

Caribbean relations. Beyond presenting past positive responses to unethical consumption practices, such as the British boycotts of sugar during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, implicitly endorsing the purchase of windward island bananas, explicitly endorsing slavery reparations, and explicating exigencies for an ethics of consumption, the book neither thoroughly nor concretely delineates how contemporary consumers can and should consume the Caribbean in a more ethical manner.

Sheller's referencing of government statistics, sociological studies, travel narratives, and a variety of visual media, to name just a few of the kinds of sources cited, reproduced, and discussed from centuries of Euro-American/Caribbean relations, might seem to be an unworkable project for such a slim book. Due to the book's scope and size, Sheller does raise multiple questions that the book does not answer. At times, the chapters' thematic organization results in repetitions across chapters. Yet overall, the book offers a manageable, informative, and interesting cross-disciplinary constellation of representations, data, and theories regarding past and present consumption of the Caribbean. The book benefits undergraduate and graduate students as well as professors and anyone else interested in learning more about the material and symbolic relations of the Caribbean, ethical consumption, slavery, colonialism, neocolonialism, and postcolonial theory.

Alison Van Nyhuis

Helen Hoy. *How Should I Read These?: Native Women Writers in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001. Pp. xi, 264. \$55.00. pbk. \$24.95

Helen Hoy's analysis of Native women writers in Canada provides a rigorous and intensely personal reflection not only on the selected texts, but more generally on the ethical and political complexities of non-Native readers analysing Native literature. Hoy focuses on seven texts: Jeannette Armstrong's *Slash*, Maria Campbell's and Linda Griffith's *The Book of Jessica*, Ruby Slipperjack's *Honour the Sun*, Beatrice Culleton's *In Search of April Raintree*, Beverly Hungry Wolf's *The Ways of My Grandmother's*, Lee Maracle's *Ravensong*, and Eden Robinson's *Traplins*. As her title suggests, Hoy is interested in "the problematics of reading and teaching a variety of prose works by Native women writers in Canada from one particular perspective, my own, that of a specific cultural outsider" (11). She goes on to say that "I am less interested in resolving the question of the title than in rehearsing some of its attendant

challenges and discoveries. And I am interested in locating those challenges and discoveries in the particularities of my reading and teaching experience, as potentially symptomatic of readings from similar subject locations" (11). What results is an engaging mix of critical textual analysis, teaching anecdotes, and personal stories of negotiating cultural difference. In a critical genre that is fraught with political tension, that is, non-Natives writing about Native work, Hoy's approach is a welcome one, because of its acknowledgment of the important and inevitable interconnections among texts, classrooms, politics, and personal experience.

Hoy devotes a chapter to each of her selected texts, and she employs a similar structural strategy in each one. She begins by providing astute and attentive textual analysis that tends to highlight elements of postcolonial resistance in these texts, and moves on in each case to question and problematize the reading she has just given us. For example, in her analysis of Eden Robinson's novella "Contact Sports" (in *Traplines*), she begins by arguing that while "Contact Sports" is not obviously about Native issues or even particularly addressing Native culture, it can nonetheless be read as an ironic critique of colonialism. She then abruptly shifts her critical stance and points out "the difficulty with my entire preceding analysis of Robinson's fiction. . . . Must all Native writing be reduced to a singular narrative of colonization and resistance? . . . Does my allegorical reading do violence to Robinson's texts, constraining them within a biographical/cultural matrix from which they might seem to have removed themselves?" (164–5). She goes on to offer alternative readings, and to continue to trouble and expand her analysis by referring to her experience of teaching *Traplines*, tracking various responses among the students to emphasize her point about the need to consider a range of interpretations in the process of analysing any piece of literature. Certainly one of the strengths of this book is its emphasis on teaching. Hoy's recounting of her experience with teaching these books reminds us that the classroom is its own politically charged space, and the reception of these books in the classroom can sometimes pose challenging pedagogical situations.

While the structure of the chapters does become somewhat predictable, more or less following the pattern I have identified above, Hoy's approach nonetheless provides a useful model for recognizing and articulating the complex subjectivity of readers producing meaning from a text. Over and over, Hoy bares her own subjectivities, wrestling openly with the guilt so commonly confessed by white postcolonial critics, but rarely handled with such honesty and efficacy as she handles it here. As she moves on to provide an interpretation counter to the one she originally articulates in each chapter, she also makes excursions to personal anecdotes that demonstrate her belief, and

enact the principle, that interpretative approaches and personal politics are intertwined, and her willingness to tell personal stories at her own expense illustrates her sense that there is a long and sometimes steep learning curve to developing intercultural relations and to producing responsible postcolonial criticism. Indeed, that belief is clearly a fundamental part of her pursuit of ethical critical practices regarding Native literature, which is really what the book is about. It is in this context that Hoy moves through her discussion of these texts, asking and providing thoughtful reflection on a number of critical questions that emerge from her title, such as how to address the criticism often levelled at Native texts, that they are aesthetically inferior to non-Native literature (a question that comes up, for example, in her chapters on *Slash* and *In Search of April Raintree*); how to define authenticity—that is, a “truly” Native voice or perspective—and how to acknowledge the cultural context of Native texts without fetishizing Nativeness (explored most fully in the chapter on Eden Robinson’s *Traplines*); and how to avoid the trap of imposing Western critical approaches on texts not produced in that cultural context (addressed in a number of chapters, including the ones on *April Raintree* and *Honour the Sun*.) Indeed, in her chapter on *Honour the Sun*, Hoy nicely sums up the kind of critical awareness she is advocating for “cultural outsiders” reading Native texts when she says “I must be alert for unfamiliar codes in a deceptively familiar medium” (75).

In the spirit of Hoy’s critical approach, I would like briefly to tell a personal anecdote that sums up my assessment of her book. In 1996 I attended at ten-day SHHRC Institute in Saskatoon entitled “Cultural Restoration of Oppressed Indigenous Peoples.” All of the speakers were invited guests, indigenous people from all over the world. I was, for the first time in my life, in a racial minority, and I felt the right thing to do was to maintain a respectful silence throughout the proceedings, with the exception of the talking circles which took place most afternoons. The entire experience was stimulating, mind-opening, challenging, and emotionally charged, easily the most influential experience of my academic life, and I took copious notes each day. At the end of the ten days, the floor was opened to anyone to speak, but I chose to maintain my respectful silence. A Blackfoot man next to me, however, encouraged me to get up and speak, and the reason he gave for wanting me to do so surprised me. He asked me what I had been writing about in all my notes, and indicated that I should share my thoughts with everyone, not just quietly observe and go away. I was shocked to realize that what I had thought was a sign of respect was to him the opposite. So, in spite of feeling quite reticent, fearful of saying the wrong thing, I went to the microphone and addressed the group. And while to this day I still have some uneasiness about

what I said, only because I have no idea what the “right” thing would have been, I do believe that speaking was better than not speaking.

I tell this story because it serves as a metaphor (as well as a model for Hoy’s own critical practice) for what Hoy accomplishes in this book. Hoy, a white critic, takes the risk of publishing a book of criticism on Native literature, of stepping into the fray of the complex politics of appropriation of voice, of privileged white academics publishing on books by authors who do not always themselves have easy access to publishing houses, of adding to the albeit fairly small number of books by white critics on Native writers, while the number of books by Native critics on Native writers (or other writers) remains, for reasons Hoy herself addresses, smaller still. It is a complex and sensitive critical space, but I’m glad that Hoy chose to speak, and her book provides the many and diverse people grappling with these issues with some good guidance for talking about literature in the rich and complex contexts of reader and author.

Gillian Siddall

Juliette Merritt. *Beyond Spectacle: Eliza Haywood’s Female Spectators*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2004. Pp. 154. \$45.00.

The number of texts exploring work by eighteenth-century women writers has grown exponentially since the early 1990s. ‘Scandalous’ authors such as Eliza Haywood have acquired respectable reputations denied them in their own historical moment as feminist scholarship investigates the consequences of women writing and publishing their work. Many now consider Haywood a subversive author who criticizes the societal constructs imposed upon women in her time, yet works within the confines of the social order that governed her publication, her livelihood, and her public persona. *Beyond Spectacle* situates itself solidly within this body of recent feminist scholarship on Haywood.

In her introduction, Juliette Merritt admirably summarizes recent Haywood scholarship. For the uninitiated, this introduction serves as a useful entry into important critical debates surrounding Haywood’s work. She includes a brief outline of several issues, including the public sphere of the literary marketplace, commercial aspects of publication, and women’s roles within these spaces. Haywood scholars might find this comprehensive background familiar, but the information proves useful as Merritt frames her own assertions. Rather than insisting upon a narrowly focused thesis, Merritt uses the