does seem to be something on it. But I can't make it out that well." Her words made her remember the vigil at midnight.

Wilma stood at Maya's side. She said, "Let's go see. Maybe they punctured the tires, or something-like that."

The two women walked out of the house. Maya carried her mug of coffee. They stood on the porch. Wilma pointed to her flower bed. The flowers were uncurling. They walked past the marigolds and down to the parking lot. None of the other houses were lit, not even the apartment complex at the end of the block. The local streets were empty of early morning traffic. "That's strange," Maya said. "There doesn't seem to be anyone stirring but us."

Wilma looked up and down the streets, her damp hair clung to her shoulders. "Yes, that's right, isn't it?" she agreed with Maya. The domed sky was turning a pale blue. Clouds skirted the mountaintops.

Maya's car pointed north. As she walked toward it, she noted that the windows were unbroken, the tires inflated. The car appeared to be unharmed, at least on one side. But what was that on top of it? A black shadow lay on the roof of the car. It stretched the entire length of the roof. Maya and Wilma stopped about ten feet from the car. Their eyes locked briefly. Then both women had the same thought, they gazed at the houses around them. The houses were mute and lifeless forms. Wilma pulled her wet hair over her right shoulder and looked southwest. The Sandia Mountains were now distinguishable in the dawn. A crescent moon glittered on Sandia Peak. A few cars on Interstate 40 still had their headlights on. These lights zipped east and west without a sound.

"Strange," commented Wilma. Maya took a shaky step closer to the shadow on her car. Wilma followed. And when Maya stopped just at the left headlight, Wilma did too.

"What in the world?" Wilma asked in a breathy and perplexed voice.

Maya was frozen for a second, desperately sorting images that flashed before her eyes. She saw herself standing in front the car, moving like an actress in a bizarre play, detached from herself, but nevertheless affected. The only thing she could say was, "What?", and again, "What...?"

The thing on the car grew into a foreboding shape in morning light. A large dog was draped over the roof of the car. The outline of its head was clearly discernible.

"What?" Maya repeated. "How...?" She didn't finish the question.

The animal did not move. Maya half expected it to pounce on her or off the car. Again Maya's eyes zeroed in on the houses. Not a curtain in any window fluttered. She noted that Wilma too was studying the houses. When the dog did not move, Maya put her coffee mug on the hood of the car and took another step.

It was then that she saw the spray of blood covering the front of the window, on the passenger side. It had dripped down the side windows on the other side of the car. Dried pools of red stained the cement.

The jaws of the dog hung open and it looked as if this was from where the blood had gushed until the animal was thoroughly drained.

Maya tried to make sense of the scene. She went through a flood of emotion; anger, compassion, for the dead animal, and resolution not to submit to fear.

"Let's go inside," she told Wilma. Wilma nodded, grabbed the mug she had placed on the hood of the car, and involuntarily shivered.

Inside the house, Maya grabbed Wilma by the shoulders and asked, "What's happening?"

Wilma's eyes were round and her mouth was round too as she said, "Oh, Maya, I don't know. It's like that incident with the car. Weird as hell. What shall we do?"

"I don't know," Maya said, "Let me think." she kicked off

her house shoes and slipped on leather sandals. While she did this, Wilma threw on the clothes she wore the day before.

"We have to get rid of it," Maya said. "Someone gave that thing to me. I don't want it and I refuse it. I'm taking it back to wherever it came from..."

"We'll have to clean the car," Wilma said. She ran to get a plastic jar of dish detergent, and she filled a tupperware bowl with warm water.

"I don't get it," Maya said looking out the window once more. "Where is everyone? There used to be early morning traffic here, I remember that!"

"Don't try to figure it out now, Maya. Let's act, move, do something!" Wilma said. "This absence of the neighbors - maybe we can use it to our advantage."

"Yeah, okay," Maya nodded her head. She took a roll of paper towels Wilma handed to her.

Again, they ventured out. The sky was opaque, the sun had not yet climbed the lowest mountains. Not one car passed on this street, or down the side streets.

Maya and Wilma acted quickly and in coordination. The two women lifted the dead animal off the roof of the car. Its body was stiff and heavy. It must have weighed a good seventy pounds. They laid the rigid body just off the walkway in front of Maya's car. Again anger filled Maya as she poured soapy water on the dried blood. Wilma scrubbed the front of the car while Maya did the side, wiping the car clean and dry with paper towels. It took a few minutes. Wilma went back inside the house. Maya stayed to empty the remaining water on the pools of blood on the cement. The soapy water colored a pink tint and ran in rivulets down the street.

Then Maya noticed something she hadn't seen before. A trail of blood led to her car from across the street. She followed it and came upon another pool of blood just in front of the house opposite Wilma's house. From there the trail went down the block. Maya stood in front of that house for a moment. Then she quickly walked to the place where she and Wilma had carefully laid the animal, a few feet from the car.

She picked up the stiffened body by its front and back legs, and she carried it across the street, struggling with her burden and panting when she was done. She left the dog in the pool of dried blood there, stood defiantly and challengingly in

front of that house. There were no signs of life in the neighborhood yet. She scooped up a handful of dirt from that yard and carried it to her car where she scattered it over the drying pools of water and blood. She rubbed the dirt over the cement viciously with her sandals. The blood darkened to brown spots.

"Now," Maya whispered, "We'll see what happens."

At that moment a light came on in a house on the corner. She heard a door slam somewhere. A quick look inside her car reassured her that nothing more had been done to it. The tires were in good shape. She retraced her steps to Wilma's house. Wilma met her at the door. Wilma's wet hair was tied with a rubber band and she wore a sweater.

"What now?" Wilma wanted to know.

"We wait and see what happens," Maya said. "No matter what does happen though, we don't know anything about that dog, okay?"

"It's the best way," Wilma said.

Maya unwrapped the towel around her head. "What time is it?" she asked.

"It's about 6:40," Wilma said, "You should leave before 7 if you want to make that class."

Maya asked, "Will you be all right?"

Wilma went into the kitchen, searching for the coffee cup she'd put down someplace earlier. As she poured a hot cupful of coffee, she answered, "I'll go to work. No, maybe I won't. I have to leave anyway. But, I'll be all right."

Footsteps were coming down the sidewalk outside. Wilma came out of the kitchen and looked questioningly at Maya. The steps ended on her front porch. Someone pounded on the door.

Wilma opened it. Maya sat in the living room and listened. "What did you do with the dog?" a female voice asked in a huff.

Maya heard Wilma answer innocently, "What dog?"

The woman repeated the question. Wilma asked again, "What dog? What are you talking about?"

To this, the woman shrieked, "You're going to pay! Killers!"

Wilma then said, "Look lady, calm down. If I can help you in some way..."

But the woman interrupted the offer of help, threatening

Wilma with curses and vile names. Maya heard Wilma close the door.

Wilma returned to Maya. She looked calm, but Maya saw her hands shaking. "Did she frighten you? Who was she?" Maya asked.

"I don't know," Wilma said, "but it wasn't the woman who scared me. It was the man.

"The man?" Maya asked in surprise.

"Yes," Wilma said. "There was a man with her, standing behind her the whole time. He stood there in silence and made obscene gestures at me. His gyrations were so unnatural, not humanly possible. It scared the hell out of me!"

"You didn't show it did you?" Maya asked in alarm. "Fear won't help us Wilma."

"No, I don't think it showed. I was just so startled. But it was the damndest thing!" Wilma gulped her coffee. Maya put an arm around her friend. "Are you okay?" Maya asked. Wilma shuddered, but managed a smile.

"Listen, I'm going to have to leave. I hate to just walk away like this, I don't understand any of this," Maya said.

"It may be that walking away is the only way to respond," Wilma said pursing her lips. "But I am convinced that you need to see Bicenti, now more than ever."

Maya nodded in complete agreement.

Footsteps were at the door again. Wilma looked at Maya and went to the door. "Killers!" the woman was screaming. "The state police are coming after you." Maya saw her lift a pudgy finger and stick it in Wilma's face. The woman was clownish in appearance, her face painted in brilliant hues. Maya stood behind Wilma.

There *was* a man with the woman. He was dark, possibly Hispanic or Indian. He bobbed up and down, as if there were springs in his legs and feet. He waved his arms imitating a grounded bird, and he contorted his face into grotesque masks that changed and flitted away as quickly as they settled over his features. Then his hands went to the crotch of his pants and he mimed an unearthly performance, contorting his body beyond the bounds of human ability. The woman with him blocking the doorway was unconcerned with his antics, she continued to shout obscenities at Wilma. They poured out in a torrent of stinging words.

Then Maya said to the woman, slowly and very clearly, "I don't know what's happening, or who you are - but you are not welcome here, and neither is anything that you bring with you." The words hung in the doorway for seconds.

The woman's eyes blinked surprise at Maya's words. For a moment, the woman's own stream of words stopped. She balanced her bulky weight on one foot. Her painted face became a frozen mask. The dark man behind the woman ceased his gyrations for a split second fracturing time and space after Maya spoke. He poised himself in the interlude, unnaturally immobile. The feat was startling. Maya was elated, felt a jab of tiny victory that her words had somehow paused his weird pantomime.

"Close the door," Maya said in Wilma's ear. Wilma pushed the door shut on the two figures. Outside, the woman again started her harangue, and then the din subsided. There were no sounds of departing footsteps. Only abrupt silence.

Wilma went to the window to observe the walkways and parking lot. "Nothing," she said in a low voice to Maya. "Nothing."

They gathered up Maya's things and prepared to go to Maya's car. Maya took out her keys from her pants pocket. They were ready to face whatever waited outside.

Before Maya opened the door, she said to Wilma. "Wait until I see if the car is going to start. Don't leave me until I know for sure. Then I'll wait until you're back inside before I drive away."

The streets were silent. None of the occupants of the dozen houses around them were visible. Wilma and Maya were completely alone. The orange rim of the sun was spreading up behind the mountains then.

"I'm sorry to have to leave like this," Wilma said. "But don't worry about me. I'll let Raoul take me to someone like Bicenti and learn something about this mess. I'll be all right. Now you just promise me that you'll see Bicenti as soon as possible. Promise."

Maya nodded and looked back toward Wilma's house. That dark man who had been on Wilma's porch a few minutes earlier now stood on the walk. Maya's head went up sharply and she sucked in a deep breath. Wilma turned to see what had affected Maya this way. The man seemed suspended there on a

background of cumulus clouds. He was detached from the earth and everything that Wilma and Maya knew. He began to bob, spring up and down, a jumping-jack. Again, his hands went to his pants crotch and Maya turned away. So did Wilma.

"Is it possible that I am 'cracking up'?" Maya asked Wilma. Wilma smiled a caring and trusting smile. "If you are, I am too," she told Maya. "Look, Maya - don't mention this, *what's happened here* to anyone. You know what I mean, other than the likes of Bicenti. Few people understand, have seen beyond..."

Maya looked again to where the dark man had been. He'd disappeared into Santa Fe's thin air. "Yeah," Maya said, "I know. I agree. Our people understand..., this kind of fracture of space, and time... But like you say, there's only a few who do. Don't worry, I won't say anything. Now you go inside as soon as the car starts." She unlocked the car, took her glasses from the glove compartment, and put the key in the ignition. The car started smoothly.

"Okay," Maya said to Wilma, "go on. I'll wait until you get inside." Wilma reached inside the car and hugged Maya, then she turned and retreated to the house.

Maya backed out of the parking lot slowly, noting that the curtains in a few houses were moving. She turned on the radio and set the dial on the Santa Fe station. The woman's voice had not abandoned the seductive tone. And it was now 7:05.

Wilma waited alone in her house all day, expecting something to happen but nothing did. About mid-morning, the neighbors showed some signs of life and activity. Cars cruised the streets.

Maya drove directly to Albuquerque, negotiating the tricky freeway traffic in time to make her 8:15 class at the university. But her mind played a reel of events that had happened to her recently; broken images of the dawning hours returned to her. By then, she was doubting her senses, asking herself if any of it had happened. In a university parking lot, she climbed out of her car, ambivalent about what she should do. She gathered her books from the trunk and slammed it down hard. Then she went to put a quarter into the meter. Splotches of dried red blood on the car caught her eye. Suddenly her doubts vanished, her mind cleared. She set her jaw in determination, and she climbed back into the car. Bicenti was in Arizona six hours away.

It was nearly four when Maya arrived home. Her family met her at the front door. "What's wrong, mom?" one of her children asked. "You're not supposed to be home yet. Are you cutting class?" The boy laughed and then he noticed Maya's strained face. he asked, "Are you all right?"

"No," Maya answered. "Let's talk."

In Santa Fe, Raoul knocked on Wilma's door. Wilma let him in. He hugged her, his white even teeth showing in a wide smile. "How's my girl today?" he asked.

Wilma answered him, "Raoul, how would you like to take me for a long ride today?"

"How long?" Raoul questioned.

"To Ca~noncito, thirty miles from Albuquerque," Wilma told him. "I'll make it worth your while," she said with a wink.

"Okay by me, but why are we going to Can~oncito?"

Raoul inquired.

"I have to see a man there," Wilma said.

Raoul smiled and teased, "Won't I do?"

Wilma laughed, "Afraid not, lover boy. The man we're going to see finds things, tells you what's wrong. Know what I mean?"

Raoul nodded. He understood.

At dusk, Maya and her man were riding down a treacherous road that wound through sagebrush and pi~non trees. The Chuska mountains were dark green behind them and Black Mesa was ahead of them some forty miles distant. A cribbed log hogan and a house were in sight at the end of the road. Sheep were penned in a nearby corral, and their bleating sailed through the evening's space and time.

Maya's man went into the house and not long after came to get Maya, waiting in the pick-up truck. "Bicenti is in the hogan," he said. He opened the truck door. Maya followed him inside the dark hogan.

Maya's man greeted Bicenti who sat on a sheepskin that covered the earthen ground. They touched each other's hands, then Maya touched Bicenti's hand, and took a place on the sheepskin beside him. Through the smoke hole, Maya watched the pink sky fade. In time Maya told him everything. *Things weren't right* she said intermittently while he sat and listened, not surprised at anything she said.

They left Bicenti's hogan over an hour later. The eastern

sky was sprinkled with early stars and the world appeared as it should be. Bicenti would come to Maya's house the next night. He would quietly tell all. Then he would bind the tiniest fracture in infinite space and time. Then, he would go silently away, until the next time.

*"Writing which addresses the root assumptions...  
the very ground on which we're standing..."*

14 TRIVIA  
A  
JOURNAL  
OF IDEAS

TWO-PART ISSUE --  
THE 3RD INTERNATIONAL  
FEMINIST BOOKFAIR

PART II: LANGUAGE/DIFFERENCE:  
WRITING IN TONGUES

**RADICAL FEMINIST THEORY**  
**Experimental Prose**  
**Translations**  
**Reviews**

**Lee Maracle** - Moving Over • **Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood** - I Write Le Body Bilingual • **Jeannette C. Armstrong** - Cultural Robbery, Imperialism: Voices of Native Women • **Conversations at the Book Fair** - Interviews with Lee Maracle and Gloria Anzaldúa • **Gloria Anzaldúa** - Border Crossings • **Michèle Causse** - ( ): Interview • **Ruthann Robson** - Nightshade • **Verena Stefan** - Literally Dreaming • **Jewelle L. Gomez** - In Review: Chrystos' *Not Vanishing* • **Linda L. Nelson** - After Reading Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera*

TRIVIA P.O. Box 606 N. Amherst, MA 01059

TRIVIA is published three times a year.  
\$14/year - individuals, \$20/year - institutions, \$16/year - out of U.S.  
SAMPLE COPY: \$6.00/\$7.00.

**Cheeky Moon by Annharte**

Those eyes show total disgust  
 at mothers who got sweet talked.  
 I am the direct result  
 —fruit of the union—  
 the big cheek breed  
 who bucks tradition  
 becomes a typical troublemaker  
 except I drink tea  
 —Blue Ribbon brand—  
 from a chipped enamel cup.  
 I should cast dark images  
 on Grey Owl's guided fantasy.  
 His beavers led the way  
 (never mind his wives)  
 to his imposter identity.

I'm left to defend  
 one lonely drop of blood.  
 I might terminate  
 if I get nosebleed.  
 The degree never counts  
 unless you practice law.  
 I need the law of the land  
 to respect my blood.  
 Between you and me  
 it's the bucket of crabs  
 pulling us down together.  
 I count myself lucky  
 to salvage my ancestry  
 in this particular drop  
 at my time.

**Bloody Jig**

riel            riel

died    died

lie

didn't we

take our blood back

fan out shake rattle roll

one snare drum bang one big drum

half white half chief half his people

half people jig have half the blood he had



## One Way To Keep Track of Who Is Talking

If I change one word, I change history. What did I say today? Do I even remember one word? Writing is oral tradition. You have to practice the words on someone before writing it down.

I do not intend to become the world's greatest Indian orator. Maybe I might by accident. I might speak my mind even when running off my mouth like I'm doing. Language finds a tongue. Maybe it will be an Indian accent.

Counting hostile Indians is made easier because they don't talk much or very little. They look the part — the part in the middle with braids. You never do know if you are talking to an Indian.

Frozen Indians and frozen conversations predominate. We mourn the ones at Wounded Knee. Our traditions buried in one grave. Our frozen circles of silence does no honor to them. We must talk to keep our conversations from getting too dead.

## Review: Being On the Moon by Lee Maracle

Poetry began as the first form of drama, story, song, all combined together. Over the centuries, several art forms arose as poetic verse. Since then, poets have striven to re-capture the rhythmic, dramatic, story-song qualities in their writing. For such as myself, it is a struggle, a kind of clawing and digging around inside for what is best in me. For others, it is an academic exercise, intellectual work, so to speak. I began reading Annharte's 'Being On The Moon' after a long day in Toronto whose air is always resplendent with chemicals, smog, which turns that which lives in the throat green.

I caution patrons of poetry; do not begin reading Annharte's book at midnight after a trying day. Over and over, I let the words, the characters, the music of her work, dance about before me, until the night had passed and I had to face a new day without the benefit of a good night's rest. In fact, you don't 'read' Annharte's work, you get to know her and all the people in her life. You come to understand her sense of humanity, her love for life and the beauty of her language through her English.

The next day I heard her speak. I want to thank my grandmothers and my mother for bringing me up outside the realm of professional jealousy. Annhart is a poet. No clawing or digging produced this book, just a running record of the highlights of her life. It is as though she sat down every now and then, and talked to clean sheets of paper, as though they were living friends.

"Mocassins keep coming undone

Slight injury slows up my parade

Minding my old lady steps...

and I wanted to apologize to my own tattered moccasins who were once the skin of living moose, for not recognizing they were not just objects, but living beings.

Who said work was for us

my job is being an Indian squaw...there are no

more jobs down south

rich women want to keep our kids  
 for a hobby scrubbing extra hard  
 to make them white until their teens  
 bring out that ol' Southern Comfort...  
 so again a squaw will laugh  
 I like my job in Indian country  
 no white women tell me what I do.

and Annharte jumps off the page, in good honest indigenous style,  
 her great heart laughing in the face of what was intended to be our  
 tragedy. Thank you, Annharte, I shall never again weep on cue at  
 the tragedy outlined by Canada for us. It is only tragedy if we are  
 not sure of the truth inside.

I'm tapped by her eyes double ringers under violet  
 bruising as she asks "Did you see a little boy standing  
 here?" "I must be seeing a ghost" I hear she had a story  
 she wanted to tell me.

Writers, according to Kurisowa, an honored Japanese  
 filmist, should "never avert their eyes". For us, writers never  
 avert their eyes or their ears. We collect stories, our folk tales  
 and render them understandable, changeable; subtracting the  
 tragedy and restoring the spirit to its healthy, natural state. Our  
 writing is born of our lives and the lives of those who touch us.

### For Elijah Harper

Grandma,  
 I sit rewitnessing genocide,  
 birthing  
 an endless field of tears  
 that can't wash away our death

While,  
 eleven men sit stoutly  
 around a green baize table  
 the twelfth chair oddly vacant

Silence  
 violent, dogged silence  
 surrounds the empty chair  
 consuming our dreams.

Missing,  
 generations of erasure  
 by men who continue  
 to talk about Natives

Eleven men  
 singing in unrestrained refrain  
 Aboriginal, Aboriginal rights,  
 minus Aboriginal people

eleven men, dressing the window  
 of indigenous absence in silky  
 bantering over Quebec' fate

"Quebec  
 is a distinctive society"  
 - such an innocuous demand  
 vetoed by English pomposity.

Between  
 the lines of silence  
 and objections to Quebec  
 resides their real fear

Grandma,  
 to grant Quebec distinction  
 they would have to make you  
 the twelfth disciple.

Ghost dance  
 between the paralyzed pens  
 of Meech's men arresting the  
 signatory of an accord negating us.

Instead  
 they sit, white faces shining  
 replanting conquest as silence begs  
 release from our endless field of tears

O Kanata  
 my home and devastated land  
 I am powerless to defend  
 eleven men and an empty chair

## Last Quarter Song by Daniel David Moses

Where has our Grandmother gone tonight?  
Our Grandmother has gone to the moon.  
All Grandmothers do when their business

here is done. She'll be there at least as  
long as the moon lasts. Her reflection  
on the river was so bright tonight

I almost lost my paddle. Looking  
back through the crystalline air at us  
navigating night in our canoe

don't you think she can see forever?  
Don't you think that we two look to her  
more than bright enough to make it through?

## TIRED SONG

Listen to the white  
walls. What naysayers  
they are. How they run  
everything over.

Oh why can't they come  
to some dead end  
in their conversation?  
I'm tired of them

saying NEVER  
is when we'll arrive at  
our destination.  
I really am at

the end. Not NEVER  
That cannot be right.  
The last of snow's  
white in the fields

and the first geese oh  
are ahead. Roll  
down the window and talk  
now, my friend, about

this place yielding  
light and wings, this road  
where we are now and  
always arriving.

## Nokomis by Forrest A. Funmaker

i first saw you as a large lake  
on the west side of Minneapolis.  
There waves skittered across the  
surface and i knew it was you  
a thing of beauty wild in the city  
Mom told me of you dying, being  
killed mysteriously, i think now  
she was only trying to hide your  
beautiful image. You must have  
been beautiful if you were my  
grandma, for I am Indian and  
just as beautiful as you. i've  
seen this city change since you  
were alive, i've drank with the  
people you once nourished, ones  
you let use you to get their  
beer and whiskey, the ones i  
now call my friends too. We  
are alike grandma me and you;  
we've seen the inside of this  
cage and we have rattled it's  
bars, we have talked to those  
in need, and i'm sure we have  
cried the same tears. On your  
shores, along the sandy shores,  
near the waters edge, i sit  
thinking what you must have  
been like. i crack the top off  
this beer bottle, take a sip,  
and chuck it to you. Cheers  
Nokomis. i love you

## The Story of Harry Loon

His story  
shoots between my ears  
quicker than  
a legacy

In ten minutes  
he's seen more  
done some  
heard it all

An unconscious uprising  
full of spirit  
taking care of business  
on parliament hill

He swims in strength's  
ocean beauty  
of work hours  
and shapes reality

He's Iktomi to some  
Nanabush to others  
the trickster to many  
a Harry Loon to me

In a class at school  
he came into my hands  
through a divine mistake  
in a coined disguise

At a convenience store  
i gave the cashier twenty  
he gave me twenty-seven  
back  
plus a looney

i was happy i met Harry  
he wanted me to know  
that nature is great  
just don't fool around

a lesson in respect  
he acknowledged me  
and now rewarded me  
with a gold replica

## Bear Mirror

Deep inside me you're cool and black  
Your reflections are evident  
Shadow me back from this city  
And take me home to our ways  
Where the grass grows high and wild  
And chickadees play so gleefully  
let me understand truth for the first time  
Show me so that I can do right

No one listens here the way elders did  
Everybody's running around like white men  
If it isn't a three piece suit  
It's who can drink the most beer  
Or who can smoke the most dope  
It's always whose more Indian?  
Time and time again  
Bad blood is always spilled

Tell me what I did wrong  
Is there still time to do it right  
To know the ceremonies and songs  
The histories, how to use a rattle  
It came to me naturally as a child  
But now my nurtured soul has forgotten  
I need to know our ways  
Please grant me this one wish

So off to the white man's school again  
I'll be back after my classes  
Maybe then I learn something  
Learn what the white man doesn't teach  
As my thoughts extend past you  
I feel you are worthwhile  
Tell me again Bear Mirror  
Of what it's like to be free

## You Rattle We Hum

1.

With every loud blast beat of the drum  
The hide shook what remained of the windows  
Vibrating down the halls of Little Earth  
People came from all over the Projects  
To wish us thanks and sing with the drum  
Before we knew it the place was filled  
And the People just kept coming to sing  
Somebody brought over their P.A. system  
And pretty soon the whole courtyard was  
electric with voices singing the songs  
until the wee hours of the morning

2.

We just kept beating on that old hide  
Belting out the People's favorite songs  
When we and the People were all high  
The booze flowed with pinky size joints  
The songs made the back of our necks  
Tingle from person to person 'til at last  
We could sing no more and the People tired  
When we looked to see who all was there  
Everyone we thought was there vanished  
There was no real people and no P.A.  
Just a lonely bunch of Spirits whose  
Main gain to be with us was to sing

## Flower Day by Alice Lee

when you died  
i lay you here  
sleep well i said  
what else could i do with you

i come now to clean your grave  
fresh flowers planted  
headstone dusted clean  
who else would do it

i hum as i work  
i know  
that even in death  
you need me  
at noon  
i'll use your grave as a table  
and eat  
a feast in celebration  
a woman  
alone

## Dream Maker by Maria Baptiste

Image-maker

I feel you creeping up  
behind me  
at night  
when I am alone

You are set to a solid purpose  
Filling my head with ancient relics  
of the past  
the leftover dusty bones of yesterday  
the long buried voices  
still waiting to be heard

I slip into their well worn moccasins  
and walk the same path trod  
so many generations ago

I see their smokeless villages  
and their skinless bones scattered  
about  
Their jawless faces whisper in my ear  
of long ago  
Their words fill my head and my heart  
I remember

with you at my side  
am not afraid  
for you are the

Dream Maker

## Lacquer Red

"There was a little girl  
who had a little curl  
right in the middle of her forehead  
When she was good  
she was very good  
when she was bad  
she was

extraordinary!"

Her father always told her this rhyme, at night  
she didn't like to hear it, it made her feel bad  
she was always left in the blackness, silent sobs  
screaming within her.

That was many lives ago

Now she sits, huddled in an ebony corner of her room  
hugging her knees to her thin chest  
playing with her revlon lipstick  
drawing little circles of red on  
the floor

Nursery rhymes fill her head, she thought her mother was reading  
aloud to her again, to make her feel better  
but there was no one.

Darkness cascades its shadowy robe over all the creatures  
that share this giant sphere  
killers shaped through the ages

by

the fall of this perennial Garden of Eden

The moon suddenly cuts into the room through a window  
invading her privacy

She sees little shadows dancing around her red lipstick marks  
as if in a ceremonial ritual from some demonic past

But a heavenly light shines on the sharp gleam of the knife  
beside her

She picks it up twisting the blade seductively in the blackness  
She's been living in two worlds, too bound by her own self  
All she will leave is little

round

circles

of

lacquer

red

**In Another World by Greg Young-Ing**

In another world,  
    we might return as enemies  
In another world,  
    we might return as friends

In the heart-land of my head  
    I have stood on a frozen mountain top  
waiting  
    for a warm smile  
        to melt me down

And a sharp old mind  
    to stab my lofty thought flights  
        and gently guide them down  
        down  
        down

But here in the outside world  
    where we have to live  
    and the only 'untouchables'  
    are dancing across a T.V. screen  
        or lightly sprinkled  
        over the shiny pages of a magazine  
the only sound I can make  
    is in the emptiness  
    of English business speak  
    that hungers for meaning

Together  
we have raced through burning forests  
    set ablaze by someone else  
and we came out clean  
    without blaming one another  
    or even losing the trail

In the acid etchings of my memory  
    a sample of a people's voice is forever  
    in the wind that runs by my ears  
a picture of Nations full of determined faces  
    forever  
        in the light  
        that flashes  
        before my eyes

In another world  
    we might return as enemies  
In another world  
    we might return as friends  
or to love  
    to love  
    to love

## The Fire Is My Mother by Redhand

Speak not to me out of both sides of your mouth  
You tell me that it is important that I learn where I came from  
But yet it is you who kept that knowledge from me and tried to  
destroy who I am

In spite of you I know where I came from

I am survivor of the holocaust

I came from the midst of the fire

What came with me I cherish; what I lack I will build anew  
Speak not about sending me back to search for those things I  
have not experienced

It is because of you that they are gone

I will not waste my energies searching to satisfy your guilt

The fire is my mother

I am the Phoenix

I am the reality

I am the culture

I am the future

I am reborn, in fire

# SPIRIT DEER



## Spirit Deer by Richard Armstrong

The early morning mist hung suspended over the pond below the corral in long willowy wisps, barely visible. The air had a dampness that made it feel somehow alive on my skin.

As I walked home from my early swim, I left a visible trail behind me in the silvery dew covered grass. Meadow larks were singing in their loudest, seemingly trying to outdo one another. The sun which had almost reached the top of Picnic Hill, made it look nice and warm over there, while here it was still shivery.

Even the smoke coming out of the chimney hung in the air above the house in a light blue shroud. It seemed like something was just waiting to happen. Things felt somehow different today, so I stopped, and, tried to figure out what it might be.

At that moment the stillness was broken as Mom opened the back door to put some food scraps in a plate for old Prince. He crawled out from under the porch, stretched and wagged his old tail. I could hear Dad whistling as he walked down the hill from the chicken house. He had his hat in his hands and I just knew that he had collected eggs that we would soon be having for breakfast. He saw me and hollered out, "Did you feed the horses yet?" I shouted back "I did" as I opened the gate to the yard so that Last Chance and Pinda-Ho could get a drink before they were harnessed.

I stopped at the door and waited for Dad to get there so I could hold the door open, because his hands were full. As I opened the door I could smell fresh coffee and deer meat frying. Dad was saying something about the hens laying more eggs lately...I hardly heard him. My mind was still on whatever it was that I sensed.

I looked at the water buckets on the kitchen counter by the sink and silently prayed that they would not be empty just yet. I wouldn't mind carrying those buckets of water up from the spring later, but right now I didn't want to go back down there.

During breakfast my older brother and dad were talking about fixing the dam in the creek and cleaning out the irrigation ditches at the upper ranch. Somewhere during breakfast it was decided that the entire family would be going because there was no school today or tomorrow and that alot could be accomplished towards getting things ready for planting.

Suddenly my little brother kicked me under the table and pointed at Dad. I looked up and saw Dad's stern eyes on me. He had been talking to me and I had been busy wondering if it was the mist or the smoke that had made things look different. He repeated, "You saddle up Lucky when you're done and ride up to the spring above the pasture and bring the other horses in. Your brothers here will ride to the Upper Ranch...we'll need the extra horses to help with the work up there."

I was still feeling a little nervous, although I was not certain what about, so I asked Dad "Could I take a rifle with me?". He said "Go ahead, take the 25-20."

As I rode up the hill I could feel the nice warm sun on my back. It was early spring and the whole hillside was covered with yellow sunflowers. I could hear the call of the blue grouse. In my mind I saw it as it strutted, all fluffed up, it's wing tips dragging on the ground. There were lots of male grouse strutting back and forth on almost all of the little ledges and when one flew up in front of my horse I nearly fell off. It's sudden fluttering made both me and my horse nervous.

I reached the top of the hill and in the distance I could hear the bell that was strapped around Rocket's neck. So I knew that they would be just a little bit further over the hill by the spring. I decided to ride along the edge of the crest of the hill.

The view was something else, and I could hear a diesel engine blowing it's horn at a Railway crossing somewhere far below in the valley near the city...suddenly there ahead of me was a deer, it took a few bounds and disappeared over the edge. I'd never shot a deer before but I thought since I had a gun with me, it was a chance to get one all by myself.

I got off my horse, tied her to a seeya bush and took my rifle and walked slowly to the edge of the hill. I looked over and there he was. He had stopped almost out of sight. One jump and he would be gone. I raised my rifle without any fast or sudden moves that might spook him. I knew I had only one chance.

He turned and jumped just as I pulled the trigger and disappeared. But from the way that he jumped, I knew that I had hit him.

I ran as fast as I could to where I had last seen him go out of sight. From there I could see both ways along the open hillside, and all the way down to the road, but there was no deer anywhere in sight. I walked down the hill in a zig-zag pattern and

soon came upon his tracks and a few drops of blood on the grass, but his tracks disappeared...

Now I searched that whole hillside up and down several times.

I was getting tired and feeling scared. I was thinking that a deer couldn't just disappear like that, could it? Then I started remembering the stories my uncle had told me about how a deer will play tricks on you sometimes, especially if it's your first deer and you don't have an elder with you.

Thinking these things, my heart started beating faster, and I wondered if this deer was doing strange things to me. I shook my head and thought, "What is the matter with me, those were only stories, things like that don't really happen." My imagination was running overtime, so I sat down to calm down and rest a bit.

I decided I would go back up the hill, get on my horse and herd the others down to the corral. I would tell my dad that I had wounded a deer and couldn't find it. He would bring his old dog Prince and Prince would find this disappearing deer.

As I was sitting there catching my breath, I was still scanning the open hillside below me. There was only one big tree on this hillside and it was about thirty yards directly below me. My eyes had just looked at that big tree when I saw the deer look out from behind the tree trunk. His head disappeared behind the tree only to reappear out the other side. The strange thing was, that he was facing down the hill. Everytime he poked his head out from behind the tree he had to look back at me, like he was sitting under the tree with his back leaned against the tree trunk.

My heart started pounding again, because he hadn't stuck his head back out. I thought, "that's impossible, a deer can't sit under a tree let alone hide from me by putting its back up against a tree trunk." Just then he stuck his head out again as if he had heard me. When he looked out from his hiding place at me, my heart pounded harder. My heart was pounding so much now I could hear the blood in my arteries rushing past my ears...I was terrified.

I thought, if this is a spirit deer playing tricks on me, should I shoot it if it looks out at me from behind that tree again? Then I thought, maybe the best thing to do is to go around to the side and see if it was really leaning up against the tree...but what if it was...what would I do then?

It took all my will power to get up slow and ease my way to

the side. As I got further to the side...sure enough, there he was sitting with his back to the tree. I was so stunned that I just froze in my tracks and stared at this deer sitting under the tree with his back leaned up against the trunk...suddenly he looked at me and stuck his tongue out at me!!! That did it. I was gone.

I ran up that hill to where my horse was tied, like it was flat ground. I jumped on my horse and rode down that hill towards home like I was riding in a *suicide race*. Dad must have seen me coming down that hill running Lucky as fast as she could go. She ran sure-footed all the way to the tool shop where we usually tied the horses.

Dad was waiting there. I bailed off that horse and before I hit the ground I was telling my Dad how this deer was sitting under a tree, with it's back to the tree trunk, and how he stuck his tongue out at me.

My Dad grabbed my shoulder and shook me. He told me to calm down and tell him what happened. So I told him everything. He told me to go into the house and have a cup of tea while he saddled the old work horse Pinda-ho.

I had just finished my tea and telling Mom about what just happened to me when Dad came in. He said, "Come on son, let's go back up there and see." I told him, "I'd rather stay right here." He told me, "Let's go." His tone of voice told me that I'd better go with him.

As we rode back up there, in my mind I could still see that deer looking out at me from behind the tree. I was wishing that he wouldn't be there when we got to the tree. But then if he was gone no one would believe me.

We tied our horses and walked the short distance to where the deer should be. I was walking behind Dad. I told him "That's the tree, he's behind there." Just then the deer stuck his head out and looked at us. My heart just about stopped beating.

Dad calmly stepped aside and handed me the rifle. Then he said "Sit down, take careful aim, and shoot it in the head." My hands were shaking and little beads of sweat suddenly formed on my forehead. Dad told me to take a couple of deep breaths and pull the trigger.

I aimed and pulled the trigger. I kind of expected the deer to suddenly disappear in a little whisp of smoke. But instead it dropped dead. Dad handed me the knife and told me to go

"throat it." I was scared but I went anyway. The deer was dead and very real.

Dad touched my shoulder and I just about went straight up. As I dressed the deer out, Dad told me why the deer was sitting under this tree. He said that at the exact moment when I shot it, it jumped as I fired and that I had hit it in the spine. This had paralyzed the deer from the waist down.

Under this tree where I thought he was sitting there just happened to be a deep little hole. It was some sort of a dust bed that he fell into and couldn't pull himself out by his front legs. So he just sort of sat there in this hole propped up by his front legs.

I finished dressing him out. I was looking at this deer and it all sounded very logical, and then the deer winked at me!

I must have turned pale or maybe my hair stood up, because Dad asked me what was wrong. I said "That dead deer just winked at me." Dad chuckled and said, "That's just a muscle twitch. Dead animals twitch for awhile after they die."

Dad then told me that our people must respect the deer's life. He explained to me what I had to do to show my respect for the spirit of the deer. Then he said "Don't ever forget this" and he walked away without another word.

While I was doing what he told me, I wondered if he had meant this or my whole experience today.

## Ravensky by Tim Michel

in Ravenbelly  
i grow  
embracing my solitude  
strengthening my resolve in  
my embryonic soup  
until i am dislodged  
and my outer self expelled

in Raven nest  
i listen  
gleaning from stories and emotions  
grouping tribal memories  
into one will  
until my shell crumbles  
and i am exposed

now, in Ravensky  
i am  
dancing the circle  
fighting to stay true to the  
star path overhead  
until my breath is spent  
and i pass the message on.

## The Buffalo Man by T. Mitchel Staats

To the people in search of the way  
He will come like a bright light  
Showing the people it is now their day  
To him will rally all the Nations might

He brings to his people the gift of life  
An end to all the tribal strife  
Not a prophet or a Messiah will He be  
A servant to his people the world will see

He will ask the young of all to rise  
And together they will capture the prize  
Nations of Creation equal to all  
Among the Brothers will stand tall

Together they will ease the pain of our old  
And not let their dreams die cold  
With conviction and their vision in sight  
Our People's young will grow up right

They will hold to the rites of our past  
And with their strength forever to last  
By Keeping their eye on the Spotted Eagle's flight  
They will end their nation's plight.

## Bear With Me by Mary Lou C. DeBassige

### Part One

Today we stand on new ground  
Raspberry bushes spread abundently  
A hot afternoon sun wraps sacred gifts  
around this red-speckled field  
Just for us from  
up above(rocks/bluffs/cliffs)  
down below(valley)  
all around(universe)  
There are no clouds in the clear blue sky  
unlike my mother's warning eyes  
"Don't go too far away  
stay close by where I can see you."

Old dead trees and stumps under raspberry bushes  
thick green moss grows in cracks  
on top hop scotch rocks

Her feet steadily check balance  
Small stones fall between two large  
opening layers of flat rocks  
Must be hallow ground below  
She reaches a branch of big red raspberries  
Under her feet a crackling sound  
One foot almost goes through a big dead tree  
laying on the ground  
The sound continues a murmur growl  
She stands quiet picks berries wonders  
Is it some other life?  
She remembers stories about bear  
from her mishomiss(grandpa)  
One is big bears don't hurt nobody  
if she sees one or more bear cubs  
she's to walk away not play with them  
because close by would be mother bear

## Bear With Me

### PART TWO

Somewhere below straight down  
sounds like bear  
She drops her biggest berries  
into the dark cave like hole  
She stands on top criss crossed log  
at the mouth between rocks  
somewhere in the distance  
pass the many sounds of birds  
crickets bees and other insects  
"Mary, where are you?  
come here right now!"  
It's momma's scary voice far away

Binder twine string holds her  
little raspberry container  
catches a prickley rose bush  
She tries to pull it loose  
Instead all her raspberries spill  
pass the bushes long grass  
into opening ground below  
She takes another slow step  
stands firm and slides into  
soft sawdust like tree log

A family of red wood ants scatter  
Try to run and hide  
Instead of hit her legs  
She feels a hairy something  
Soft feather like movements  
brush her ankle laced high tops(leather shoes)  
Hears a burpy grunt  
a deep contentment

## Bear With Me

### PART THREE

Momma's loud voice comes closer  
Wide eyes look for a way out  
She breaks loose runs and climbs  
rugged layer rocks  
from which she came  
Mishomiss sits on top of this rock ground  
There's trees everywhere  
You'd never know there's underground  
Mishomiss puffs his pipe  
He knows this place  
She was with him when he picked  
this spot last fall  
To make winter firewood  
and this raspberry field

Now, his straw hat keeps his face in the shade  
He takes his red cotton handkerchief  
from his back pocket overalls  
Wipes his sweaty face and neck blows his nose  
Puts his handkerchief back  
into his back pocket  
Beside him on this rock ground  
is a birch-bark handmade bowl  
or pail shaped container full of raspberries

"Brother (nickname)  
you're just in time...  
it's time to eat...  
"Let's gather dry twigs  
and cedar to make fire...  
we'll boil water for tea...  
"The others will soon be here."

## Bear With Me

### PART FOUR

Over the open fire her momma turns over  
a golden fried scone (fried-bread)  
in a cast iron frying pan  
Her momma's eyes tell her  
not only of flowers in her head  
She sees momma trade with a relative  
some of these raspberries for  
some coal oil for their lamp  
She sees a handful of dollar bills  
after momma sells maybe half a pailful  
of these fresh raspberries  
She will then buy white sugar  
to make homemade jam  
She sees jars of raspberry jam on shelves  
underneath their kitchen floor celler  
She will climb down a short steep ladder  
Pick one jar when snow is on the ground

Tonight after hot sun goes down  
she may get to watch momma cook  
fresh clean sugar covered  
sweet smelling raspberries  
on top of the old kitchen wood stove  
(and momma may even bake a raspberry pie  
for tomorrow's dessert)  
Before her bedtime she'll tell momma  
she heard bear and gave bear  
an open log of red ants for it's meal  
and a five pound lard pail full of the  
biggest, ripest, juiciest  
raspberries for it's dessert

How do you tell momma something like this?  
When all you don't want to see is a  
long stick make deep razor sharp  
red blood streaks on her body  
"Momma, no! momma, no!  
please momma, noooooooooo."

## Alive Spirit's Simplicity

### prologue:

Several days ago Mary's daughter, Lou, came to  
our house. Lou plans to stay a while, until she  
re-establishes herself in Toronto.

Lou just finished an Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation  
Program at Rainbow Lodge on Manitoulin Island.  
Mary and I understand because we're ex-drunks

### present setting:

With my spirit on a southern faced living room  
loveseat, clean the attic of my mind by spinning  
these words.

With her spirit, Mary's on a western faced swivel  
dining room chair...in front of an oval table hooks  
autumn glory on her rug.

### Ist dialogue:

"Mary, I haven't seen Lou for the past few days. I  
miss her. Have you heard from her?"

"Oh yes, she phoned yesterday."

"That's good."

### intermission:

[Scott, my son rings the door bell, He visits often  
I get up to let him in.]

"Anee n'gushi, aneesh ezhimadzeeyin,?" (Hello my  
mother, how are you living your life/how is your life?)  
He looks at Mary. "Your telephone is ringing, Mary."  
She goes upstairs to answer it. In the meantime,  
him and I converse. Several minutes later, Mary  
comes downstairs in a quiet manner.

2nd dialogue

"Was that Lou?"

"Um-hum," (meaning yes)

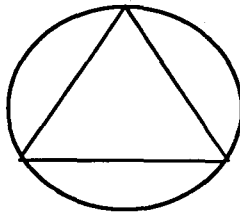
"How is she?"

"Oh, she's fine. She's on her way home.

"That's excellent! Mary, you and I have a strong spirit connection. We sent it out to Lou. She too picks it up by phoning."

epilogue:

HEALING



SHARING

HARMONY

## Bear Death by Armand Garnet Ruffo

Familiar with bear death

I have seen him served as an offering

hot on a plate, supper for the successful.

Penis bone scraped clean  
and drying in the sun. Caged

corpse braided in tassels  
and bells, lying like a rug.

Head stuffed.

Squat on a log dreaming slick ants

as thick as people or slick people as thick as ants  
was the first time he was shot.

Right between the eyes. It was raining  
a smell of earth and water.

If I say today he's bent and lumbering  
over your city streets believe me.

The faces he sees are smudged against glass.

Enticed by flesh's soft currency, he is expected  
to eat heartily, lick his lips  
and join the crowd.

He tries to keep his head, take only  
the choice bits, give  
only the odd unfamiliar  
growl.

## Creating A Country

They came to North America in search of a new life, clinging to their few possessions, hungry for prosperity. They had enough of poverty and suffering to last a lifetime. They believed with all their hearts that if they laboured they would become barons in a classless society. Patriots were thus born on both sides of the border. But the process of creating a country took much longer than most ever imagined. For there were a myriad of unforeseen obstacles in this formidable new land, like the mosquitoes and Indians. Undaunted, the pioneering spirit persisted.

In Canada, Susanna Moodie arrived to take notes. After writing anti-slavery tracts in England, she thought it only natural to document the burden of roughing it in the bush. Susanna shied away from both mosquitoes and Indians. One day, however, quite by accident, she met a young Mohawk whom she thought handsome and for a brief period flirted with the notion of what it would be like to be swept away by him.

But she soon tired of such thoughts and nothing ever became of it. Later she would say neither Indians nor mosquitoes make good company. She did make it perfectly clear that she bore no grudge. She believed everything has a place.

Just as she believed her place was across the ocean, but she too had heard stories about golden opportunities. Lies! She could be screaming alone. Nothing but lies! Susanna also believed that she was turning life into art, and creating the first semblance of culture in a god forsaken land. It was her only compensation. When she spoke about her life her eyes rolled in her head like a ship leaving port. She never gave up the dream of returning home across the ocean. Dreamed so hard that even on her death bed she never stopped talking to herself.

South of the border Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer never once worried about mosquitoes. He too was interested in culture and for this reason carried a gun. He was a soldier, not an artist, and made no pretense about it. Custer never wrote and rarely talked unless formally addressed. Yet, he was a passionate man who dreamed the same dream every night. He fancied that he had discovered the final solution. Each night he rounded up all the buffalo in what is now Montana and shot every last one of them.

As a son of European peasantry, he'd heard stories about what it was like to go hungry. He also knew that Indians could

starve just like white people. As a patriot, he believed his solution was perfectly reasonable. He also believed that American politicians would see to it that the buffalo and the Indian would find a new home on the American nickel.

Susanna Moodie never met General Hair (as Custer was affectionately called), she never liked Americans anyway. She was an old lady of 73 when he died on the plains of the Little Bighorn trying to live out his dream. They say that Custer was singing "The Girl I Left Behind" the day he headed west. We know he wasn't singing to Susanna Moodie. We also know that after hearing what the U.S. Cavalry was doing south of the border, Susanna thought about the anti-slavery tracts she had written years before and, for a moment, about what had ever become of her young Mohawk, if he fared any better.

## Pemmican Publications

is Celebrating its 10th Year of Publishing

A warm *Thank You* to all who supported  
us through our 1st decade



411 - 504 Main Street / Winnipeg, MB / Canada R3B 1B8 / (204) 942-0926



**Red and White by Shirley Eagle Tail Feathers**  
(for Kate and Amy)

Amidst this cloud of racism  
being bounced around  
    OFF of you and  
    OFF of me

Two little hearts  
Meet  
One red, and  
One white

But, both Blood Red

Together, they will stay  
As close as any  
Best friends will

They will argue  
They will hate  
But  
They are always

Looking forward to tomorrow

When, they can  
Begin again  
With a New Sun  
With a Fresh smile

**Bright White One by Myrtle Johnson**

I see things, light today  
nice and quiet. My spirit  
is warm like the winds flowing  
in empty skies.  
I'm game, like fish  
flipping in fresh water,  
slapping at sparks of light  
gleam from small beams,  
off the bright white sun  
My spirit is 'bright white one'  
A dry, clear day of the green earth  
I have reached damp water.  
Changing them into evaporation  
of clear white cloud

## Like a Child

I sing like a Child  
I sing of Indians  
Dancing in Blue Smoke  
Reaching the warm Earth.  
For the echoing  
of a far gone whisper  
I touch the yellow flames  
burning, leaving ashes behind  
I see the Indians laughing  
Grabbing each other, hand in hand  
They have reached their spirit  
Coming from the winds,  
Over the cold shining lake  
In the early morning  
I sing, I dance  
I dance in the Blue Smoke  
With long forgotten Indians  
I will be one of them  
Reborn in myself  
Like a Child

## This Windy Dusty Day

This windy dusty Day  
in Alkali with the  
Warm wind searching over the land  
to melt the cold snow  
So that is so dark  
The dust covers and  
Dances on this ice of water  
Water is trickling down  
rocks, sand, weeds and  
all things new to spring.  
It whistles, with the trees  
swaying in the air.  
The dust makes circles  
of winds  
The designs reach into  
the blue sky  
I cover myself. I will  
have to wash. In the  
wind, I watch my child  
They say the woodtics  
travel with the wind.  
Then land on your clothes  
woodtics climb in your  
hair and bite into  
the skin. It is bad  
I stay inside  
and watch the wind

## Pow Wow Fever by Cheryl Blood(Ohmyahsin)

Cold hard concrete, loud muffled sounds from the announcer's  
microphone echo's in my head.  
Sounds bounce all around the room, my ears struggle to interpret  
Dust fills my nostrils, while I sit slumping in my cold plastic chair.  
Looking through the acrylic panes encircling the hockey rink.  
I watch dancers of all guises dance to the beats of vibrating loud  
muffled drumming and chanting.  
On cold concrete floor where winter's ice once lay,  
Children run freely, uninterested.  
"Is the Pow wow spirit here yet?"  
"I don't feel it, do You?"  
Colorful outfits of all makes and styles;  
Traditional, Fancy, Buckskin, Grass, Jingle, Clown, and  
even Jig dancers adorn visions of silently watching spectators eyes.  
- Competition now sets in - different categories, dancers displaying  
their fancy footwork.  
young to old do their best to catch the judge's eye,  
ballots are counted.  
Now they introduce Pow wow queen and Runner ups  
Name Giving Ceremony "Buffalo Woman, I think he said," and the  
name  
so fitting  
Honor dance everyone stands, Queen and family follow, dancing  
behind  
each other to a complete circle.  
Giveaway Dance Ceremony now, I don't ever receive anything  
anyhow,  
Think I'll go for a coffee!

# SEAGULL

## Seagull by Arnold Louie

The sensation of being in flight on a new summer day in the Okanagan Valley was second only to the feeling of a full gut. Which reminded me, I hadn't had my breakfast yet! The craving for food or lack of it was normal for a web-footed sea fowl like myself.

I fluttered my way towards the city to solve the deficiency inside my moaning belly. I landed downtown on the top of the Bank of Commerce in Penticton and looked at the street below me. Before I could think further, the smell of food instinctively brought my attention to Main Street. As I looked and found there below me, at the corner of the street, the hot dog stand one of my cousins had told me about. The fresh smell of toasted franks was enough to hypnotize any starving seagull. With that in mind, I bravely flew down to get a closer look to plan my attack.

I landed on a nearby bench trying to look lost as I boldly inched my way closer to the stand. My strategy was, that if I came close enough I could use the strength in my wings to carry me over the grill, and like an eagle snatch my hotdog and fly away. But, it didn't take me long to find out the hotdog owner must have experienced my kind before. I alertly focused my attention to the sling shot he withdrew from his pocket. It didn't take me long to recognize that the marbles that were being launched from his sling shot were aimed at me. Just when I turned and began to fly away, I felt a direct hit on the side of my head which grounded me to the pavement in a bird crash.

The next thing I could feel was the earth tremble to which brought me to open one eye and noticed the hotdog stand owner was running towards me. A sudden irrational fear of being thrown in a city garbage can brought me to my feet.

I quickly began to flap my wings getting ready for takeoff, as my tortured body started down the runway of the city sidewalk. The hotdog stand owner wasn't as slow as I thought. He gave me a boost with the side of his foot that not only contributed to my air travel, but also motivated me in the direction of the heavens as the instincts of survival kept my wings flapping until I came to the top of the Bank of Commerce.

Standing there as a slight breeze blew against my ruffled feathers my head began to ache. Obviously that was not a way to fill an empty stomach. So without delay I readily took off to scout a less dangerous area of being a scavenger. I perched myself on the top of

a telephone pole by Parkers Dodge car lot, I looked out below me and felt ashamed. Life had not been fair to me as I looked at my webbed feet. I seen my cousins below me waiting for their daily meal of McDonald's garbage being ushered out the door, anticipating foreign food of any kind to hit the pavement. At first my stomach wanted to join them but then I thought, is this what life is all about. Fighting my family every day for a few pieces of rotten leftovers.

Why are my feet webbed? How come I don't have the claws of an eagle or a hawk? Then I would be able to kill my own food instead of being the local bum I am. The idea of being an eagle made me excited as I took that thought and soared above the town. So as I began to glide through the air I tried to think what it would be like to search for real prey. Rather than the left over throw away food my body had grown accustomed to. Caught up in my own fantasy while flying down, Main Street, my eyes zeroed in on a medium sized cat.

My stomach growled as my famished body became alive! So like the macho bird my thoughts had perceived me to be, I swooped down for the kill. The closer to the ground I came the more I began to realize the size of the cat.

I arrived in ill humor and tried to puncture the cat's neck with my webbed feet and at the same time fly away with him. It became apparent that my feet have no muscles in them to control such a hostile animal let alone fly away with him.

My next reaction was to instantly throat him with my strong powerful beak as I quickly attacked the jugular area. Instantly this action of thrusting my fragile pecker into such a thick hide brought tears to my eyes. The cat must have been pretty hungry himself because before I knew it I was at the bottom and the cat's mouth had me by the throat trying to kill me. I couldn't do anything so I started to panic, I was in a fight for my life.

Instead of trying to kill, I was about to be eaten by this ferocious feline. I wasn't the eagle I thought I was and if it had not been for a local store owner who came out with his broom and clubbed us both I would have easily become digestive material.

Flying away, the blurred vision from the blow of the broom brought me to face the reality that because of my day dreaming. I had experienced what cat scratch fever was all about. So with that I quickly began to think of a different strategy to fill the emptiness in my stomach. I exhaustedly landed my weary body on a nearby

house as I tried to ignore my wounds by the thought of food, which would heal any anguish that I felt. The pain started to set in which made me come to the conclusion that I was a wanna be bird living in a wanna be world. No matter what I did I could never be an eagle. I still admired his ways. How he never lets his hunger change his environment. He would starve before he would bring himself to be the vagrant bird that I am. I guess a wanna be world is what created bums like me.

### Seduction by Nana

Coyote shuffled down the path,  
yellow eyes shining,  
tongue lolling

Stopping suddenly,  
Coyote cocked his head  
ears pointed  
one eye cast downward  
leg poised

There in the grass  
a brilliant shining light

Coyote gazed  
transfixed  
as the light grew

From its center  
stepped a beautiful woman  
smiling  
hand outstretched  
palm upward

Coyote did not move  
primal instincts prevailed

The woman grew in size  
black hair and eyes  
dark skin  
scent of sage and cedar

A woman of sun and earth

She spoke  
I have a gift for you  
Yes,  
a gift, she said  
Of friendship  
for you

Coyote's skin tingled  
Her womanly curves  
enveloped him  
full and soft  
He yearned to hold her  
touch her hair  
feel her warm form

lay next to his  
to suckle her breast  
heat to heat  
sensations  
joining them as one

Coyote's passions rose,  
gift forgotten  
Teeth flashed  
sinking into tender flesh  
of rounded shoulder and neck

She was motionless  
an inner scream  
shattered the stillness  
Withdrawal,  
of trust  
of friendship  
of warmth  
of love and dreams

Brilliant light fragmented  
magic shards shattered  
like suns reflections  
on windy waters

Coyote stood alone  
He had forgotten the gift  
offered  
in trust and love  
It too was gone

Coyote trotted down the path  
heart and stomach  
still hungry

No god  
no hero  
just Coyote

## Christmas Day by Mary Ann Gerard

What if all the alcoholics on earth  
gathered here tonight.  
Would you be there, Daddy?  
Swinging chains and cursing the  
seven little whores you fathered?  
Over there! I see someone I know.  
The boy I loved, who hit my eye,  
the boy I married who took  
my trust and tore the paper  
binding from the satin dreams.  
I spilled whiskey on my leather.  
My kitchen table, stained with wine-rings  
disappeared the next day.  
A knife and a five dollar bill  
were left under the mattress.  
Someone-Oh God, I don't remember who-  
broke the light bulb and  
I picked the glass  
from Baby's feet.

## Christmas Day, Part II

Another Christmas day.  
You wear your drunkenness  
like a corsage  
red and green pipe cleaners amok,  
dangling silver bells clinking  
Lids of beer bottles  
tinkle forth all day  
and the kids shuffle through them  
while they cry for more toys.  
My new shoes didn't quite fit.  
Too bad you hawked the stereo  
to buy them.  
You smile your holiday smile.  
I'd like to hawk that;  
teeth for money,  
all those pearls for some cash.  
Later in the alcohol soaked  
yeasty smelling amber night,  
you knocked my two front teeth out.  
A memory for our family  
that screams violence  
every winter  
when we see Santa.

## Eon Ago by Deb Clement

it seem like eon ago  
 when i was there  
 fight'in it, not likin' it  
 bein' angry 'cause o' my pain  
 at my loss  
 at alienation  
 my self was lost, it was sacred  
 but on my road  
 i met a man — he was cree too  
 who gave me a story  
 it said: keep goin'  
 don' look back, you find what it is  
 you'r lookin' for  
 an' when you do, keep it, hold it  
 it is sacred  
 so now today and ev'ryday  
 i need to have it: the story  
 comes back to me  
 it is like find'in a friend  
 after a long sep'ration—  
 havin' wonder at what was  
 happen'in to my frien'  
 why was my frien' lost to me  
 i'd ask  
 now today i know  
 the path i travel  
 brings healin'  
 it brou't back me  
 my frien', my self  
 it seems like eon ago  
 that time when i was lost  
 in al'co'l

## We Cry

you laugh we cry  
 at your ridicule  
 of our sacred ways  
 we cry  
 we try to preserve  
 our identity  
 you laugh as we try  
 to hold what is sacred  
 you laugh  
 we try to explain to share  
 you ridicule  
 you dig up our ancestors  
 we cry  
 you study us  
 we continue strugglin'  
 against your contamination  
 we cry  
 you tell us to  
 assimilate  
 we cry our secrets  
 we will not tell  
 you ask us for the key  
 it is respect  
 the native "problem"  
 was given to us  
 we are blamed  
 for "our" problem  
 we want to choose  
 from your offerings  
 of civilization  
 you laugh  
 we cry  
 we will continue  
 our struggle

## Just Beginning by Colleen Seymour

Have you ever journeyed with the sun  
as it starts and ends a day?  
Have you ever journeyed with the sun  
as it starts and ends each day  
for four consecutive days?

The gray light, where anything can happen, awaits  
The blanket of silence, so thick you can wear it  
Ecstasy is to witness birth

Woodburnt smoke curls lazily, as rocks are heated  
Like Granny, the icy-cold water has its own language  
Rejoice  
as each fir bough is appropriately placed

Have you ever felt the presence of strong spirits?  
They are spoken to  
in a Native tongue, which is much stronger than the babble of  
The wise one's speaking or singing  
is instantaneous  
Seriousness or lightheartedness  
changes  
depending on the assistance one seeks  
At times, the old one's wavering voice  
speaks through the innocence of a child  
Only the strong ones listen

For those who fail to observe  
something  
which is not concrete  
invisible are the spirits  
Experience the inner self, with those moments of experience

Have you ever journeyed?

## I know who I am by Donna K. Goodleaf

colonizer, my enemy  
I will confront and challenge you.  
I will neither accept nor conform to your lies  
I will challenge you  
I know who I am

I study you, I watch you, eyes of a hawk  
I know your history, I have studied it  
colonial history, full of lies  
history of tyranny, massacres, disease, theft, state terrorism  
history of genocide  
that is your history

your identity, "proud american/canadian"  
"This is my historical roots" you shout  
what is an 'american' or 'canadian?' I ask you  
you have no roots here, rootless one  
prisoned mind, confused mind  
history of confusion  
that is your history

Indigenous Nations, histories of resistance  
we are clans, nations, ever so strong  
our roots, one with mother earth  
this land, Turtle Island  
Kalanerskowa, Great Law of Peace  
ancient constitution of Hauderosaunee people  
history of survival, this is my history  
I know who I am

Kanien kehakaneha - People of the Flint  
Kahenrakwas, woman, ever so strong  
history of survival,  
this is my history  
I know who I am



## Journey by Kerrie Charnley & Greg Young-Ing

I.

The day fell upon me like birth  
and I awoke as if I had just discovered a new religion  
The sun shone like a neon cross in an eclipse  
and I knew that I was about to love something  
for the first time  
On this day I would walk across a new territory  
which my feet would press like a virgin  
I was about to live again  
raw and innocent  
and all my sins were absolved

II.

The Moon glows over the light  
of my beginning  
and I awoke inside of the dream  
the house being dismantled  
cousins parade in and out  
smiling sadness my way  
I walk through seeing  
the wooden homemade swaytun  
Aunt Margie walks to the spot  
starts to dance shake cry sing Indian  
I start crying towards a Katzie song  
in here I shake and moan  
my lover misunderstanding  
trying to rescue me  
doesn't understand this dream is what is rescuing me  
from this place from generations of this place  
towards wholeness  
where all places all times become one  
and I am able to see tomorrow  
I was beginning to see tomorrow  
when tears here merged with Indian tongues tones movements  
in that dream that yesterday and lateral cousin consciousness  
like an orgasm that nearly was now I will have to begin again  
turning subtle sensations into mercury stars  
of consciousness subconsciousness  
the blood flows through me in tongues  
in daylight moon flows through me  
the tongue a memory held taut within my womb....

# GOOSENECK

## Goosenecks by Art Napoleon

It was such a bright lazy kind of August day that Nap could have kept drifting downstream without even bothering to paddle. After all, he was his own kind of man, with nobody to answer to, no deadline to meet or plan to follow. His makeshift canoe, consisting more of sprucepitch than actual birchbark, would eventually get him to Gooseneck's camp, about six miles to the west as the crow flies. He might be there by nightfall and if not, he would camp somewhere along the way, that is if the canoe would hold up.

The Kiskatinaw is a gentle river with just a few rapids to really worry about, but nothing Nap wasn't used to. It was good elk country ranging from open hillsides to low bushlands mostly red-willow and alderbrush. Much of the river was crowded with steep banks that cut sharply into the dark waters in a gigantic V-form. It was through each of these passages that the river narrowed and deepened, which made it practically impossible to land any canoe. At the end of each passage the river would widen again allowing Nap to see on either side for a fair distance. He had been through this country a few times before but always on horseback, never by river.

Nap could remember certain landmarks along the way where he had hunted with his dad. He knew of a good mooselick somewhere up ahead, not too far from the river, but wasn't too sure how to get to it. Nap remembered the heavily used gametrail that his dad had showed him. It was the main trail to the lick, so if he could find it, Nap figured he could check the lick for signs.

Nap was hot and sweaty by midday, so he quickly pulled off his moccasins and shirt. He swatted at the horseflies swearing to himself as he tried to roll the last of his tobacco. His feet were dirty and calloused and just for the hell of it, he struck a match on his bare heel and was about to light a smoke when he noticed a familiar looking Bam tree up ahead. He recognized the unusual twist part way up the trunk. Nap looked around intently and had that feeling he had been here before. "Sonofabits!" he yelled, as the match burned his fingertips. Nap put away his tobacco, landed the canoe, picked up his 30-30 and started looking for the trail like a hound after blood. He knew this was it. About two hundred yards from the river there was a small clearing with lots of muskeg and an underground trickle. Nap had a fast drink and veered off to the left through a thick stand of young pine. There he spotted the trail, a twisting groove in the underbrush that looked old and unused far from the way he remembered it. He

wondered if maybe the lick had been abandoned. Sometimes moose will do that, he thought. They'll just suddenly stop using a lick for some reason. Nap wondered if they knew whenever too many humans were coming around. He slowed his pace to a quiet cat's crawl as he neared the lick area. The sun was breaking through the overhead poplars in long straight rows shedding its heavy light on the edge of the trail. He sensed there was something wrong when he saw the tracks of a moose that had been startled. Not caring to be quiet anymore he searched the east side of the lick for wolf or bear tracks, whatever scared that moose away and kept others from coming in.

Nap was an excellent tracker, just like his father. He chuckled quietly as he thought of the tricks he used to pull on the Hudson Bay boys when he hunted for their crew. One time he'd dropped to his knees and pretended to taste some fresh elk tracks they had come across. One of the Bay bigshots they called Clark had yelled excitedly, "What is it? What is it?" and was actually ready to start shooting at something. "It's a three year old virgin....I think she's in heat," was Naps casual response. Clark who was not amused by this attitude, later fired him for being a "smart-assed Indian."

A loud ring of snapping branches jolted Nap back to reality, but as he turned to face the commotion, it was too late. It hit him full force, head on, knocking him flat to the ground gasping for air. As he tried to crawl to his gun, she reared back and came at him again, this time with killing force. Everything happened so fast. There was no time to get scared, no time to care or think. She shook him violently and somehow Nap could taste her fur as he tried to squirm away, instinctively struggling to survive like he had seen so many animals do. Fierce brown and spewing red was all he could see as she blew hot breath down his back grunting in a way that would terrify the bravest of men. She had her full weight on his helpless body and all he could do was lie there and try to breathe. He had already accepted his death as he thought about Goosenecks.

When Nap regained consciousness all he could do was open one eye. The other one was pasted shut with dried blood. He couldn't see the bear but he sensed she might be watching. Sharp jolts of pain shot through his rib-cage and head. For the first time in his life Nap was afraid. Now he heard her coming again and he tensed his body in preparation for another attack. But suddenly, she stopped short and turned back. He could see her now out of the corner of his eye. She stood on the hill panting and looking down, proud of what she'd

done. She came charging again and stopped short, running back uphill. It seemed like a game, But Nap figured she was testing her meal to see if it was dead. He lay as still as possible for the longest two hours of his life.

Nap looked over the damage to his body as he tried to gather his wits about him. His old body had never been through so much before but he knew he could make it only if he could get back to the river, a quarter mile away. He hadn't heard any noise for awhile and it was close to evening, so he figured he'd take his chances. He reached up to his face to pull some dried blood when he realized that the skin over his forehead had been clawed pretty good, leaving part of his skull exposed. He untied the scarf from around his neck and made a headband to prevent further bleeding. Nap slowly and painfully gathered his rifle and part of his shirt, which he used to tie a gash on his upper arm. There was no looking around for the beast, it was straight to the river for Nap. He kept having visions of her charging at him. He walked as fast as he could, but it didn't seem fast enough. He kept sensing her presence behind him. He knew that bears don't leave their kills for very long and a couple of times he could have sworn he heard something heavy crashing through the brush. Nap fought his way through what seemed like a mile of alder and willow that kept slapping at his good eye. He never bothered once to look down and see if his feet were even on the trail.

His beat-up water-filled canoe never looked so good. Nap was so glad to be alive that he didn't mind the pain so much, but he staggered as he tried to get into the canoe. He had lost too much blood. If he could only make it to Gooseneck's he knew he would be taken care of. Nap finally managed to sit himself in the canoe and balance himself. The cold water had felt good. He was surprised to find his front pocket still intact, tobacco pouch and all. He cracked a faint smile as he started to roll a cigarette thinking that he had truly earned it.

The river was nearing another cutbank when he spotted the bear on the rivers edge. He picked up the 30-30 and cranked the lever. The bear followed the riverbank at the same pace as the canoe, keeping her hungry eyes on Nap until she could follow him no more. She was stopped by the sharp slant of the cutbank, and the only way to continue would be to walk back over a high, long hill choked with dense buckbrush. Nap raised his gun and took aim with his one eye. He had the sights set right on the spot behind the shoulder-blade. It would penetrate her lungs and she would eventually

bleed to death. "I should have finished you off when I had the chance you bastard!" He yelled at her. The bear just stood and stared, looking like she'd lost the world. "What the hell," he thought. "It's not my shooting eye anyway." He lowered his gun.

## Nemiah by Cody Williams

At my dad's far away in the mountains  
lots of fun  
Fishing...  
Pool...  
going hunting  
At my dad's far away in the mountains

Feed chickens Attack...

Eggs  
Chasing the rooster  
At my dad's far away in the mountains  
Going to Grannie's  
Frogs...  
Horses...  
Eating Indian Ice Cream

At my dad's far away in the mountains  
Wish I would be back there  
Dad...  
Ruby...  
It won't be long now...  
It won't be long now...

## Training For Motherhood by Joann Thom

Sit quiet  
Listen carefully  
Pay Attention  
Keep your eyes focused on a fly spot  
on the wall  
just to the left of her shoulder  
Avoid eye contact  
Don't be too forward  
too moniyaw  
Pretend your face is covered  
with a carved wooden mask  
Don't betray the emotions  
that you feel, my girl,  
When grandmother tells you,  
like she told me,  
"Never beat your sons," my girl,  
"You can beat girls,  
but you can't beat your boys."  
You see, my girl,  
We can be beaten—but not the boys.

## Untitled by Leah E. Messer

Our souls cry out to be set free  
For we can no longer find the people  
Who we use to be  
This place...once...long ago  
Was our home  
You have changed who we were  
With the offer of your helping hand  
What was once ours..is now...  
Just your foreign land  
You have turned our home...this land...  
Into a place called uncertainty  
And uncertainty...your horrible trap  
Has taken away our dignity  
Now we search and we struggle  
For a way to be free  
Why do you not let us speak,  
For we have a story that must be told  
Is it because you know there is truth  
In the tales of events that our hearts must unfold  
We ask that you please let us speak  
Don't ask us to forever hold our peace  
We must leave your place of uncertainty  
For it is time we tell our story  
It is time...to give us back our dignity.

## Life by Eriel Deranger

Life is like Dominos  
The first row to fall is childhood  
The second row to fall is young adulthood  
Which they call teenage years  
The third row to fall is adulthood  
Next comes Elders, where everybody must be very kind  
It is very unwise to be unkind to Elders  
because one day you'll be one yourself  
You wouldn't like to be yelled at when you're old  
Finally we get back to the dominos  
After the elder stage falls, I'm not sure  
Nobody knows till they get there.

COMING THIS FALL FROM

*Fifth House Publishers*

## The White Line poems by Daniel David Moses

The poems in *The White Line* are rich and delightful. Daniel David Moses' verse is taut, melodious, humorous and questioning. His subjects are often simple and ordinary, but his sense of the spiritual in the everyday makes the normal numinous.

"... precise, perceptive and powerful. . . . poetry of spirit and integrity." —Douglas Barbour, *Quarry*



Write for our free catalogue of books by Native writers:

Fifth House Publishers 20 - 36th St. East, Saskatoon, SK S7K 5S8

# MILK RUNNIN'



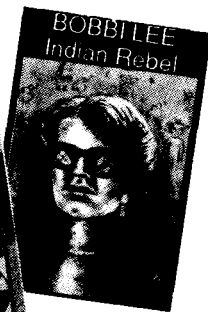
women's  
PRESS



### MOHAWK TRAIL by Beth Brant

Brant endears us with stories of her family and Native community. She recalls a lesbian adolescent love.

94 pages \$9.95 pb  
0-88961-151-3



### Books By Native Women

#### BOBBI LEE: INDIAN REBEL by Lee Maracle

Written by a Native woman, this autobiography is a significant contribution to the history of Native women in Canada.

180 pages \$9.95 pb 0-88961-141-3

#### A GATHERING OF SPIRIT Edited by Beth Brant

Poignant short stories, autobiographies, poetry, letters and illustrations written by over 80 Native North American women.

242 pages \$12.95 pb 0-88961-135-1

#### ENOUGH IS ENOUGH As told to Janet Silman

A group of Native women challenge blatant injustices and bring the plight of Native women and Native experience to the eyes of millions.

254 pages \$12.95 pb 0-88961-190-x

517 COLLEGE STREET #233 TORONTO ONTARIO M6G 4A2

## Milk Runnin' by Leonard Fisher, Jr.

"...be right back! Don't worry!", climbed into the pickup, damn thing better work now. What's a guy gotta' do for peace and quiet 'round here, damn kid screams loud for milk then louder for spilt milk, jumps up an' down on the bed like he's possessed, plays me against his ma bettern' a diplomat - shit. Here I'm runnin' off for milk an' breakfast cereal...jeeezus!

If I could I'd take 'em back to his pa stand him an' his mom side by side, get the guy to take a good look an' say,

"I understand the attraction but I ain't responsible for the result," then grab Pauline's hand an' piss off down the road; easier said than done I guess. Ain't taken much more though. Rain's done miracles 'round here overnight.

Never seems to amaze me though, happens time an' time agin, same time every year. Funny things like that jus' pass through your life an' ya expect 'em as though they're rewards for makin' it through another day or somethin'.

It rains the desert blooms. So what else is new ya' ask yourself? It don't rain everythin's dusty an' chokin' hot. After a rain flowers pop up like gophers, all purple or blue, little yellow centers, clumps o' green grass here an' there - smells real fresh, no dust flyin' up in your eyes...makes a guy feel like writin' somethin' like poetry or whatever.

If a typewriter could be attached right into yer head an' thoughts could just float on through without havin' to peck away at some ol' letter-clunker then I'd be away, if there were somethin' like that there'd be no problem. It'd be better than half o' what Pauline reads me most of the time.

"...ridin' bareback without a bridle" that's about the only stuff I could understand the rest sounds like bullshit as far as I'm concerned.

This road here, it always sends me mindwalkin' if I had that brainwriter now I tell ya' there'd be no stoppin' me believe it. No matter how I'm feelin' or what mood I'm in comin' up here's like gettin' birthed right out of the mountains.

Gigantic canyon walls close enough t' touch when ya' go through some o' the curves an' about three different stripes o' red just at eye level alone; then when ya' start squintin' from watchin' the road an' countin' layers ya' go, POW!, out onto the plateau. Then there's nothin' but flat far as ya' can see.

Flatness, hundreds an' hundreds o' miles straight away, all this color from blood red clay baked under the sun, flowers everywhere, boulders here an' there movin' no faster than they did ten thousand years ago still crawlin' outta the ground.

There's poetry out there; right here where I'm standin'. Never know what's to find out here but I sometimes stop for a look 'round, ain't found an arrowhead or anything like that but there's lots a' small

bones; stoppin' at different spots maybe somethin' historic'll pop out an catch my eye.

Just lookit this place, it don't surprise me now how that hitcher-girl almost went crazy when we got up here, must be quite amazin' for someone out from the coast..., came quite a ways from where she started that's fer sure. Didn't seem to bother her though, looked right at home, meandering around barefoot, skirt floatin' on the breeze around them filly thighs, I was just waitin' for her silhouette. Pure, innocent beauty all alone out there in the world, out here on the desert dance floor, movin' to the hiss of heat comin' out the rocks an' the rattle...

Looks like Harv's truck pullin' up just now, ain't that a laugh 'cause my pick-up's parked somewhere everybody figgers she's had her day, well out here I suppose he thinks I'm broken down. Yep, there he goes lookin' under the hood, at least he'll find a surprise.

"Check the tires while yer at it son, an be quick about it!" Poppin' out from beneath the hood he wipes his hands on the back of his jeans like he normally does, everybody knows where Harv's been an' where he sits. At the diner there's 'Harv's seat', at the bar there's 'Harv's seat', nobody sits in 'em 'cept Harv cause they're all seasoned with a thick layer of oil and grease.

"Pretty damn nice work eh Harv, did all the wirin', oil filter, gas filter...you name it. Finished up last night."

"Yeah but didcha set up the carb properly this time? You're gonna have trouble if ya' didn't."

He waves a taunting finger like some ol' house mother, if he'd just put a hand on his hip now it'd be the spittin' image; big, rotund body, face so brown the grease barely gets to tell anybody he's a hard there again. Could sleep under the stars or in back a' the truck if it gets too cold, canopy's good enough if I need a little privacy, last time me an' that hitcher slept there.

That was a good one alright....

Even after she'd been hoppin' an' bouncin' all over the dance ring, doin' everything from grass to traditional stuff; wild, chestnut colored mane flyin' back an' forth like it carried rhythm for her, anything them folks would teach her she learnt it like it was in her blood, boy you wanna' talk about ridin' bareback with no bridle!

There she was that night with her nostrils flared like the last wild mare bein' chased in a box canyon, lyin' in the moonlight all sparkly wet like a black diamond, smellin' like a musky, desert rose on the evenin' breeze; she tasted like salt-honey an' creek water when I kissed them sweet little sun-baked cheeks..., damn belt buckle - boy what a woman she'd be to have around.

Wasn't crazy or a vagabond or anythin' like that either just out lookin' fer somethin', ya' could see it in her eyes like they was always focused inside, there was somethin' she was after. Full of energy too, that's the way people get when they go questin', not like you'd think, not full of problems or doubt them type a' people go

lookin' to solve their problems, only way they'd be able to go on livin'.

Harv was sayin' somethin' about his brother's wife heard she'd gone up north after Santa Fe that year, headed up into Canada or Alberta; probably 'round Jake's place I guess that's who's wife she spent most of her time with when she weren't dancin' or talkin' with them goddamn Wannabees....

Jake'll probably be gettin' himself ready soon too I imagine, might not have enough drummers 'til he gets down into Montana...I'm out on the milk run anyway ain't I, might as well be ridin' bareback.

## Suicidal Tendency by Kateri Damm

i can hardly believe  
the way the deep blue sky surrounded the bone bare tree limbs  
that knocked against each other in the sun  
the same way we knock against each other  
in these small rooms

was it only yesterday  
before the sun hit  
the eastern side of our sky  
that i wounded myself  
to prove the depth of my skin  
(have you ever noticed the sun when it is a blood red song of war)

did you know  
i have sung a thousand songs to your mood swings  
written a thousand poems of the echoes  
without finding the words you won't be able to forget  
even after a thousand thousand suns have kissed this tongue  
of sky

so do you even care  
that you are my suicidal tendency  
do you even care  
that i rumble through the dry grass of august  
to lay under the stars at night  
because i can't bear to sit in the cold light of silence  
between us

i can't even lie to myself  
and say  
you don't matter to me  
the truth is like a mirror i haven't been able to turn away from  
though i can't even see myself anymore

truth is  
i can't see the lines separating us  
truth is  
it's scary

one night i dreamt  
that when the sun shone on my heart i dissolved  
into the lines on your face  
and you smiled



## A Dear Friend's Battle by Margaret Warbrick

1. When nothing comes easy  
Reality becomes a nightmare  
The unwanted tears and emotions  
He doesn't realize problems can be solved.
2. He doesn't want the goodness of others  
He lost his ride, goals and his dreams.  
He delivered his soul to the midnight devil.  
He, no longer owns himself, only to others.
3. Delivering the goods to strangers  
Alive or dead he takes the chances  
Life slowly squeezes the games  
He lives only as he receives the money.
4. The gutter or trash, the innocent dies  
Blinded and scattered life deals  
Addicted to crack, it's his life  
He will do anything to be high
5. Dues are paid with life  
He's cold, distant and angry.  
Sniffing, overdose, and bleeding noses  
What a life, he really thinks he's living
6. He owes himself better, come alive  
He discarded the happiness for something deadlier  
He was conned and played with the ball  
In the end crack will cling if hope doesn't exist.
7. Hope glimmers as he remembers the old life  
He wants to come clean, a will to live  
Slowly gaining respect within his soul.  
He found help and grabs the rain-bow ray.
8. He found himself, the people, he's winning  
One day at a time he's living to come clean.  
That's life, That's reality, that's living  
He reclaimed his lost soul and his life.

## Testimonial by Conrad George

to be free and harmonious  
to have nothing else  
to stumble from  
to have my positive feelings  
in tune  
to achieve Greatness is my  
quest

to follow the hints, dancing  
all bout me  
guiding me to heights  
motion to memorable sounds  
placing footsteps lovingly  
upon familiar grounds  
Allowing music in my mind  
to lead me  
toward the freedom of my search...

(TESTIMONIAL) being human...

an adult  
child within  
I am forty years old  
I look back into my past  
see as a child  
my suffering at the hands of another culture  
I look through the pains of growing  
growing up in the home of guardians  
guardians who hate themselves  
and hurt others  
In the beginning  
I existed  
I had two loving parents  
parents who were also victims  
of the other culture  
parents who drowned their  
despair in alcohol  
I was taken and placed

in a white home.

There were two other natives  
 who were found to be my sisters  
 the Guardians who housed them  
 took me and my little sister  
 in as well  
 our new home was not even an hour old  
 our Guardians began slamming things  
 around, yelling awful things  
 Their first words were  
 "I'm going to beat the Indian out of  
 you and make you white"

that beating was to last  
 for the next eleven years  
 eleven years of beatings that  
 had nothing to do with discipline  
 both Guardians added their  
 abuse upon us equally  
 the hard part for me was  
 being forced to go to them  
 and hug them every day  
 I cannot recall any wrongs  
 I do not want to hate people  
 I know now it is because of them  
 that I find it hard to show or  
 to give love to anyone  
 unannounced flashbacks  
 send me into the grips of recurring  
 nightmares  
 these nightmares are always the same  
 only the faces have changed  
 turning into people  
 I live amongst now  
 I see and hear again  
 with a child's eyes and ears  
 incapable of escaping or finding help

Today, (my being)

The life within strains to reach out

to share warmth, kindness, and  
 togetherness  
 with family and friends

when such things appear possible  
 something awful interferes which  
 makes me Rebel, makes me push people away  
 I have read books  
 about suicide about self-denial  
 in these readings I have found that  
 I too have become a statistic  
 that this is an end result  
 I have found that suicidals usually attack  
 themselves  
 where they hurt the most  
 I ask myself "where is it that I really  
 hurt the most?"  
 I consider which door should I open  
 to rid myself of this extreme burden  
 which tool would bring total peace  
 which method should I self-inflict  
 to empty out this silent pain  
 to empty out this feeling  
 the result of knowing  
 knowing about abduction by another culture  
 knowing about the care of such cruel guardians  
 I ask "What part of myself should I destroy"  
 to destroy the intense pain  
 the Pain that controls my anger and hate  
 I recall promises I have made to myself  
 it is because of these promises  
 that I am alive and here today  
 promises that remove my need to  
 self-destruct  
 Quiet painful memories haunting me  
 understanding this pain and its  
 point of creation  
 that gives me strength to live  
 the strength to become a vehicle  
 of wellness for other children of  
 my culture who were abducted

and placed in abusive guardianship  
People who recall that they too were carved  
by these same destructive tools

(TESTIMONIAL) no matter (etc.)

No matter what grows in my  
Field of Dreams  
I could never reveal to another  
by the sparkle in my eyes  
this warm place in my heart  
beating Love stronger Love every beat

I thrive there thinking of you  
In my field of Dreams  
where sunlight pours out its warmth  
soothing hearts filled with strife

I think of you wanting you  
still needing you YOU a flower  
one of many a living part of  
my bouquet of loving memories

a million flowers grow there  
in my field of dreams  
each flower a reflection of a heartbeat  
each a gift from all hold so dear there

Seasons, will never change my love  
Reasons, will never replace my caring  
Need, will never keep me from sharing  
the heartbeats  
in my field of dreams...

## A Childhood or Was It? by Don Wind

Pain etched in my eyes, the lines  
on a drawn face, the timidness of  
thymself. A face full of sorrow,  
of tears, of years of abuse.

Slap, slap! Stop. Will you shut-up!  
Knees quivering, lips trembling  
Eyes full of streaming tears. Don't  
hit me! Don't hit me!  
I can't move! Rooted to the spot!  
Too scared to move. Too scared to run.  
Will I be hit more? How much more?  
Don't know what to do!

Too scared to sit by my older brother at  
meal time.  
He'll slug me if I clank the fork on my teeth

Home drunk again. We hide

Get in the car! No, you're drunk  
Dragged outside! Screaming!  
He tries to drive the car. We land up in  
the ditch on a cold morning.  
He swears. He passes out!  
So cold and afraid.

He makes a swipe at me. I hit back.  
Just making a grocery list. I run  
He grabs me and hits me on the nose  
It bleeds  
He hits me again across the face and my  
glasses go flying  
He shatters them into pieces.

We don't need the dogs, the puppies!  
I'll show you what I'm going to do!

He grabs me by the arm and out we go to the dogpen. Gun in hand, he shoots the poor, helpless puppies Now watch me, he said! Exploding shots. Dad is drunk again. We hide. He calls us out. We stand there quaking. Then he's mad. What happened? Table in half. Dishes and food go sliding to the centre and to the floor. We run under the crib. Ouch, ouch. My hair is caught in springs. Bang, Bang, Bang, goes the crib. You kids come out from under there. Sore bruised head. Headaches and tears and stomach heaving. So scared. dad is in jail again. No food, no money. How will we eat? No wood for the fires in the heater and the cookstove. Us kids go and gather small chips of wood and make a fire.

Drunk;drunk;drunk. All the time it seems. Sleeping on the couch, feel cold pistol at my rear. Wake up! Wake up! I'm going to kill you! Laughing and laughing he says it again and again. Pull down your pants! Do it! Now! Now! Fright, heaviness of sleep. Scared again!

Drunks!Drunks,Drunks!

Wake up, someone on top of me. Pants down, guys from the reserve. I'm going to get you! I'm going to have you! You're mine! Dark. Always at dark.

Can't scream! Can't move.Why! Why Why So many times!  
Is this how life is?

Don't tell anyone. They won't believe you, says Michael as he gropes me. Don't tell your parents or I'll lick you if you do! I'll beat you says Michael. So frightened! Feelings and groping by a drunk under the blankets. Help me Help me. Too scared to scream. Where are you when I need you? Shouts, hits, slaps, used, punches, dishes flying! Fight, Fight, Fight! Dad and my brother fight. Scuffle, scuffle, they throw punches and hits at each other! Blood, blood, Get out of here, you are no longer my son. Please, please don't say that! We take them part. Boy are they strong! Bruises, bruises, bruises We take Dad outside to calm him down. Bang! goes the .22. My brother has shot himself through the mouth! Blood, blood, blood! Taken by ambulance to the city. In hospital for months and months. At home, he is now like a child. Crazy. Crazy. Crazy... Years of his craziness and drunkenness go on. Abuse continues. He is hard to deal with. So mean. yet so pitiful! Why Why?! It is now. Oh, how I want to forget! I can't! Can I forgive? I will when I am ready!

Do I? I don't know.

Help me to write this out.

I know I can.... There is more

## A Native Elder's Solitude by Andy P. Nieman

He stood upon the wind swept shore  
And gazed across the land,  
Shuffled his feet to stir some heat  
Blew warm air in his hands

His once black hair that now turned grey  
Fell braided at his sides,  
The pain of seventy years gone by  
Put sadness in his eyes;

This was his favorite hunting spot  
He always got his game,  
Since miners came with golden dreams  
Nothing has been the same;

He couldn't stop his memory  
From drifting back in time  
When he still had his wife and kids  
When life had been so kind

When the bitter winds of changes blew  
New faces came to stay,  
They brought their guns, enforced their laws  
And took the land away;

He recalled how he shared with them  
His food and all he had,  
In return they filled him with high hopes  
Then promises turned bad;

The more he lived the whiteman's way  
The more he lost his grasp,  
His independent way of life  
Was slipping by too fast;

These days he worried for his kids  
What would become of them?  
For they were dependent on  
A free welfare system;

Friends asked him many times to move  
Into an old folks home,  
But he had pride, would rather die  
In his cabin all alone;

An icy wind blew from the North  
That chilled his fragile bones  
Another empty-handed day  
Made it harder to go home

The gun felt heavy in his hands  
As he trudged on through the snow,  
He sat and rested by the trail  
Alone in feelings of deep woe;

### My Companion by Sheila Dick

Three decades or so ago  
I closed the door upon myself,  
Open only to you  
With your sad beckoning eyes and  
cold demanding hands.

I warmed those hands,  
Your hands, their hands and you  
began to drain my life blood  
from my being

And,  
I gave  
and gave, i gave until  
Like a leaf i dried to a shell  
Of near nothingness  
and drudged listlessly along  
The frosty ground  
Without direction and  
Without Life.

Until,  
So near to non-existence i came  
As under  
Your feet i lay, dry, crisp  
and so near  
Death.

You did,  
You all did, you almost  
Turned my precious  
Fragile being into  
Dust beneath your feet.  
But a breath of life pulsed ever  
so faintly  
Through my veins and a gentle wind  
Drew me away into  
The Golden warmth of  
Sunlight where I lay  
A tormented heap.  
All alone.

Then,  
    A flicker,  
    A small gasp of air,  
A struggle for life  
As each gulp tore at my burning lungs.

It all began painfully, like birth.  
Then, a rush came thundering through my veins  
And a shaky shadow of a hand  
Grasped mine  
(I later learned it to be my own)  
And opened a door to Me.

Behind this door  
Was a passionate person,  
A being hat was ever so Brave  
    Ever so strong.  
And my fascinating companion and I  
Are true friends,  
    Now.

We hold hands,  
    We laugh,  
    and we cry.  
Always one, side by side in the autumn winds  
and the winter sun  
We laze, sometimes relaxed,  
Cleansed by the  
    Comfort and warmth of early Spring.

This one companion and I will  
Sail thru the sunlight  
Where frosty ground have  
Given way to  
    Tender shoots of Life.

For, you see,  
My companion is Me  
And I am She for  
I am Brave and Strong, and I,  
    - I am Alive.

### To Mom: by Karen Coutlee

Real Beauty is like my Mother's

Most of the time you don't see it or appreciate it.

Mother forgive me for the way I am

You weren't a bad Mother

It's just my own private devils I run away from.

I love you, I honestly do.

It's just that I can't show it

No matter how hard I try.

Please don't desert me because it will be

better one day.

I should be grown up but it still remains the

memories of the past that I live in.

I've almost hit bottom and when that happens

I'll bounce back up.

I promise.

## **Thank you for Giving Me Birth**

I thank you for giving me Birth

Even though I don't know you that well

For in this world I hold some worth.

I thank you for giving life to my Brothers and Sisters

Because then I know I am not alone

And I know I will always have a place to call home.

I hope you give your self a blessing for giving life to others

because it's not such a bad world to live in after all.

Even though it wasn't life's plan for us to be together

We'll stand side by side in stormy weather.

You know in this life I'm blessed with two fathers

now who can ask for anything more.

Be thankful for what you have

Because it far out weighs the other.

# Fishermen

## Fishermen by Glen James

"Why is it," questioned a young boy to his father, "that Indians have everything old?" They were walking across an open field to get to the Little Nespelem Creek to fish.

"What are you talking about?" answered the man who was somewhat taken by this query from his ten year old boy.

"I mean like that old pick-up right there going down the road. "Indeed it was an old truck and had all the symptoms of age and neglect. It smoked and rattled and needed a muffler plus it had numerous dents and some different colored body parts. More than likely too, it probably had yards upon yards of baling wire holding things together.

"Well son those boys are out of work and can't afford to fix it. Repairs to an old truck can become quite costly.

"Like in town too, I mean those new houses in the projects look old. Grandpa's house is old too."

"Yes it is, but he built it thirty years ago. And anyway why all of a sudden do you ask these questions?"

The young lad just walked in silence for a while seeming to forget the whole thing. He pointed to a tall cottonwood tree where a hawk had just landed. There was a nest high up in the branches. A cool breeze rustled the stand of trees and blew a sweet fragrance from the surrounding pond. Somewhere near the marsh wild mint was growing.

"Last week on the last day of school when we were riding the bus home one of the bigger white kids was mad. We were sitting in the back of the bus and he came and sat in front of us. I think he got beat up at school or something. Me and Tony were talking about something and laughing and he turned around and told us to shut up or he'd beat the hell out of the both of us. He really glared and he grabbed Tony by his shirt and pulled him forward and then shoved his face so hard that the back of his head hit the back of our seat. He began calling us names and said that all Indians were dirty and lazy and ruined everything they touched. He said we didn't know how to take care of anything the way white people do. He said we didn't care if we lived in dirt or filth and that's why everything we have looks old. By then Tony pulled out his little pocket knife and was just opening it when the bus stopped and the white kid got off. He was laughing when he got off, but when he first saw Tony pull out his knife I knew he was scared. I never thought about it before but a lot of our houses are old."

They were almost to the creek and stopped alongside a marsh to dig for worms. "Watch out for those nettles behind you," said the father as they kneeled and began to dig into the rich black soil for some bait. Every shovelful of dirt produced a handful of worms and soon they had enough and put the shovel back into the brush.

When they neared the creek a couple of mallard ducks took to flight and a kingfisher chattered loudly over his territory before flying up the creek and into the brush. Down the creek a ways they heard a loud splash, a beaver sounding the alarm before diving to safety. The creek was very brushy and the water was cold, beaver dams were all along the creek. You couldn't cast as you would at a lake, you had to do it gently underhand or else you'd snag up in some bush. The pools were full of big Eastern Brook trout. They waded out to a big dam where they could cast upstream.

As they stood on the beaver dam minnows darted about trying to steal their bait as they reeled in the line to recast. "You know son, I haven't been to school much but I'll try to answer your question as best I can."

"That's O.K. dad you don't have to. I forgot the question anyway.

"The way I think it is, is the whiteman never did understand our ways, our people. You see they came here what, four hundred years ago. The ideas or the way they wanted to live is completely different than Indian people. They want to have and to own as much as they can more than even their brother has. Indians usually will share anything they have. Even though there are many different tribes from the east to the west, the way we looked at or thought about the world was pretty much the same. You know just different styles of ceremonies, but for the most part we all asked the same things. Good health, food, happiness, a good road.

Now these whitemen started out in the east and came west. They were farmers, miners, you know whatever else there was. They started out poor and wanted a good life because in Europe or wherever they came from, they were poor lowly servants with no hope of ever being rich or in a royal family or whatever they prize as being good. Take for instance a farmer, he teaches his children and he his children and so on. It becomes their blood. And so they begin four hundred years or so ago and each generation moves farther west and brings with him whatever he has learned. By the time they get here to our land around here maybe three hundred and fifty years go by.

The government opens up our land for white settling and just like that here is all these farmers around us. Now this is the part that they don't understand and maybe it's just my thinking but I believe it's not too far from what's going on. Remember what I said about whatever they're doing becomes their blood like farming. It's the same with Indians. We were fishermen, hunters, traders. We followed the seasons with much care because it was our life. Mostly though we depended on the salmon. See we are San Poil and lived along or close to the San Poil river since the Creator first made us. It was one of the worlds best salmon rivers if not the best. It took care of us. Now comes the government and he says he is going to build a dam and everything is going to get better. So he builds one, two, three or more dams and all of a sudden our beloved valley is under



water. But what is worse, all the salmon are gone. They can't get past the big dams. Now what this means is that after thousands of years of being fishermen we're nothing cause there is nothing to fish there's no salmon.

I know this is a little hard to understand for you son or maybe it isn't cause it seems kids nowadays pick up on things a lot quicker than we did. But again back to the government. They say our people back then, you know my mom and dad, your Granpa and Gramma, they tell them we'll send you to school and you can become modern Indians. Forget the old ways, forget your superstitions, it's better to have education. Well that was hard on our people cause our band was one of the last to resist the whiteman; we wanted nothing from him just to be left alone. No more salmon for them means the kids go hungry so in the end the children get shipped off to boarding schools. They shipped them as far away to places like Oklahoma, Kansas, Oregon and other places too. These were usually run by catholics, and the sisters and such were mean, very mean. You couldn't even talk your own language if you did you were severely punished, or if you talked about medicine dances or sang songs, you were punished. After my folks were grown up and started having children, they love us so much and didn't want us to suffer what they suffered so they never taught us the language. But it is like I said, once something is in your blood, it's there for good.

That whole generation of Indians didn't realize that it wasn't just language the whiteman hated, it was just being Indian. They want our land. They want no Indians at all. So if you look at it, we have been living this way for only sixty or so years and it has taken the whiteman four hundred years to have what he has. But we still have our belief in the land and our winter dances and the spirits and these are truly the good things in life. If you treat them with respect then you are making a good road for yourself and your people, we'll never die off. We'll always have deer to hunt and land for our horses. We don't question the power of the earth or of the spirits. These are the real powers, they can easily destroy the most powerful thing whiteman can invent in just a blink of an eye. So having everything new would be nice but it's not the most important thing to us.

Our homes might be old but inside they are clean. It's like our sweat lodge it looks old but the power of it is so great the whiteman can't understand it, so he considers it just a pile of rags. But we know better. We understand these kind of things. But too, now that our people are getting a college education and can understand the whiteman on his own level it might be another bad thing. It's good that the whiteman can't lie to us, but now some of our own are treating us just as bad. But we know, we don't say anything cause they can't cheat and lie and hide it. We know, The Creator knows. But I could go on and on and that's not the answer for what you asked. You see I could go to the city and work, but then we'd

all have to go. We'd not be able to do anything like we can now and it just isn't worth it. There's just too many crazy people running loose in cities. We couldn't go fishing or hunting or riding horses or sweat. Nothing. We'd just be in a house, there's no comparison and so my choice is here. We have old things, but that's O.K. cause we still have our freedom. You'll understand some day and make a choice of your own cause you'll have a family to think about. Do you understand any of this?"

"Well I thought it was because we couldn't afford it, but we can't afford not to be used to old I guess. I like old."

When they were finished cleaning the days catch they counted twenty-one fish, all fourteen or more inches. On the way home a whitetail doe and her two fawns crossed just in front of them and the fawns stopped and stared for a while. Their spots were still predominant on their body and made them so delicate looking. Then the mother whistled and the fawns dropped to the ground and blended with the brush so as to seem to disappear. "You see that learning, that's as old as the salmon and that's a way of surviving. There will always be deer so like you said, "old isn't so bad."

**PRESS GANG PUBLISHERS IS PROUD TO PRESENT:**

**SOJOURNER'S TRUTH by Lee Maracle**

Urban settings, inter-racial issues and traditional Native culture are the focus of this new collection of stories. Available Nov 1990 \$10.95

**NOT VANISHING by Chrystos**

Passionate, vital writing that addresses self-esteem and survival, the loving of women, and pride in her Native heritage. \$9.50

**PRESS GANG PUBLISHERS**

603 Powell Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1H2 Canada  
(604) 253-2537

## Granny by Gerald Etienne

granny cares  
to care is to live and suffer  
granny has lived long  
granny is hurt from all the suffering  
Yet granny still cares  
She cares for her children  
granny cares for her grandchildren  
granny helps in every way she can  
she works  
granny cans fruits and vegetables  
granny cleans her home  
she cooks  
granny bakes bread and pies  
she sews  
granny makes gloves and moccasins  
she teaches  
granny tells us stories and lessons  
she loves  
granny tells us and hugs me  
granny cares

## Plenty of Lore, Plenty of Land by Davey C. Maurice

If a person decided to conduct a study about aboriginal people in Canada, there would be no shortage of material available for research purposes. In trying to decipher what is meant by aborigine, from this literature, one would be overwhelmed with images of savagery, deceitfulness and disgrace. Contemporary society recognizes that Canadian aboriginal issues must be reassessed. Since the 'white paper policy' was introduced in the 1960s, aboriginal peoples of various parts of Canada, have taken a firm stand against the Canadian federal government in search of their separate identities. A large part of their struggles have been based on more socio-economic problems. However, more recently the trend has shifted to the political circles. Aboriginals are seeking compensation and losses from land-claim titles, natural resource royalties from aboriginal lands, and a system of self-government within Canada's political structure. All of these mentioned are pertinent to the aborigine's future existence. This process undertaken by the Canadian aboriginals has slowly developed from isolated incidents across Canada into a full-blown national struggle. This ongoing struggle is of great importance to the aboriginal people of Canada, for without it, they all would be facing virtual extinction.

What one must do in order to assess the current aborigine situation in Canada, is research the literature made available by Indian and Metis leaders alike. Of course, several inquiries and commission reports have been structured, however, most of this information is strictly a form of rhetoric provided by federal political groups, who in reality have no idea what should be assessed and what is assessed. From reading many books, articles, and other classroom materials, the image projected about aboriginals are in a sad state. Some of this data actually portrays the truth, while many of the other written articles are full of blasphemous remarks concerning Canada's history. Canadian history is a shameful story coupled with rhetoric designed to mislead our younger generations into believing that aboriginal people are inferior beings. In truth, if one was to exclude any aboriginal input into Canada's evolution leading up to confederation, the historical material available would probably be just as absurd.

The Canadian aboriginals, regardless if they were status or non-status, did not shape Canada into the country it is today. Canada is seen as a bountiful democratic country, capable of providing its natural resources to nations around the world for exploitation. Canadians like to believe that they take care of their own citizens. Moreover, they believe in opening their borders to almost every available foreign immigration department worldwide. If you are a citizen in any other part of the world, say Japan or Lebanon, and you are fairly wealthy, Canada welcomes you with open arms. What does this say about Canada's history? Basically, that Canadians are greedy, adventurous people, who thrive on making the almighty dollar, and that their history up until now, reveals that Canadian governments in the past have ignored providing more substantial information and government services to their aboriginal societies. Meanwhile, what happens to the real issues on Canadian soil? For one, Canada is now a country filled with immigrants who also need to make their presence felt. Jobs, social relief agencies, parliaments, and Canada's entire federal structure seems to be overly involved in accommodating the immigrants' needs. All the while aboriginal issues are left simmering on the back-burner.

When speaking of Canadian aboriginal people, it is important that one separates each group into its own traditional and cultural circle. In Canada there are three main groups included under the title, aboriginal. They are status and non-status Indians and the Metis, who are usually descendants of either French or English European ancestry combined with one or another Indian bloodlines.

All of the aforementioned aboriginal sub-groups in Canada still maintain their own historical conflicts with the Canadian political structure. To begin with, status Indians are seeking more autonomy and the right to self-government. In 1985 and 1987, at the First Ministers conferences held in Canada, both conferences ended on a negative note. Reasons for this aboriginal setback resulted after Canada's premiers could not define 'self-government'. After so many decades of political negotiations, two of the four Indian bands who were successful in their negotiations were from Alberta. The Alexander Indian Reserve and the Northern Sawridge bands are precedent-setting cases for other Canadian aboriginals seeking autonomy. Basically, the right to self-government allows the aboriginals(status Indians) to control their own affairs. This includes control over their own police force, health services, and

school boards, moreover they oversee substantial earnings derived from natural resources such as oil and gas and forestry. If the Indian bands who have been successful in their negotiations, live up to expectations, more Canadian aboriginal groups will follow their examples.

Another aboriginal sub-group which has not been too successful in their political struggle has been the Metis. Their primary difficulties arise from their exclusion in the treaty system which was established in the 1800s for status Indians. The Metis were considered as all other Canadians were, and did not earn extra benefits from the Canadian government. There does exist, however, viable reasons why the Metis should be acknowledged as aboriginal. Some historical Metis leaders, such as Riel and Dumont, did include themselves in Canada's establishment. For their efforts to gain Metis autonomy and the right to self-government, both leaders were somewhat condemned. Riel was hung for treason, while Dumont quietly faded into Canada's historical development. Indian affairs of Canada's governmental system does not take interest in the Metis struggle. The Metis have established some major organizations to seek out their overall interests. Like the status Indian, the Metis struggle has been a long drawn out affair. Up until recently has the voice of the Metis been heard. Randy Hardy, who is Chief Of Federation of Metis settlements, negotiated and won a major victory for Alberta's Metis in a twenty-one year old law-suit against the Alberta provincial government. This was of historical importance since it is not only the first, as Alberta was the first province in Canada to provide any land to the Metis. Such an historical gain could not but help other Metis settlements in achieving some form of self-identity. More and more Metis people are becoming involved in their national quest for autonomy. This fact provides the Canadian government with several reasons why they should take heed to all aboriginal concerns.

Procrastinating any longer will not help address the many major issues at hand. Canada's government is not only faced with pressure from status Indian and Metis groups, more outside European folk are condemning Canada's stance toward aboriginals. Environmentalist groups across Canada have now listened to the horrors expressed so long ago by aboriginal people about our land abuses. Riel was praised for his efforts and dedication to help the Metis. Indian guides and hunters are praised for their efforts in leading the first Europeans across Canada. Pow-wows, sweat-

lodges, and other aboriginal ceremonies are of particular interest to anthropologists, sociologists, and ordinary people alike. It seems that the Indian and Metis traditions have finally created enough interest to gain popular support. Mistakes have been made in the past. They will not erase themselves. Aboriginal peoples of Canada have taken a stand and are trying desperately to achieve autonomy of some sort. If history keeps repeating itself, Canada's government will be hesitant to deal with matters, however, this has not been the case. Many Indian bands and Metis settlements have been successful in their negotiations. This does not mean that all is well and should be forgotten, it only serves to say that aboriginal grievances are being dealt with and more positives are emerging for aboriginal sake.

End

## Rain Thoughts by Cecilia Luke

Rain

Unrelenting, descending, reflecting  
Imposing on memories  
Images wafting in serenity

Penetrating, Impressing, Dissolving  
An intimate mist of gauze  
Transparent petals stored in silence

Immersing, Cleansing, Reviving  
A veil is lifted  
A shimmering image in seclusion

## Chris & Gary

Hunters

Stalking though the whispery grey dawn  
Hugged in layers of clothing  
Soft steps in moist moors  
Frosted breath kissing morning mist  
Dew dampened nostrils  
Muggy voices in a muffle

# CHANGING SONG

## Changing Song by Leona Lysons

Her hands were cold, and the plastic bags had grown heavy, cutting into her fingers and cramping them. She could afford only the two bags of groceries and even that felt heavy.

She knew there were four city blocks left before she could enter her house and set the burden down. She decided to walk quickly to end the trial as soon as possible.

She veered onto the left of the sidewalk to avoid a child whizzing by on his bicycle. Her bag snagged on a fence and the contents tumbled onto the ground. "Shoot", her mind screamed. She glared at the boy's receding back. He hadn't even seen what he'd done.

She started tossing the spilled contents into the other shopping bag. Margarine, bologna, and peanut butter for school lunches fit uneasily, crowded into the other package. When she picked up the oranges, the twist tie slipped off, and the oranges rolled all around her. She grit her teeth and grabbed the nearest fruit, reached back, and threw it as hard she could. The shot was terrific and the lamp post that was her target now had a smear of orange juice dripping down its' side. "There," she felt much better. She then chuckled at her silly act and thought guiltily of the wasted orange. It was important to keep a sense of humour.

As if rewarding her for a good thought, a chickadee landed on the fence. It watched her to see if she might offer it a morsel of food. She looked at it, and smiled. She wondered if they had met in her backyard where she fed birds wild bird seed and beef suet. Maybe it was one of the chickadees who had become brave enough to land on her hand and accept the suet from her open palm.

She thought of the legend about why the chickadee sings one song in the summer, "Kee-chenna, Kee-chenna," and changes it to "Chick-a-dee-dee-dee," for the winter months. Compared to Jays and Magpies, it was so small and yet, it too survives the coldest winters. Maybe its' survival had something to do with its ability to change songs with the seasons, she thought.

Somehow the bird and the legend reminded her of herself, and the changes she was going through. The season of marriage had ended, and now the season of starting over as a single parent had begun. Time to change her song, and to sing as bravely as the little bird. To keep singing though times were hard.

As she gathered the last of the oranges, a man came out of his house and offered her a plastic bag, and a ride home. She smiled and thanked him for the bag, but declined his offer of the ride. She would make out fine, thanks.

## Warrior's Winter by Duane E. Marchand

Proud Warrior  
The winter's fierce wind  
Has taken its' toll  
On your once handsome features  
The numbing cold  
Has scarred your face with deep lines  
And gnarled your hands  
So drawing back your bow  
Is no longer possible  
Your sunken cheeks and hollowed eyes  
Reflect the hardships of many winters  
Many long days and sleepless nights  
Struggling, worrying  
About your very survival  
And the survival of your children  
During those days when the winter's cold  
Had stolen the lives of many young children  
Your children had overcome those times  
Although the bitter winter stallion  
Has finally carried you away  
Your blood still courses  
Through our veins  
Dear Father, proud warrior Father  
We are who we are  
Because of who you  
Will Always be

## Diptera by Duane E. Marchand and Columpa Bobb

I'm shakin' off the cold again  
Shivers and shudders knights in the gutters  
Damn cold's gone right to my bones  
Moans and groans and chillin' bones  
Eyes ain't even open yet  
Burnt out eyes, bitchin sunrise  
And the light's still pushin' through  
Night blind and still outta yer mind  
This bench ain't so comfortable no more  
Too hard and cold for these bones old  
Kin feel the boards pushin' through cavities  
where teeth once stood  
No more teeth just a bootleg sheath  
Arm's gone dead other side of the bench  
Nerves asunder body's ablunder  
Heavy dew this morning, shirt's soaked feet's froze  
Every poor fool's got his soul sold cause nobody's bold when it  
comes to the cold  
I don't know haven't felt them in daze  
Pigeon shit in my ear  
Looke here, there's no shit pit in a pigeon's ear  
Well...got it easy today  
Easy eatin's from sleazy beatin's  
Emma's still snoozin' in her puke  
It seeps and creeps even as she sleeps  
Kin smell it, it's bad, like everyone I know  
Like human sewer, humanities manure  
Hafta move, hafta rise  
Demise, despise, don't look at me with them beady eyes  
Need more sun to melt the black ice  
Stinking, rotting, heat sweltering vice, I accept you with  
open arms isn't that nice  
My mind's still freezin' but I ain't dead yet  
Hesitation, procrastination I'm looking forward to your  
destination  
Tied with cement shackles I'm forced to move slow  
Stop fightin' and frightin' your soul I'll enlighten  
I'm a dominant rock in a majestic sea  
Hush, hush, you miserable lush!  
I'm a dominant rock in a majestic sea!  
Enough of this talk, let yourself cry, lay yourself down  
Let yourself die  
In your ocean of blood I kin stand, I kin laugh  
I kin live

## Hey...Mr. Music Man

In the chill of the night  
The lonely sound of a saxophone  
Echoes through the alleys and streets  
Passersby offer coins in sympathy  
Not in appreciation of talent  
Or skillful mastery of the instrument  
This is not the big time  
The only limelight to bask in  
Is the cold fluorescents  
Of the Government Liquor Store  
On East Hastings Street  
I see a smile in your eyes  
When a request was asked of you  
And you gladly obliged by playing the blues  
With closed eyes  
You poured every ounce of energy into your music  
Your music was alive, your music had soul  
And for that fleeting moment  
You weren't that cold and lonely black man  
In ragged clothes and dusty hat  
I saw you with shiny shoes  
Fancy clothes and a brand new hat  
And those cold fluorescents  
Grew bright and warm,  
And beads of sweat formed on your brow  
As you took your place on centre stage  
I heard the crowd go wild in appreciation  
For someone that everyone wanted to be  
I saw you too for who you are really are  
The Music Man  
As the last notes faded  
Into the thick wintry air  
And your last patron faded into the crowd  
I watched as you counted the change  
"Hey, Mr. Music Man," I said,  
"I have no money to offer you, but,  
Please play that song for me, okay."  
And there it was again  
The warm smiling eyes  
Sparkling in the cold fluorescent lights  
Of the Government Liquor Store  
On East Hastings  
And in the chill of the night  
The lonely sound of a saxophone  
Echoes through the alleys and streets  
The sounds of the Music Man.

## Concrete City by Tracey Bonneau

wet smog rises into skyline  
the working day starts  
trails of pushy umbrella people  
surrounded by rush traffic  
a glitzy high heel  
steps on the soiled  
trenchcoat (of a nearby street beggar)  
his harmonica tune  
floats in the air  
business suited men  
flock into tall  
stonefaced monster buildings  
plastic cheese  
and instant coffee giants  
dollar signs embedded  
into their pupils  
the lingering harmonica note  
hangs in the damp air  
a single echo  
of sanity  
a solitary reminder  
of who the real victims  
of the concrete city are

## Stranded On An Island

on the islands edge  
a figure shadows  
the darkness  
she smells him  
hunger driven she tastes  
and brown skin melts  
into clear beads  
that roll off skin  
become wheels of lust  
between two bodies  
screaming into a place  
rarely felt  
he crumbles then  
like sand  
unto the island  
she tries to pick up pieces of him  
but the grains sift through her fingers  
and her tears wash  
whats left away

## Doorway

clouded eyes squint  
toward day  
lightness  
higher  
higher the mind races  
playing its games  
smaller  
smaller the tunnel becomes  
until  
light  
becomes darkness  
and the walls squeeze  
a tiny pool of light  
seeps through a crack  
in the rigid door  
set me free  
let that light shine  
on my eyes  
so they can be clear  
of clouds



## Bureaucrats by Garry Gottfriedson

Bureaucrats sit neatly hunched behind plush marble desk tops  
clustered with paper and pictures and day old carnations  
with knuckle white fingers tightly clasped around papermates  
skidding and scraping across someone's future

AND

WHEN

SOMEONE

goes to see them quiet and concerned about their future  
they stare like a crazy cartoon cat would  
with a shiny civilized smile and licking their lips and wagging their  
hands

feeling important just before striking

AND

WHEN

THEY

STRIKE

they stand fully exposed in their outdated english garb  
smelling like they just arrived from france japan or india;  
they breathe wildly if questioned,  
as if they are ready to choke.

DON'T

STAND

TOO CLOSE

because their mouthwash lingers like raw fish and wine

Those bureaucrats are a weird bunch  
huffing and puffing and chasing away  
anyone who dares to visit them.

## Crystal Globe

We live in a crystal globe  
glittering, revolving, adapting, even though  
it is not meant to lack truth  
someone in the beginning instructed not to forget  
in our lifetime  
but somewhere, sometime parts of it were forgotten  
then passed on to those willing to listen  
fractions remained unmoved by the motion of time;  
unbounding power which tested those willing to speak  
in this universe which never lies  
The fragmented parts passing  
like an eclipse  
where there is no turning back  
where there is no reversing  
and in that minute moment  
the power of the sun is shielded  
blinded by a creeping transparent moon:  
It only takes a second to block light from entering the crystal  
and it is inevitable to stop.

We live in a crystal globe  
and go on forever multiplying with repetition;  
somehow there is a mystical beauty hidden behind this  
somehow none of it makes sense until we remember the truth  
in its simplest form;  
this is caused in the accuracy of memory  
and it is then  
it becomes all too clear, awesome, yet fearful,  
something like feeling the penetrating warmth of the sun  
just before the eclipse, also  
coming to know its coldness before the point  
of fading into cold shadows:  
The eclipse is repeated and the void is multiplied  
with different logic each time,  
but, those things are distinct with colors, textures, and feelings  
manifested over and over and over  
Portions of truth remain  
even, pure, and without limitations  
like the process of water turning to ice  
and ice reverting back to water.

We live in a crystal globe  
gentle, warm and with the ability to melt those things which freeze  
All of us are born and die soon  
with questions unable to be answered;  
this does not stop  
and there are no words to describe this;  
not in color to be seen  
not in sound to be heard  
not in any aroma  
none in these earthly textures.

It is a beauty deeply hidden  
within this crystal globe

## Downtown Main Drag by Randy Fred

Hookers by night  
Witnesses by day  
On guard for thee  
Downtown, main drag  
All day, all night  
somebody's looking out  
looking out for your cash  
For your time  
For what you got  
Giving love  
Taking love  
Wanting love

Hookers by night  
Witnesses by day  
Something to sell  
Something to buy  
Downtown, main drag

Hey there's the gal  
Saw her downtown, main drag  
Early this morning  
Handing out some paper  
Telling me the times a-coming  
Now she's back  
On the same drag  
Telling me  
Few bucks, my main man  
Make you happy all night long

Ah, it's good to know  
Somebody's looking out  
Looking out for  
Downtown, main drag  
Hookers by night  
Witnesses by day

## Sweet Romance Junkie by Alvin Manitopyes

I love to be in love and...  
It is with no fear  
That I say "I Love you"  
Say what?  
You heard it, you read it  
And I will not whisper or scream  
Those three little words  
Unless someone really moves me  
You did - so now you know  
You don't have to say it back  
Maybe you need to hear it  
Brag about it  
Nurture it  
Kill it...No don't!  
Because it is there  
In its present tense  
So when I declare  
My affection for you  
I mean it...even if...  
I don't what it means  
But it does not mean  
long term commitment  
It does not mean  
foolish promises  
It does not mean  
being a prisoner of love  
nor a temporary obsession  
It does mean constancy and virtue  
It does mean admiration  
It is just...  
Just a purring passion  
That I feel...for you...  
For how strongly?  
Your beauty and presence  
Works on my heart  
I can't help it  
Your sweet kisses  
Your cheerful smile

Your graceful moves  
Concentrates and captivates  
My whole senses  
I am...  
Your crazy fool.

## **Indian Lad In City by Eileen Burnett**

I slowly trudge down  
Bustling main street  
Dodging fleet youngsters  
On skateboards. Not recognizing  
A soul that I meet

For I'm seeing snow trails  
Through shadowy spruce  
Watching bare underbrush  
For signs that bull moose  
Passed this way;  
Feeling brisk wind  
Veering to north  
Snowshoes crunching.....

'Scuse me lady,  
I'll help you pick up your parcels

## **The Disempowerment of First North American**

**Native Peoples**

### **And Empowerment Through Their Writing**

**Jeannette Armstrong**

Paper prepared for

Saskatchewan Writer's Guild

1990 Annual Conference

PANEL DISCUSSION:

"EMPOWERING ABORIGINAL WRITERS"

In order to address the specifics of Native people's writing and empowerment, I must first present my view on the disempowerment of first North American Nations.

Without recounting various historical versions of how it happened, I would like to refer only to what happened here.

Indigenous peoples in North America were rendered powerless and subjugated to totalitarian domination by foreign peoples after, they were welcomed as guests and their numbers were allowed to grow to the point of domination through aggression.

Once total subjective control was achieved over my peoples through various coercive measures and the direct removal of political, social and religious freedoms accomplished, the colonization process began.

In North America this has been to systemically enforce manifest destiny or the so-called "White Man's burden" to civilize. In the 498 years of contact in The Americas, the thrust of this bloody sword has been to hack out the spirit of all the beautiful cultures encountered, leaving in its' wake a death toll unrivalled in recorded history. This is what happened and what continues to happen.

There is no word other than totalitarianism which adequately describes the methods used to achieve the condition of my people today. Our people were not given choices. Our children, for generations, were seized from our communities and homes and placed in indoctrination camps until our language, our religions, our customs, our values and our societal structures almost disappeared. This was the residential school experience.

Arising out of the seige conditions of this nightmare time, what is commonly referred to as the "social problems" of Native peoples emerged. Homes and communities, without children had nothing to work for, or live for. Children returned to communities and families as adults, without the necessary skills for parenting, for Native life style or self-sufficiency on their land base, deteriorated into despair. With the loss of cohesive cultural relevance with their own peoples and a distorted view of the non-native culture from the clergy who ran the residential schools, an almost total disorientation and loss of identity occurred. The disintegration of family and community and nation was inevitable, originating with the individual's internalized pain. Increasing death statistics from suicide, violence, alcohol and drug abuse and other

poverty centred physical diseases, can leave no doubt about the question of totalitarianism and genocide.

You writers from the dominating culture have the freedom of imagination. You keep reminding us of this. Is there anyone here who dares to imagine what those children suffered at the hands of their so called "guardians" in those schools. You are writers, imagine it on yourselves and your children. Imagine you and your children and imagine how they would be treated by those who abhorred and detested you, all, as savages without any rights.

Imagine at what cost to you psychologically, to acquiesce and attempt to speak, dress, eat and worship, like your oppressors, simply out of a need to be treated humanly. Imagine attempting to assimilate so that your children will not suffer what you have, and imagine finding that assimilationist measures are not meant to include you but to destroy all remnants of your culture. Imagine finding that even when you emulate every cultural process from customs to values you are still excluded, despised and ridiculed because you are Native.

Imagine finding out that the dominating culture will not tolerate any real cultural participation and that cultural supremacy forms the basis of the government process and that systemic racism is a tool to maintain their kind of totalitarianism. And all the while, imagine that this is presented under the guise of "equal rights" and under the banner of banishing bigotry on an individual basis through law.

Imagine yourselves in this condition and imagine the writer of that dominating culture berating you for speaking out about appropriation of cultural voice and using the words "freedom of speech" to condone further systemic violence, in the form of entertainment literature about your culture and your values and all the while, yourself being disempowered and rendered voiceless through such "freedom's".

Imagine how you as writers from the dominant society might turn over some of the rocks in your own garden for examination. Imagine in your literature courageously questioning and examining the values that allows the dehumanizing of peoples through domination and the dispassionate nature of the racism inherent in perpetuating such practises. Imagine writing in honesty, free of the romantic bias about the courageous "pioneering spirit" of colonialist practise and imperialist process. Imagine in-

terpreting for us your own peoples thinking toward us, instead of interpreting for us, our thinking, our lives and our stories. We wish to know, and you need to understand, why it is that you want to own our stories, our art, our beautiful crafts, our ceremonies, but you do not appreciate or wish to recognize that these things of beauty arise out of the beauty of our people.

Imagine these realities on yourselves in honesty and let me know how you imagine that you might approach empowerment of yourselves in such a situation. Better yet, do not dare speak to me of "Freedom Of Voice", "Equal Rights", "Democracy", or "Human Rights" until this totalitarianistic approach has been changed by yourselves as writers and shapers of philosophical direction. Imagine a world where domination is not possible because all cultures are valued.

To the Native writers here, my words are meant as empowerment to you. In my quest for empowerment of my people through writing, there are two things of which I must steadfastly remind myself.

The first is that the reality I see is the reality for the majority of Native people and that although severe and sometimes irreparable damage has been wrought, healing can take place through cultural affirmation. I have found immense strength and beauty in my people.

The dispelling of lies and the telling of what really happened until everyone, including our own people understands that this condition did not happen through choice or some cultural defect on our part, is important. Equally important is the affirmation of the true beauty of our people whose fundamental cooperative values resonated pacifism and predisposed our cultures as vulnerable to the reprehensible value systems which promote domination and aggression.

The second thing I must remind myself of, is that the dominating culture's reality is that it seeks to affirm itself continuously and must be taught that numbers are not the basis of democracy, people are, each one being important. It must be pushed, in Canada, to understand and accept that this country is multi-racial and multi-cultural now, and the meaning of that. I must remind myself constantly of the complacency that makes these conditions possible, and that if I am to bridge into that complacency that I will be met with hostility from the majority, but, that those whose thoughts I have provoked, may become our greatest allies in speaking to

their own. It is this promotion of an ideal which will produce the courage to shake-off centuries of imperialist thought and make possible the relearning of cooperation and sharing, in place of domination.

Our task as Native writers is twofold. To examine the past and culturally affirm toward a new vision for all our people in the future, arising out of the powerful and positive support structures that are inherent in the principles of co-operation.

We, as Native people, through continuously resisting cultural imperialism and seeking means toward teaching co-operative relationships, provide an integral mechanism for solutions currently needed in this country.

We must see ourselves as undefeatably pro-active in a positive sense and realize that negative activism actually serves the purpose of the cultural imperialism practised on our people. Lies need clarification, truth needs to be stated and resistance to oppression needs to be stated, without furthering division and participation in the same racist measures. This is the challenge that we rise too. Do not make the commonly made error that it is a people that we abhor, be clear that it is systems and processors which we must attack. Be clear that change to those systems will be promoted by people who can perceive intelligent and non-threatening alternatives. Understand that these alternatives will be presented only through discourse and dialogue flowing outward from us, for now, because we are the stakeholders. We need the system to change. Those in the system can and will remain complacent until moved to think, and to understand how critical, change is needed at this time for us all. Many already know and are willing to listen.

The responsibility of the Native writer is tremendous in light of these times in which world over, solutions are being sought to address the failed assimilationist measures originating out of conquest, oppression and exploitation, whether under the socialist or capitalist banner. We as writers can show how for Lithuanian independence and support for South African Black equality becomes farcical in the glare of the Constitutional position to First Nations here in Canada, who seek nothing more than co-operative sovereign relationships guaranteed in the principles of treaty making. No one will desire or choose to hear these truths unless they are voiced clearly to people who have no way to know that there are good alternatives and that instead of losing control we can all

grow powerful together.

Finally, I believe in the basic goodness of the majority of people. I rely on the common human desire to be guilt free and fulfilled, to triumph, towards attainment of our full potential as wonderful, thinking beings at the forward edge of the Creator's expression of beauty.

I believe in the strength and rightness in the values of my people and know that those principles of peace and co-operation, in practise, are natural and survival driven mechanisms which transcend violence and aggression. I see the destructive paths that have led us to this time in history, when all life on this planet is in peril and know that there must be change. I believe that the principles of co-operation are a sacred trust and the plan and the intent of the Creator and therefore shall endure.

Thank You.

GATHERINGS: AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

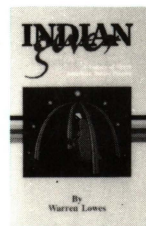
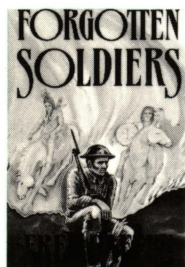
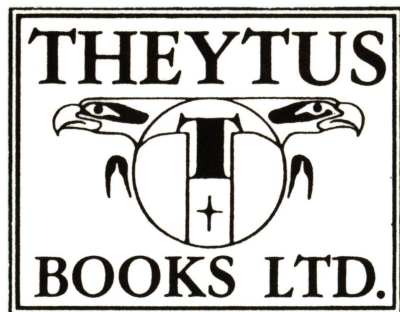
1. Cody Williams  
Ten year old Cody Williams is of Chilcotin-Shuswap Native ancestry. A proud Indian, he is a Native Traditional Dancer.
2. Tracey Bonneau  
Tracey Bonneau is an Okanagan Native currently residing in Vancouver. Her life's ambition is to become a national television news reporter.
3. Greg Young-Ing  
Currently studying law in Vancouver, Greg is originally from Manitoba. He continues to enjoy writing in his spare time.
4. Colleen Seymour  
Employed as an Instructor at the Secwepemc Cultural Education Center in Kamloops, Colleen teaches courses of the Native Adult Basic Education Program. Of Shuswap Native ancestry, Colleen enjoys hard, honest work.
5. Tim Michel  
This is Tim's first piece of poetry. He is currently enjoying his time as a travelling instructor on Computer Programs. Tim is of Shuswap ancestry.
6. Garry Gottfriedson  
Of Shuswap ancestry, this is a second for a publication of Garry's writings. Currently teaching at the Secwepemc Cultural Education Centre in Kamloops, Garry plans to attend the En'owkin International School of Writing this fall.
7. Richard Armstrong  
A member of the Penticton Indian Band of the Okanagan Indian Nation this is Richard's first published works. Richard enjoys working with Audio-Visual programs.
8. Conrad George  
Conrad Albert George is an Okanagan of the Penticton Indian Band. Conrad is a student at the En'owkin International School of Writing.
9. Redhand  
Assiniboine from Fort Belknap Montana, Redhand considers himself a dreamer and a writer. United Federation of Tribes, one race, one voice, one Nation - all red.
10. Duane Marchand  
Duane is of Okanagan Native ancestry from the Okanagan Indian Band near Vernon. These are his first published works of poetic material.
11. Joseph Bruchac  
Joe Bruchac's native ancestry is Abenaki. Co-author of 'Keepers of the Earth' his poems and stories have been widely published and he has edited a number of anthologies of Native Writing.

12. Donna K. Goodleaf  
One of the few eastern North American Indians to submit writings, Donna is from the Kanien Kehaka (Mohawk) Nation. She is presently enrolled in the Department of Education at the University of Massachusetts.
13. T. Mitchel Staats  
T. Michel's writings truly come from inside, where spirituality is strong. In writing for pleasure he shows survival. Of Mohawk ancestry, this is one of his first works.
14. Nana  
Nana, a Blackfoot potter and scholar, is from Browning, Montana. He enjoys using the gifts of life to help others.
15. Kateri Damm  
An established writer of the Cape Crocker Reserve in Ontario, Kateri resides in Ottawa. Her works have appeared in The Magazine and Seventh Generation.
16. Anna Lee Walters  
A writer of short stories, Anna has made her home in Tsailie, Arizona. An intense feeling of Native spirituality underlies her writings.
17. Cecelia Luke  
A member of the Okanagan Nation, Cecelia makes her home in Creston, B.C. She uses themes of love, color and emotions to bring out her words for a deep respect for nature.
18. Armand Garnet Ruffo  
An Ojibway, Armand is from Northern Ontario. A graduate of the Writing Program at the Banff Center School of Fine Arts. He holds an Honors Degree in English Literature from the University of Ottawa. His poetry has recently appeared in Seventh Generation: Contemporary Native Writing.
19. Lee Maracle  
Lee is of Cree and West Coast Indian Ancestry. Currently residing in Sardis, B.C. She is author of "Bobbi Lee", "I Am Woman", and is one of the editors of "Telling It and Sojourneris Truth and Other Stories".
20. Annharte  
Born in Winnipeg, Annharte is of Saulteaux and Irish heritage. Currently living in Regina, she partakes in writings, readings and visits throughout the Native community.
21. Mary Ann Gerard  
Mary Ann is from Missoula, Montana. The two selections appearing in this journal have previously been published.
22. L. Cheryl Blood  
L. Cheryl Blood is of the Blood Tribe of Southern Alberta. This is her first published works.
23. Sheila Dick  
Sheila is a Shuswap of the Canim Lake Band. A mother of three, she has been involved in Native Indian Education for the last ten years. She received her Bachelor of Education degree in 1986.
24. Davey C. Maurice  
Of Metis ancestry, Davey was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Proud to be Native through spiritual and traditional ways, Davey also enjoys sports. He plans on majoring in Sociology at the University of Regina.
25. Kerrie Charnley  
Of Katzie, Jewish and English ancestry, Kerrie writes to heal herself and to find redemption for past struggles her grandma and mom have experienced.
26. Deb Clement  
Of Cree ancestry, this is Deb's first published works. Deb is currently living on Vancouver Island and pursuing a university degree.
27. Karen Coutlee  
Okanagan Upper Nicola Band. First published writings. Fine Arts at Cariboo College in Kamloops. She pursues writing from deep feelings.
28. Forrest A. Funmaker  
A Hochunk (Winnebago from Wisconsin), Forrest has enjoyed great success at the En'owkin International School of Writing. He is presently working on a stand-up comedy routine.
29. Don Wind  
Of the Okanagan Indian Nation, this is Don Wind's first published works. His interests are reading, cycling, drawing and writing at leisure.
30. Arnie Louie  
Is a member of the Inkameep Band in Oliver, B.C. He is a student of the En'owkin International School of writing. This is his first published work.
31. Daniel David Moses  
From the Six Nations lands in Southern Ontario, his works include poems and plays.
32. Alice Lee  
A writer of short fiction and woman's issues, she has previously published 'Love Medicine' and 'Old Woman Alone'.
33. Maria Baptiste  
Maria is a member of the Okanagan Tribe and is planning to write a book on the Okanagan people.

34. Shirley Eagle Tailfeathers  
Shirley enjoys writing at her leisure.
35. Myrtle R. Johnson  
Of the Shuswap Nation, Myrtle enjoys writing poetry in her home at Alkali Lake
36. Art Napoleon  
From the Salmon Arm, B.C. area. Art enjoys the outdoors and story-writing.
37. Joann Thom  
This is Joann's first published works.
38. Leah E. Messer  
A welcome addition to this journal
39. Eriel Deranger  
Eriel's first published works. Congratulations!
40. Margaret Warbrick  
Of the Shuswap Reserve near Invermere Margaret enjoys writing stories and poetry
41. Mary Lou C. Debassige  
From Three Fires Society on Manitoulin Island, Ontario, This is Mary Lou's sixth published works.
42. Andy P. Nieman  
From the Yukon, this is Andy's first published works.
43. Glen James  
Of Nespelem Washington, Glen enjoys writing on the culture activities of his traditions.
44. Gerald Etienne  
A writer of poetry relating to friendship and family.
45. Leona Lysons  
Of the Shuswap Nation, Leona enjoys writing poetry and will return to classes this fall at En'owkin's International School of Writing.
46. Randy Fred  
Founder of Theytus Books Ltd. Randy now resides in the Nanaimo, B.C. area.
47. Alvin Manitopyes  
Currently living in Calgary, Alberta, Alvin writes poetry for leisure.
48. Eileen Burnett  
Eileen enjoys writing of nature and life at her leisure.
49. Jeannette C. Armstrong  
A well known and gifted writer., Jeannette continues to involve herself in writing about her traditions and culture through contemporary events



# The Canadian Native Publishing House



===== 10 YEARS =====

For latest catalogue write to:

**THEYTUS BOOKS LTD.,**

P.O. Box 218,  
Penticton, B.C. Canada V2A 6K3  
or phone (604) 493-7181  
fax (604) 493-2882