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“Haughty Conquerors”:Amherst and the Great Indian Uprising of 1763.
By William R. Nester.

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northern Mexico leaves one wishing for more information. This limitation is further exacerbated by Bonnie Lynn-Sherow's piece in which she seems willing to generalize what little she is able to quote about Kiowa attitudes toward water to all Indian peoples. In her attempt to challenge what she sees as a generalization about Euro-American environmental exploitation at the expense of Native American resources, she strains to suggest that the Kiowa fear of water illustrated in one or two stories is somehow evidence that Indians generally had no sense of environmental responsibility.

When authors step into more carefully documented history they end up on safer ground when they discuss social, legal, and political challenges between different interests including Indian nations. Alan S. Newell's piece on "Tribal Reserved Water Rights" and Daniel McCool's piece entitled "Winters Comes Home to Roost" are excellent discussions of legal complications designed to determine water rights. Brad F. Raley's piece on private irrigation in Colorado is well written and thoroughly researched. The technical study in the area of geography is an important inquiry that demonstrates the suitability of another discipline addressing the water question, but things begin to fall apart by the last chapter, when Hal K. Rothman attempts to discuss the very large subject of growing city demands for water. His piece falls flat as a useful discussion about demands for water in the city since it lacks depth and breadth. The piece is eight pages long and fails to do even elementary justice to the subject.

Fluid Arguments is a good attempt at dealing with an enormously complicated subject and does introduce readers to some of the key issues. Its weaknesses are somewhat outweighed by the sheer need for more literature that helps thought leaders and the public get a handle on water and the structured approaches needed to ensure adequate use by all the interests. Failure to find the appropriate solutions will doubtless lead contenders beyond political conflict to a real war of violence.

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"Haughty Conquerors": Amherst and the Great Indian Uprising of 1763. By William R. Nester. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2000. 312 pages. \$72.50 cloth.

At the end of the Seven Years War Indian people in the Ohio Valley and Great Lakes region were stunned to learn that France had ceded their lands to Britain; they were undefeated and the French had no right to give up their country to anyone. In 1763 the Indians went to war against the British, an action that has been variously interpreted as a conspiracy, a rebellion, a revolt, an uprising, a war of defense, and a war of independence from and for status within the British empire. British officials then and Anglo-American historians since saw French hands behind it, but the war was fought for Indian, not French, reasons. The man most commonly associated with the conflict was the Ottawa or Odawa war chief Pontiac, even though he lacked the overarching

authority to orchestrate and organize the multiracial war effort. The man primarily responsible for the conflict, at least in William Nester's account, was Sir Jeffrey Amherst, commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America.

As France and Britain competed for hegemony in North America, Indians had fought consistently to preserve their lands and independence. Now that the British took over territories formerly claimed by the French, it was critical that they assured the Indians their lands were safe and lubricated the wheels of forest diplomacy with a steady supply of gifts. Instead, redcoat garrisons occupied frontier posts, Anglo-American settlers pushed west, and with Britain on the brink of financial ruin at the end of the most expensive war in its history, Indian presents fell casualty to post-war retrenchment.

Amherst was the architect of the new policy of economy in Indian affairs. In Amherst's view an empire was something to be governed, not something to be negotiated and cultivated by giving gifts to Indians. Sir William Johnson and other experts in Indian relations warned of dire consequences but their warnings fell on deaf ears. Amherst insisted on cutting presents and treating Indians as subjects, not allies, of the crown. Indians saw in British actions an assumption of conquest, an intention to enslave them and take over their land.

A Delaware prophet named Neolin gave spiritual force to Indian discontent and Pontiac turned anti-British sentiment into direct action: At Detroit in April 1763, he urged delegates from the Three Fires Confederacy—the Ottawas, Potawatomis, and Ojibwas—to pick up Delaware war belts and expel the British. In the course of the war that followed, the Indian alliance took nine British forts and killed five hundred British soldiers and some two thousand settlers. At its height, the war zone encompassed a vast area between the Great Lakes, the Appalachians, and the Mississippi. Britain's hard-won empire west of the Appalachians was all but swept away. Only Fort Pitt, Detroit, and Niagara remained.

Amherst responded by advocating any measures necessary to "extirpate" the Indians: "I wish to hear of no prisoners," he wrote Colonel Henry Bouquet (p. 114). Whether or not Amherst himself ordered germ warfare, Indians who visited Fort Pitt in the spring of 1763 were given blankets from the smallpox hospital. Disease, shortage of supplies, and the separate agendas of individual tribes undermined the Indian war effort. British armies invaded Ohio Indian country and the Indian coalition began to unravel. Sir William Johnson worked on the diplomatic front to prevent the war from spreading, to split the Indian confederacy, and to pit the Iroquois against the western tribes. A series of conferences and treaties brought the fighting to an end, and Pontiac himself took Sir William by the hand in July 1766. Three years later, Pontiac was dead, assassinated by a Peoria Indian.

The British claimed victory but, as Nester points out, the Indians inflicted the greater casualties and damage. Neither the Indians nor the British had been able to win the war militarily and each resorted to diplomacy to bring it to an end. The war hastened British plans to implement a boundary line between Indian lands and colonial settlements, so that peace could be preserved once the Indians had been "reduced to due Submission." The Royal Proclamation of

October 1763 established the Appalachian Mountains as the boundary and prohibited private purchases of Indian lands. In 1764 the Board of Trade drew up a "Plan for the Future Management of Indian Affairs," designed to restore peaceful relations with the Indians by establishing two superintendencies, restoring the practice of gift-giving, and restricting and regulating Indian trade. Such measures alienated American settlers and land speculators like George Washington who felt that the French-Indian barrier to westward expansion had now been replaced by a British-Indian barrier.

William Nester provides a thorough narrative of the events, and a simple interpretation of the war: Amherst caused it. Bull-headed and not very bright, Amherst refused to heed men with more experience in Indian affairs, insisted on treating Indians with contempt, and was personally responsible for the Indian uprising that very nearly cost Britain its western empire. By the time he was recalled to Britain, his own officers and men were as pleased as the Indians to see him go. His successor, Thomas Gage, and others patched together a peace Amherst had been unable to achieve by force of arms. While individuals such as Henry Bouquet receive sympathetic and nuanced character sketches, Amherst comes across as the red-coated officer so commonly stereotyped in American movies: arrogant, ignorant, and woefully misjudging his adversaries. It is difficult to find fault with the portrayal.

Nester includes Indians as active and equal participants in the conflict and recognizes their achievements in both war and diplomacy that followed, but more attention to political and cultural aspects within Indian society would have added depth and balance to the book. Describing the member tribes of the Iroquois League as "six bands," for example, conveys little of the political sophistication of the Hodenauonee (p. 18). The research and reading on which the book is based are rather unbalanced. The endnotes contain some scattered references to manuscript collections such as at the Clements Library, but the primary research rests overwhelmingly on the printed editions of the papers of Sir William Johnson and Colonel Henry Bouquet. The author misrepresents existing and emerging literature when he states that only three authors—Francis Parkman, Howard Peckham, and the popular writer Allan Eckert—have written books on the subject. Broader works in the last decade by scholars such as Richard White, Gregory Dowd, and Jon Parmenter have added significantly to our understanding of the war. Lacking any reference to Richard White's *Middle Ground* (1991), for example, "*Haughty Conquerors*" stands oddly out of touch with recent literature. It is a welcome and straightforward account of the war known as Pontiac's, but will hardly occupy a central place in a field of enquiry that is both more active and more complicated than the author allows.

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