"As the Rez Turns": Anomalies within and Beyond the Boundaries of a Pueblo Community

Erin Debenport

After initial instruction in written and spoken Tiwa, young adult participants in the summer language program at San Antonio Pueblo began authoring their own pedagogical materials as a learning activity. Charged with writing pedagogical dialogues to aid in language learning, the students created "the first Native soap opera," as the students described it, which they named *As the Rez Turns*. In this paper, I analyze the processes of entextualization surrounding the creation of this text, its generic features, and its content, which provides a glimpse into the contemporary lived experience of community members in this community that emphasizes strict control of textual circulation and limiting access to local knowledge. I utilize Philip Deloria's (2004) analysis of Native Americans' engagement with popular cultural forms, and linguistic anthropological work on intertextuality and genre to analyze this example of representation, outlining the extra- and intracommunity generic and ideological "expectations" conditioning the creation of this dialogue to show how the students utilize associated "anomalies" as discursive resources to construct veiled political commentaries and assert the right to author indigenous language materials. By including stylistic and thematic elements outside of and in dialogue with the standard forms of pedagogical language dialogues and contemporary soap operas among other genres, the final text is an example of the ways that indigenous people continue to "creat[e] modernity in dialogue with others" (Deloria 2004:238). Pueblo language ideologies privileging indirection are honored in the creation of this covert political commentary supposedly created as a neutral language learning tool. Thus, *As the Rez Turns* is an example of a comedy of manners, highlighting membership issues, gender, and indigenous identity in this community.

To purchase the full article: http://uclajournals.org/toc/aicr/35/2