North American Monetary Union?



HON. FRANCIS HINCKS

Presented as part of the Special Issue: Money

As we find ourselves in a new era of North American free trade, will history repeat itself?

The Souls of African American Children: New Amsterdam



Presented as part of the special issue “Early Cities of the Americas.”

“Why would clergymen of the Reformed Church use their office to baptize the offspring of men and women claimed as property by the Dutch West India Company, the premier slave-trading company of the seventeenth century?”

Miniature Worlds



“Even after a woman mastered painting’s technical skills and the theory that stood behind them, she encountered the nagging problem of publicity. A successful artist had to exhibit and advertise. She necessarily exposed herself to strangers as she drummed up a clientele and again when she sat down to capture their likenesses. The training needed to transform raw talent into polished style was beyond most women’s reach just as the demands of professional painting were at odds with the standards of feminine decorum.”

Commemorating Concord



"It may seem natural to us that in 1825 the children and grandchildren of minutemen would commemorate the fight at the North Bridge. It was not."

Truth or Dare: On history and fiction



With history like this, I thought, who needs fiction?

9/11 and Acoma Pueblo: Homeland security in Indian Country



View from the top of the mesa, Acoma. Photograph courtesy of Mark Penzel.

In late December 2001, my husband Mark, kids Lily, Max, and Sam, and I were at the end of a tour of Acoma Pueblo, America's oldest continually inhabited village. About sixty miles west of Albuquerque, New Mexico, Acoma is a nearly thousand-year-old pueblo sitting atop a 367-foot-high mesa, famous for its sixteenth-century run-in with Spanish governor Juan de Oñate, its massive, seventeenth-century adobe mission church, and its contemporary potters. Eating sizzling hot frybread sprinkled with cinnamon and sugar, we huddled together amidst the dwellings in the sharp winter sun, gazing out at Mount Taylor and some of the most dramatic landscape in the American West.

Mouth full, I pivoted just slightly and noticed an American flag poster in the window of a nearby house. "Look at that," I said to the kids, pointing. Instantly, all eyes settled on the decal. Chewing slowed noticeably. "Huh?" said Sam, steam escaping from between his lips. "What the . . ." said Max, hopping from foot to foot. "*Interesting*," Lily said, raising an eyebrow.

U.S. flag in a home window, Acoma. Photograph courtesy of Mark Penzel.

Tafoya came up with the design and slogan for his homeland security T-shirt a few weeks after terrorists flew jets into the Twin Towers. He recalls thinking, "That's right. Now *they* know how it feels."

My kids have been traveling from the Northeast to New Mexico to visit family

since they were nine months old. They laugh when Boston friends ask if they need passports to visit Mark's parents. "*New* Mexico!" they reply. "It's a *state*, not a foreign country!" The kids are "good tourists." They have come to know, after years of attending rodeos and powwows, of stopping at Taos Pueblo to see Christmas bonfires, of examining the smorgasbord of jewelry spread out along the walk in front of the Governor's Palace in Santa Fe, that Indians are many things: smart and smart-alecky, proud, and more often than not getting the short end of the stick. They do not associate Indians with flag-waving American patriotism.

Which is why we had snickered the previous evening when we had seen a particular T-shirt at a Los Lobos concert. Bracketing a silk-screened reproduction of a nineteenth-century photograph of Geronimo, armed, alongside three Apache warriors, the writing on the shirt read "Homeland Security . . . Fighting Terrorism Since 1492." Wildly popular in Indian Country ever since U.S. troops invaded Iraq, the shirt was only beginning to make the rounds in December 2001. Even then, we got the joke. Seen from Indian Country, the folks at the Department of Homeland Security are the hypocritical descendants of terrorists, themselves.

Thinking about the T-shirt and seeing that flag poster up at Acoma, I wondered what Indians were saying about 9/11. That question stuck with me. A few conversations and emails later, I have learned that, like many other minorities in America, the Indians I spoke to are struggling to negotiate multiple identities that leave them to work out their relationships with patriotism and oppression. I have also learned that there is something uniquely Indian in the quality of this struggle, something that other groups, no matter how disenchanted or disenfranchised, cannot share.

A T-shirt with a message: Geronomio and Chiricahua Apache warriors. Courtesy of Matthew Tafoya andwww.nativesovereigntees.com.

It *is* hard to understand how Indians can simultaneously fly flags, said Robert Holden, Choctaw, and view the federal government as an occupying, terrorist agency. But that is just the way it is. "This is still *our*homeland," said Holden, a specialist in radioactive waste disposal on Native land for the National Congress of American Indians in Washington, D.C. To illustrate Indians' position, Holden reminded me that during World War II the Iroquois confederacy, seeing itself as a sovereign nation, declared war on Germany and Japan. Nowadays, even when they know that the U.S. government has contaminated their lands, "Indian people still go and fight for this country." The National Congress of American Indians does not have figures yet for how many Native peoples are fighting in Iraq. It estimates that eight thousand Indians fought in World War I, twenty-five thousand fought in World War II, and forty-three thousand fought in Vietnam. Maybe the hard part for non-Indians to understand, Holden said, is that Indians do not entirely see the homeland they are

defending as either American *or* Indian. “We are going to stand *with* our allies and protect *our homeland*.”

Matthew K. Tafoya, Navajo, who designed the original homeland security T-shirt and marketed it through his Albuquerque company, Tribal Sovereign Tees, is far more blunt. To Tafoya, Indians who fly American flags are “brainwashed” and “not thinking for themselves.” Indians do not join the U.S. Military, Tafoya said, because they are flag-waving patriots. With unemployment on Indian reservations hovering between 60 and 70 percent, Tafoya said, “the military is the only sure way to get a paycheck.”

Tafoya came up with the design and slogan for his homeland security T-shirt a few weeks after terrorists flew jets into the Twin Towers. He recalls thinking, “That’s right. Now *they* know how it feels.” Tafoya said that the shirt has been extremely popular with Indian veterans of the wars in Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf, who—ironically—show up at his booth at flea markets wearing worn-out, government-issue combat fatigues. He suspects that when Indian vets see his shirt, they are thinking, “We’re completely screwed over by the government, and we’re also lucky to be alive.”

“Traditional culture can promote entry to the U.S. military as an extension of the ‘warrior tradition,’” wrote Ben Winton, editor and publisher of The Native Press, which also markets a homeland security T-shirt. In an email responding to my questions about Indians, patriotism, 9/11, and military service, Winton wrote that young Indians “are protecting their families and their traditional homeland (what little of it remains under tribal control, anyway).” He mentioned the Navajo Code Talkers of World War II as a group that wanted to protect Indian Country and U. S. soil. “Assimilation and acculturation allow for many people to feel a sense of dual identity/citizenship,” Winton wrote. “They feel both proud as an ‘Indian person’ and proud as an ‘American’.”

Winton suspects it became easier for Indians to feel a dual sense of pride and a more conventional type of patriotism after the late 1970s. By then, he explained, younger Indians were not consumed by animosity associated with the “Termination Era” of the 1950s, when “the U.S. government bused thousands of Indian people off the reservations into the cities with the promises of ‘a better life’” while “seeking to terminate their legal status as sovereign domestic nations within the borders of America.” Some “assimilated into the larger society,” and their children, he concluded, may have lost some of their parents’ disappointment and bitterness—as well as their activism.

Up at Acoma, award-winning traditional potter Norma Jean Ortiz has been negotiating multiple identities all her life. With a white father and a Pueblo mother, Ortiz grew up at Acoma getting ribbed by her peers for not being “Indian enough,” even as her grandmother taught her to grind ancient potsherds into newly mined clay to strengthen the walls of her pots. Ortiz was selling her wares, which she had laid out on a cloth-covered folding table, when Mark, the kids, and I had finished our frybread. We were studying the tiny dwellings,

none of which has electricity or running water, some of which still use thin sheets of mica instead of glass for windowpanes. We were also supervising the kids, who we had given pocket money to buy themselves each a souvenir. They stopped to examine Ortiz's work, including potsherd magnets, mugs, inexpensive animal figurines, as well as fine, gourd-shaped pots.

Norma Jean Ortiz and her wares, Acoma. Photograph courtesy of Mark Penzel.

Ortiz talked openly, if elliptically, about why she had chosen to fly a small American flag from her family's ancient home. She put up her flag, she said, in response to the attacks on the World Trade Center. What did she think about what had happened September 11? She shook her head. Unable to identify with unmuddied political or ethnic allegiances, Ortiz's least common denominator was empathy. "I feel real bad," she said. "All those people. I think about them a lot. I know they're out there, though."

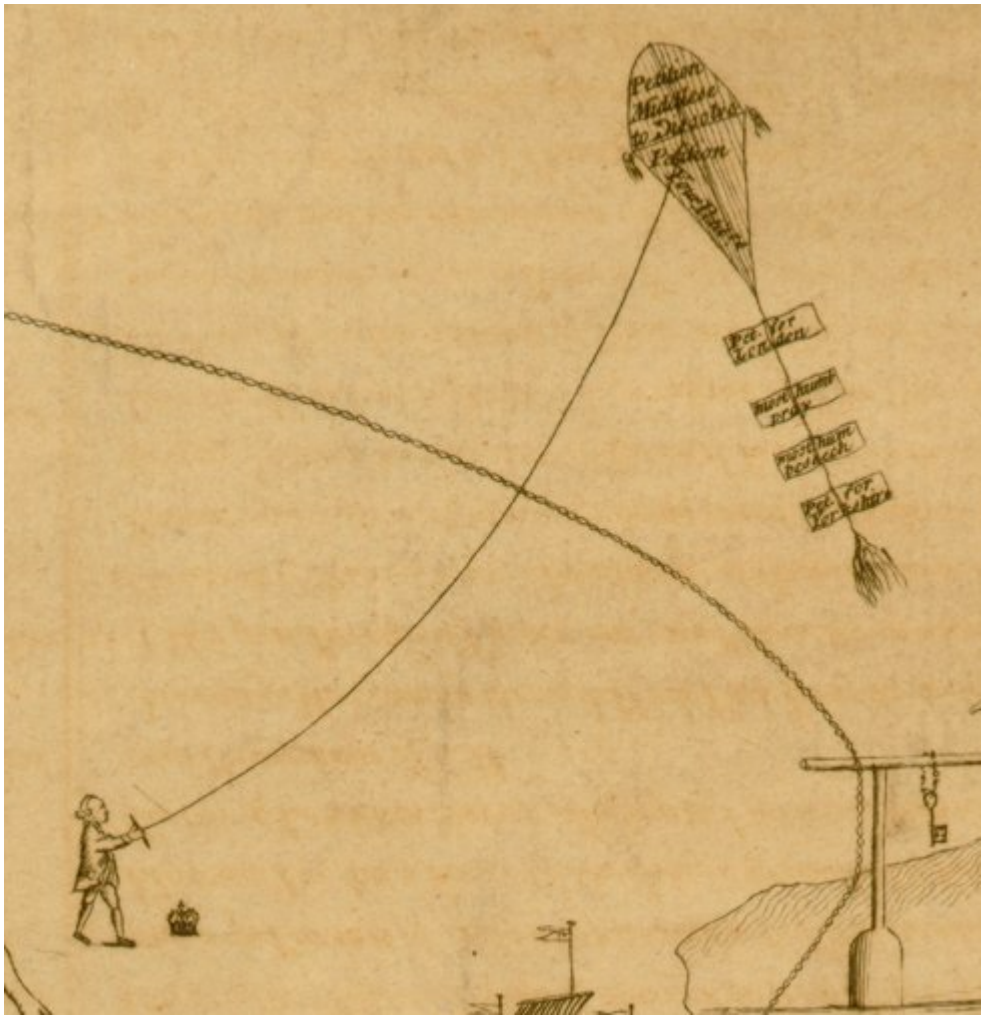
I bought a potsherd magnet. Lily and Sam each chose small animal figurines. Max found a mug with his name on it. Pottery wrapped, ready to begin our trip back to Boston, we began our climb down the mesa.

For examples of Norma Jean Ortiz's pottery,
visit akisofthesouthwest.com or pablos4corners.com.

This article originally appeared in issue 5.1 (October, 2004).

A nonresident fellow at the Charles Warren Center at Harvard University, Cathy Corman lives in Brookline, Massachusetts, with her husband and eleven-year-old triplets and is completing two book manuscripts, one about Indian literacy during the removal era, the other a series of profiles of successful adults with Attention Deficit Disorder.

Political Electricity: The occult mechanism of revolution



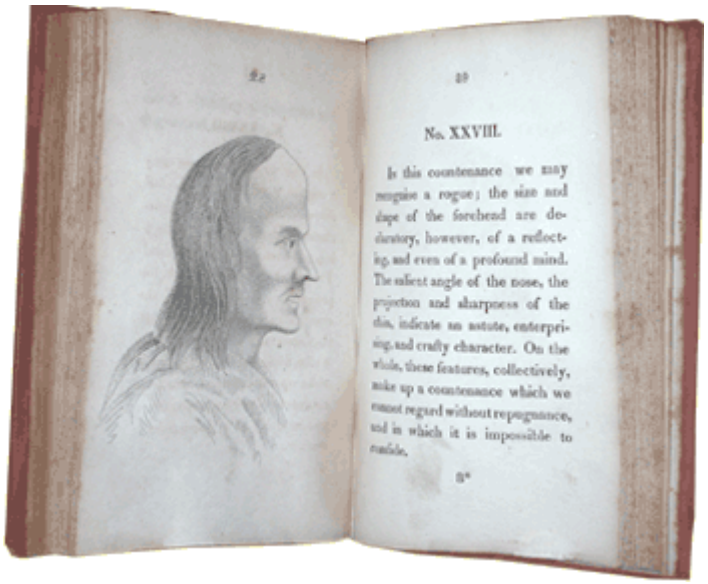
Electricity was one of the leading branches of experimental science in the Enlightenment, certainly the branch with the highest public profile owing to the proliferation of commercial entertainments after the 1740s, both in Europe and British America, where customers willingly paid for the novel experience of having the “electric fire” course through their bodies.

Slaves in Algiers, Captives in Iraq: The strange career of the Barbary captivity narrative



Only a year and a half after the fact, the rescue of Jessica Lynch has begun to seem like a quaint memory, as our attention has been turned from American captives to American captors, from Lynch's blond ingenuousness to the scary hard eyes of Lynndie England and her comrades at Abu Ghraib.

[The Physiognomy of Biometrics: The face of counterterrorism]

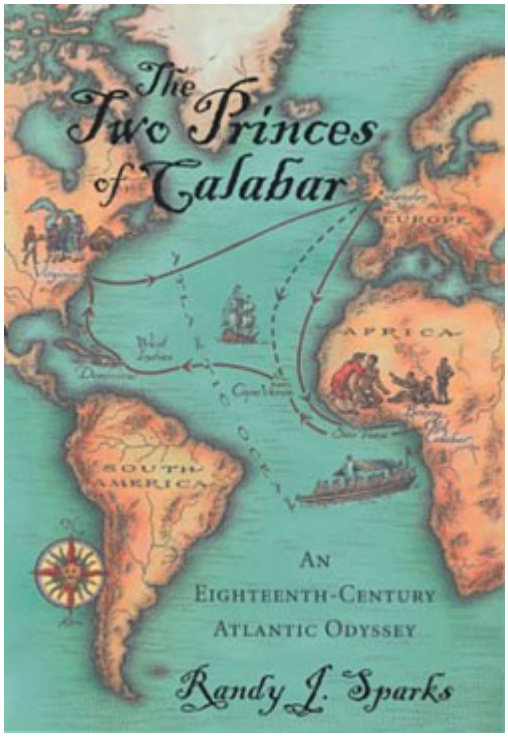


No. XXVIII.

In this countenance we may recognise a rogue; the size and shape of the forehead are declaratory, however, of a reflecting, and even of a profound mind. The salient angle of the nose, the projection and sharpness of the chin, indicate an astute, enterprising, and crafty character. On the whole, these features, collectively, make up a countenance which we cannot regard without repugnance, and in which it is impossible to confide.

When biometrics look to a face it is to identify a person, when physiognomy looks to a face it is to identify that person's permanent moral character. Yet, each attempts to control mobility and the instability it brings to the social order by turning to bodies in general and faces in particular.

Captors to Captives to Christians to Calabar



History conveniently divided by nation-state boundaries and imperial rule to conform to academic specialization has neglected how fluid these commercial, cultural, political, and social boundaries have been since the fifteenth century.