



Cade Tompkins Projects

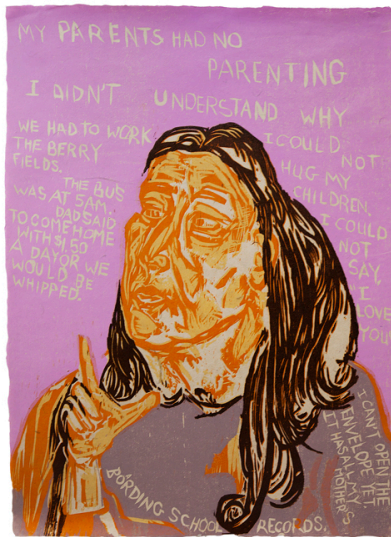
# Art in Print

## Daniel Heyman

by Britany Salsbury  
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### Edition Review

For more than a decade Daniel Heyman has worked on the border between artistic practice and oral history. His prints combine portraiture and text to mine some of the most contentious social and political issues of our day, as in his depiction of detainees at Abu Ghraib prison, whom he sketched from life during their testimony [\[see Art in Print Jan-Feb 2012\]](#). His recent woodcut series, *In Our Own Words: Native Impressions* (2015), builds upon his interest in primary research to present and interpret the experiences of members of the tribal nations of North Dakota.



Daniel Heyman, *My Parents Had No Parenting* from *In Our Own Words: Native Impressions* (2015). Courtesy of the artists and Cade Tompkins Projects.



Heyman spent last summer conducting interviews with tribal administrators, teachers, farmers and workers on four Reservations. After discussing individual biographies, experiences with assimilation, and the role of native culture, he made woodcut portraits of his subjects that incorporate their own statements. Artist Lucy Ganje then designed letterpress broadsides to accompany the woodcuts and provide a more detailed history.

Together the prints offer a nuanced account and convey a sense of pride in native cultures that have withstood systematic attempts to destroy them. *My Parents Had No Parenting*, for example, shows Denise Lajimodiene, a woman who grew up to be a teacher after suffering a tumultuous



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relationship with her father, who had been viciously bullied at the boarding school to which he had been sent to learn English. Heyman depicts her in the act of telling her story, looking confidently forward and gesturing animatedly. The roughly chiseled lines of the woodcut emphasize her assertiveness. The layers of ink meld seamlessly, especially on the impressions printed on paper made from mulberry and flax fiber indigenous to North Dakota, and reflect the complexity of her storytelling. Much of the negative space is filled with text—deftly selected phrases from the narrative such as her description of picking berries as a child for \$1.50 a day to avoid being whipped.

The impact is heightened when seen alongside Ganje's broadsides. Printed in the same colors as the image, the sitter's detailed account covers the page. Together, the woodcut and broadside provide both source material and interpretation. They comprise a historical document and a sensitive portrait of both the sitters and their tenacious culture.