
languages according to Chomskyan linguistics. As a result, Dan Everett's claim that Pirahã does not have recursion caused quite a stir. Both Everett's name and the Amazonian language Pirahã are listed (for pages 75 and 131); however, "recursion" is not in the index at all (but it is also discussed on other pages, such as pages 45 and 114).

Overall, Moreno and Mendivil-Giró deliver what they promise as early as in their book's subtitle. They provide a critical overview of studying language as a biological phenomenon versus a cultural one. Since we probably do have to wait quite a while for conclusive results as to which paradigm is the correct one, this book serves an important purpose: It updates the reader, from the critical position of the Minimalist Program, on the the current state of the theoretical debate on nature and culture in linguistics.

Kent Nelson. *The Spirit Bird*. U of Pittsburgh P, 2014. 318p.

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Spirit Bird follows a well-established precedent by author and self-proclaimed birder, Kent Nelson, of incorporating his knowledge of all things avian seamlessly into his narratives as he has done in previous works such as *The Land That Moves* and *Language in the Blood*. Whether they inspire an entire narrative or a single paragraph, each introduction to a Bluethroat, a Sun-bittern or any other from the myriad of birds in the collection is illuminating, but also vital to each of the thirteen stories.

The characters are just as diverse as the species of birds in the book running the gamut from a millionaire-cum-literal donkey to migrant workers and everything in between. Kent's love of the land is evident in his descriptions of the landscapes that go beyond the cursory and are just as vivid if not more so than those of actual characters. In fact, one could argue Kent's love for the outdoors serves to flesh-out nature, whether intentionally or not, as the one consistent character in the book taking on a different reincarnations in each story, sometimes the provider, other times the victim, other times the artist's subject and other times still a passive onlooker.

All of the stories are set in the here and now and readers will be able to recognize current issues, the most relevant being the osmotic Mexican-American border, which although mentioned in passing in other stories, is nowhere as prominent as in the collection's first story *Alba*. A young man by the name of Último Vargas who believes himself to be destined for great things, crosses the border like his estranged father before him into Hatch, New Mexico. With an entrepreneurial spirit from the very beginning, he overcomes setback after setback in an effort to actualize his self-prophesized greatness. In *The Path of the Left Hand*, Myron, a pharmacist who has been married for thirty-three years begins to reflect on his life and the proverbial road not taken, the road in this case being his latent homosexuality. The story takes some surprising turns as Myron decides to explore this facet of his sexuality that he has stifled for so long.

Compared to the other twelve stories, *Joan of Dreams* stands as the odd man out in terms of style. Kent takes a more poetic approach to the narration which is apropos because the main

character, Joan, is suspended in a dreamlike trance following the recent death of her husband. Having to assume the farming responsibilities that used to be her husband's, she drives the wind mower back and forth across the field contemplating her existence in the absence of her husband's. "She was the wind and the sound, whatever form it took – a dove's lowing from the cottonwood outside or a sparrow's long slow sweet whistle."

With the appreciation of nature that is evident throughout the collection, the question of preservation and stewardship is also brought up but manages to avoid being didactic. When the protagonist of *The Beautiful Light*, Glenna asks the poet whose poem she just heard if she always writes about birds she responds, "not always, but birds measure the health of a planet." To which Glenna quips, "Then the news isn't good, I see only pigeons." This sentiment is explored in further depth in *La Mer de l'Ouest* in which the protagonist lawyer Scotty is juggling among many things: the organization of a vigil because a navy base is dumping dredge spoils and ruining heron and egret rookery, and a highway department is threatening to cut down century old trees in order to expand the highway.

In more ways than one, Kent's characters have a lot in common with the birds they share the pages with, there are the restless ones compelled by a migratory desire to come and go as they please, there are the rare ones that feel out of place like Hakim Bayles the son of a Caucasian mother and Egyptian father, the beautiful ones and the list goes on. It is this that makes *The Spirit Bird* an engaging read and an eco critic's nirvana.

Mirta Ojito. *Hunting Season: Immigration and Murder in an All-American Town*. Boston: Beacon, 2013. 264p.

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Going far beyond examining the anatomy of the senseless murder of Marcelo Lucero, a thirty-seven-year-old Ecuadorian immigrant in a small Long Island community, *Hunting Season* dissects the difficult relationship between the white population in the village of Patchogue, most of whom are themselves grandchildren or great-grandchildren of European immigrants, and more recent immigrants from Gualaceo, Ecuador. Expertly told with the eye of a seasoned journalist, Ojito's narrative draws the reader into the lives of the murder victim and the perpetrators, all of whom are products of the respective times and places in which they were raised. The author's expert analysis of how racism, xenophobia, fear, and hate combined in this small township to create an atmosphere that enabled teenagers to feel justified as they found sport in "hunting for 'beaners'" (1) is exemplary of how these same issues play out every day in small towns and larger cities across the United States.

Repeatedly, *Hunting Season* addresses the rise of local nativist groups—especially since the election in November, 2008, of Barack Obama to the United States' presidency—and the influence members of these organization have on the local discourse about immigration, race, and ultimately hate for the unknown "other." Fueled by national-level hate-mongering rhetoric from broadcast personalities, such as Lou Dobbs, Pat Buchanan, and Bill O'Reilly, who suggest that the United States is being "invaded" by "illegals," local hate groups see themselves vindicated in their actions. Indeed, the Southern Poverty Law Center considered Steve Levy,