

Editorial and Opinion Page

Poetry by Purnell Swett High Students of Yvonne Barnes Dial

Unquestionable Beauty

As I gaze into the deep blue sky I sit and wonder, why do the thick white clouds have to be disturbed with thunder? As I stare into the ocean deep it has always been mysterious to me, why do the waves come to and fro in beautiful harmony continuously?

As I look into the bright sunset, I think of a silly question, why does it change from day to night with such a steady connection?

As I study a variety of animals and creatures that roam the earth, I am constantly reminded of the importance of their wild and untamed birth.

As I stare upon the stars in the sky and their appealing beauty I start to wonder if they are as parents waiting to watch over and guide me.

As I look up to the tall trees that stand just beyond my door, I begin to stop and have a crazy thought, why can't anyone naturally reach the top without having to worry about a dangerous and tragic drop.

As I walk upon the beautiful green grass it's always amazing to me, how beautiful it just grows and grows with such constant dignity, people steadily walk over it with all their might, but it is not a bit frightened, it just grows far beyond their sight.

As I watch the four seasons change continuously I am grateful and start to think, how wonderful it is for the weather to change, without our four seasons everyday would be the same. So as I review all of these amazing things it is a constant reminder of nature, and I will always appreciate all of the earth's pure beauty and all of the creations.

By: Jasmin Bell

"I Come From A people..."

I come from a people who have roamed the Earth free for generations. My people were one with nature, mother earth, and father sky. We had one God, the Great Spirit. We traveled on foot until the horse came, which helped us to travel faster. Soon our world came crashing down, and now we are one no more. We forgot mother earth and father sky, and therefore we forgot me.

By: Marri Brooks

Death

As I lie in a field of sunflowers, I gaze up at the beautiful blue sky, and I begin to wonder what it will be like when I leave this all behind. Will it be like a dream that never ceased to end? Or an on going journey without a friend.

If I should happen to take this journey all by myself, I know that in my heart I will not be alone, for I have a God who has forgiven me of all my sins and promised to always accompany me until the very end.

By: Ashleigh Johnson

Life After Death

No one understands how you feel inside. It's so dark and dismal. Life feels like a bumpy ride, it never stops to let you off. You have to stick it through. Even though most of the time you're feeling sad and blue nothing ever goes right. Instead it all goes wrong. You're life simply feels like a sad, depressing song. Does the tune get brighter as time passes by? Even if it does still I'll never understand why my dad had to die.

By: Natasha Lowry

"ALONE"

Alone in the somberness of the night, I lie awake longing for you and your warm embrace. Memories of you flooding my mind, taking me back to another place, another time. Back to a time when we walked joyously hand in hand, you whispering softly in my ear, that you'll forever be my man.

Now those whisperings no longer linger, you left me alone with the snapping of her finger. Never again will I feel the innocence of your touch, the gentleness of your lips. I yearn for so much.

My feelings for you I often resent. I try to ignore the reality, you're not heaven sent. But no longer can I ignore, as I see your feelings increasing for her more and more.

Suddenly I feel lost and full of pain, realizing that without you, alone is how I'll forever remain.

By: Adrienne Chavis

Spirit Voices of Bones: Poetry by MariJo Moore

One of the words that immediately comes to mind when reading a poem created by MariJo Moore is "spirituality." The poetry she offers to us in her latest collection "Spirit Voices Of Bones" is just that: Satisfying! This talented poetess has prepared a feast for the soul, and one can not come away from the table feeling anything less than spiritually and emotionally full.

Although Moore is an American Indian (Eastern Cherokee and a native of Asheville, NC) writer, this is not necessarily a book of ethnic poetry. As Vinc DeLoria Jr. states on the cover notes: "The crisp, clear and evocative poetry of MariJo Moore is leading the way in raising American Indian poetry from merely ethnic reflections to a universal form of emotional expression." I heartily agree.

When I first opened this book, the poem "She Trembles" offered its deep wisdom and sharp realism. Coincidentally, I had the pleasure of hearing Moore read this particular poem at an American Indian Writers' Conference in Greensboro, NC this Spring where she and I were teaching creative writing workshops. I remember how moved I was when

I heard her read: She trembles and the trees growl Catacombed mystery-lined in-nards daring machinery to bite at her memories.

You shall be punished for this! She trembles and the oceans roll with wet-tasting morsels sweetened with thick oily poisons. Leave her be! You've marked her eyes torn her flesh, ate her intentions and streaked her thighs.

It's not only too late - it's too demanding. Scattering her memories once honored now disgraced by progress. Milking her breasts with pumps of steel smearing her face with hardening make-up building mounting erecting her belly with toys she with someday destroy.

You silly foolish ones Who desire to capture the future in signs. There is no future for you save retribution and in-kind contributions from those you represent

As I listened to her sound of my own voice reading this poem aloud (and I do recommend her poetry be read aloud to receive the healing the words offer), I myself could not keep from trembling. This experience of relation is just one of many I encountered while reading this book of deeply-moving, visceral, image-ridden creations. And although each poem was satisfying, I could not help wanting more.

The intimacy of Moore's poetry is delivered in such a way that identifying with much of it is easy. There are poems dealing with the digging up of ancestral bones, the horrors of Vietnam, fetal alcohol syndrome, the necessity of continuing ceremonies, the importance of listening to animals and birds, and the determination of celebrating the wonders and burdens of being American Indian in a modern world that wants to stereotype us to death. Many of these words have been spoken throughout the ages. It is the way Spirit has chosen to speak through Moore that is so refreshing. This is a book that pleads to be heard, while demanding to be listened to at the same time.

DEAR AUNT

Dedicated to Janice Blue Chavis Every night that I see a star I wish on it near and far. I hope that it will see that the wish I wish is not for me. It is for my Aunt that is up above looking down on me with much love. I know I do wrong and I know I am bad but I hope that you are not mad. The wish I wish has not come true but when it does I will end up finding you. I know you can hear me even though you are gone. But my heart still beats for our love is strong. I never got the chance to tell you how I feel so this one is for you Aunt Jan I LOVE YOU still!!!!

By: Melissa Blue

Dedicated to: Gerta Hunt

Death

What color is death? Whom does it fear? Why must it come and take those so dear?

Why does it leave others behind? Some claim that it's just not their time.

But why must death haunt us? It has no color, it fears no one. It takes the old, and even the young.

When it comes to take your loved one away, it's only because the Great Spirit, decided they couldn't stay.

Why must we question? Why must we fear? Someday we'll meet the ones once held so dear.

By: Tamara Oxendine

What is Love?

Love is an undying emotion lingering forever like a slow, soft song that is incessant. Love is a heart-felt feeling which holds no boundaries and firmly embraces every beings soul. Love allows a person to go beyond the limitations of life and be one with another being. Love is like a rose blooming from a bud into a mature flower because of the growth of a person's love. Love is in words the best feeling a human would ever experience.

By: Ala Locklear

What is Heritage?

Is it a mountain, a tree, or just another species? Oh what can it be, my eyes are so blind to see. All this time I was wondering, it was right in front of my eyes. It has no taste, it has no color. It is pride, joy, honor, knowledge; it is all the things you want it to be. For me I am all the things I want to be. I am an American. I am a Lumbee. It was passed down from my ancestors to me. How I thank them for all the goodness they have brought to me.

By: Jaimee L. Chavis

There's a Part

There's a part of you that is fearful. There's a part of you that is insecure. There's a part of you that thinks too much. And there's a part of you that's brave and courageous. Or that's what you think. Maybe you're not the person you think you are. You could be if you only believed in yourself and always hope for the best in you life. Then the person you would want to be will shine through you.

By: Richard Oxendine

My True Love

From the break of dawn to the setting of the moon, my mind rests on only you. For I blessed the stars and the heaven above for having you for my true love. For God gave me two great things in life, one was life and the other was you by my side.

By: Troy M. Revels

Along the Robeson Trail

by Dr. Stanley Knick

Director, UNCP Native American Resource Center

Last week we began discussion of the Lumbee in context. The purpose of this discussion is to move in the direction of a more full understanding of the Lumbee in the broadest possible context. But what does it mean to say: "the Lumbee in context?" The English noun "context" originates from the Latin verb *contexere*, which means "to weave together." Nowadays the word is taken to mean the background and environment of a particular thing — everything that surrounds and thus may help to define a thing. In language studies we may speak, for example, of the context of a sentence — the parts immediately next to or near a specific word which help to determine that word's exact meaning.

Take the written word which is spelled l-e-a-d. Is this the word which means "a soft gray metal element," or is it the word which means "to show the way by going before?" When the word stands alone, its meaning may be unclear. But when we see the word in context by surrounding and connecting it to other words and ideas, the meaning becomes more apparent (as in the sentence: "Joe was chosen as the one who will lead us into town to buy lead pencils.")

So it is with human beings and their cultures. We may know something about the Scots, but we will have a better chance of understanding them by seeing them in the broader context of the Irish, the Norsemen, the English and the French. We may know something about nineteenth century events, but we will better understand them by seeing them in the context of eighteenth and twentieth century events.

An attempt to situate the Lumbee within a broad context requires patience, just as weaving requires patience. It necessitates sifting through

strands of evidence and interpretation, searching for patterns in the weave. Such a process should address several questions relating to: the nature of evidence and interpretation as means to understanding; the possible consolidating role of an anthropological or holistic view; the specific evidence available from various sources relating to the Lumbee; and the interpretations which can be drawn from the existing evidence.

But what is evidence?

An elder gentleman from a farming community walks into a museum with a shoe box. From it he draws an object wrapped in newspaper and says: "I was poking around in my back yard and I found an ancient artifact. It's like nothing I've ever seen, so it must be very old. It was made by Indians long ago. See, it has arrows carved in it!"

The museum curator looks at the object and instantly recognizes a recent machine-made ceramic bowl. It is one of many thousands just like it made in Hong Kong or Singapore, available in many tourist shops. He tells the gentleman that the bowl is actually modern, despite its partial covering of soil and its arrows around the rim.

The elder doesn't believe it. He says: "You must be mistaken. How could it have been out there in the dirt in my garden if it were something new? It must be very old. And see these arrows, who else but Indians would put arrows on a bowl?"

The curator explains that the method of manufacture is revealed by the mold-lines on the vessel. He points out that other people besides Indians use arrows, and have done so for many centuries. He shows the elder some examples of authentic pre-Columbian ceramics from the region, and talks

about the differences in method of construction, surface treatment, color and texture of the clay.

But the elder goes away believing that the curator simply doesn't know, his subject. The bowl goes on the elder's mantel and he tells his kinfolk that this ancient-artifact is proof that Indians lived in his back yard sometime long ago. The word spreads.

The local newspaper hears about the artifact. Anxious for human interest stories, they run a story about the elder and his prize. The text tells of the exciting discovery of the bowl and gives the elder's account of the bowl's ancient origin.

A reader of the newspaper sees the photograph and the story and tells his family about it over supper. Years later a student doing late-night library research about the community comes across the newspaper story in microfilm, and the "ancient artifact" becomes an element in her paper about the origins of the community.

In effect, the bowl has been entered into the record. It has been seen by persons who accept it on face value and who draw their own conclusions from it. It has been taken as something which reveals, something which tends to prove or provide grounds for a certain belief. In some sense, and to some people, it has become the truth. It has become evidence.

But what is evidence, really? What constitutes evidence in scientific and historical inquiry? In other words, what can we accept as evidence?

In the next segment, we will continue discussion of the Lumbee in context. For more information, visit the Native American Resource Center in historic Old Main Building, on the campus of The University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

Say You Read it in the Carolina Indian Voice. To subscribe call 521-2826



Pediatric Pointers

By JOSEPH T. BELL, MD

One of the things that commonly frighten us as parents is choking episodes in our children. I am scared to death of balloons and rarely ever let my daughter play with one. The following are some suggestions to help prevent choking in young kids:

1. Do not allow young child to play with small objects. Toys for children younger than 3 years old should be a minimum of 1 1/4 inches in diameter.
2. When the child is about 2 years old, teach them not to hold objects in their mouths.
3. A child's chewing skills develop about the age of 4 years. Until then, avoid giving them chewable tablets or foods that are hard and smooth or round and smooth that require chewing. Common foods to avoid include hard pieces of fruits and vegetables, such as raw carrots, peanuts, popcorn, grapes, and hot dogs. If the child is younger than 3 years old you or another adult should supervise them while they eat.
4. Do not give young children

coins as rewards or play items. 5. Help children to avoid putting large pieces of food in their mouths. Cut or break the food into bite size pieces and encourage them to chew their food thoroughly.

6. Encourage children to sit without talking while eating food or candy. Excitement or activity can predispose a child to choking episodes.

7. Keep safety pins closed and away from children.

8. Beware of small objects around the house that children can choke on. These include small toys, bolts, screws, nails, earrings, and above all, rubber balloons. Do not allow your child to blow up a balloon unless you or another adult is supervising him/her. Once a balloon is popped, discard it immediately.

9. Purchase only age appropriate toys. The label on the toy's package should help you determine if a particular toy is safe for your child.

Next week we will talk a little bit on how to treat a choking child if that episode were to occur. Take care and we will talk again next week

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By: Jessica Bell

"Solidarity In The Night" are twelve different American Indian translations, giving credence to the beauty of native languages that still exist today, and as an expression of kinship. It is wonderful to see such words of healing and love written in the languages of Nations such as Eastern Cherokee, Saponi/Yasha, Lakota, Navajo, and even Hawaiian and Yup'ik Eskimo. And the "Notes" section not only makes this book a great teaching tool, it also offers insight to Moore's inspirational process of creating poetry which is woven from intuition, dreams, visions, and the voices of the old ones.

I came away from reading "Spirit Voices Of Bones" realizing it will always be with me, and wanting others to hear the words as I had. It is with great pleasure that I invite you to listen.

Robert Humphrey, of Western Cherokee descent, is the author of "Remembrances Of Walking The Trail Of Tears: Becoming Buffalo Snake", and resides in Commerce, Texas.

"Spirit Voices Of Bones" is available at Books-A-Million in Fayetteville, NC, or can be ordered from publisher by calling 704-645-2959.