

**A Generation Removed: The Fostering and Adoption of Indigenous Children in the Postwar World.** By Margaret D. Jacobs. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014. 400 pages. \$29.95 cloth; \$29.95 electronic.

In the most ambitious historical account of adoption since Ellen Herman's *Kinship by Design*, Margaret Jacobs's *A Generation Removed: The Fostering and Adoption of Indigenous Children in the Postwar World* tackles the political, gendered, and racial configurations of settler colonialism that have promoted the continued removal of indigenous children from their families and communities since the 1950s. *A Generation Removed* complements Jacobs's previous award-winning book, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880–1940*, which examined the intricacies of parallel boarding-school systems. Framing the contemporary removal of indigenous children through adoption and foster care within Patrick Wolfe's concept of the "logic of elimination," Jacobs argues that the breakup of Indian families is a "defining feature of modern Indian life" that is not only significant to American history, but global and transnational ones as well (xxvi–ii).

Using detailed archival research and numerous interviews, *A Generation Removed* synthesizes an impressive comparative historical account of indigenous child removal by means of foster care and adoption in the settler-colonial nations of Australia and Canada (part 3), while paying the most attention to the United States (parts 1 and 2). Much scholarship on the experiences of indigenous youth has centralized earlier boarding- and residential-school systems, while more recent research includes the adoption of indigenous children and critique of child-welfare systems. Yet rather than including comparative analysis, critical and historical accounts of these events, experiences, and institutions are most often limited to a specific national context. Jacobs's ambitious comparative approach is by far her most important contribution to this area of study, but she also is one of the first scholars to underscore the vital role of Native women in establishing greater self-determination in regard to child welfare. Interspersed between chapters are brief, revealing narratives of interlocutors who influenced the author's research. These anecdotes, and other more detailed accounts throughout her book, highlight the complexity of indigenous child removal and an intimate view of what is at stake.

The book is organized by chronology and theme as well as geography. Part 1 exposes the ways in which state bureaucrats shift policy away from boarding schools, which became an "economic burden," and increasingly promoted adoption into non-Indian homes as the privileged solution to the "Indian problem." Few scholars have explained with Jacobs's depth how and why this shift occurs. Policymakers and adoptive parents, many of whom were "progressive Christians," saw them as a form of rescue and reconciliation with American Indian communities, thus linking these adoptions firmly to liberal ideals. Part 2 explores in searing detail the tearing apart of Indian families and "slow termination" of tribes through the adoption and fostering of children. That 25–35 percent of Native children were removed for adoption is a well-known statistic, but most scholarship only mentions the 395 children who were

a part of the Indian Adoption Project, while some include vague estimates from the Adoption Resource Exchange of North America that followed. These scholars have reasoned that although small in number, these adoptions had a symbolic significance. Jacobs is one of the first to provide multiple primary sources—congressional hearings for the Indian Child Welfare Act, for example—to evidence that, in addition to these two programs, hundreds of children were adopted through private agency adoptions and other localized initiatives. The majority of part 2, however, features the ways tribes organized and reclaimed the care of their children. Most notably, she stresses the crucial role that “mad grandmas” and other Native women played in reclaiming care. Jacobs shows extensively that it was not only Indian activists and tribal leaders who worked to establish the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (ICWA), but also social workers and lawmakers, some of them white.

Part 3 explains how the removal of indigenous children in Canadian and Australian contexts was a transnational, global practice eerily related to that in the United States. The wholesale and unwarranted removal practices in Canada and Australia were informed by similar racial and gendered ideology about indigenous people that constructed unwed motherhood and traditional ways of caring as deviant, non-normative, and detrimental to the future of indigenous children. The author also illuminates the ways these parallel practices were also governed by religion and the common philosophies of assimilation, liberalism, colorblindness, and reconciliation. In ways that few have done before her, Jacobs reports that in the case of Canada, not only were children removed and placed in non-indigenous Canadian homes, but also thousands were transnationally placed into United States homes. As in part 2, Jacobs attends to the ways in which indigenous activists and leaders resisted child removal, detailing its transnational and collective nature as well as the major role of women. While indigenous groups in Australia and Canada were not able to institute federal legislation such as in the United States, Jacobs reveals how they achieved local victories, some of which gave them even greater self-determination than ICWA.

In addition to Jacobs’s substantial attention to Native women’s role in organizing against removal and adoption schemes, what is generative about Jacobs’s book is her use of the “logic of elimination” to place the removal of indigenous children in the historical context of settler colonialism’s goals of eliminating distinctive indigenous status, establishing claims to native land, and denying sovereignty. Further, her comparative and transnational approach enables readers to understand the removal of indigenous children beyond individual circumstances—in which officials always maintained removal was in the “best interest of the child.” Instead, Jacobs vividly displays the overlapping ideology, discourse, and practice of settler-colonial nations, where child removal has been not only a painful legacy of settler colonialism but also its “latest manifestation” (258).

The book is not without a few weaknesses. For instance, Jacobs’s critique of liberalism is limited. For her, white adoptive parents, and in some cases even social workers and government officials, were often well-intentioned or unwitting figures in larger government schemes of child removal. While they may not have been aware of the wholesale removal policies, this reading glosses over the ways in which those who

participated in the removal and adoption of indigenous children were informed by white supremacist logic that held that indigenous peoples were unfit and incapable of caring for their own children. Moreover, Jacobs could have done more to explore why mixed-race indigenous children were preferred over full indigenous or African-American children in the United States. Aside from the goal of assimilation, what does this preference also say about global notions of anti-blackness or desires to incorporate “some” indigeneity into one’s white family?

Another shortcoming is Jacobs’s interpretation and application of Wolfe’s “logic of elimination.” This framework hinges on the critical notion that settler colonialism is a “structure not an event,” which Jacobs does not argue or explain (388). Indeed, as feminist scholar Andrea Smith contends, one of white supremacy’s three pillars is settler colonialism. In other words, because settler colonialism is foundational to white liberalism it would still not have addressed larger issues of settler colonialism, such as acknowledging full tribal or indigenous sovereignty or returning stolen lands. Yet Jacobs seems to lament that liberalism failed to live up to its “potential” in once again failing nonwhite and indigenous communities; thus, an anticolonial or decolonial framework is missing from the text. Lastly, Jacobs’s analysis of indigenous feminism, which she briefly mentions on two occasions, could have drawn more from the many scholars in Native feminist studies to illustrate how white supremacy and resistance fit into indigenous feminism.

Overall, however, *A Generation Removed* amplifies pressing issues for indigenous communities and nations that are too often ignored, overshadowed, or misunderstood. In her first anecdote, even before the introduction, Jacobs describes how, as a non-Native historian, Acoma Pueblo writer Simon Ortiz posed a question at an academic conference that haunted her. He asked why American Indians have had a difficult time coming to terms with and writing about their boarding school experience. From this question and the subsequent conversation, she concluded that there was still much to tell (xxii). Although Jacobs had wanted to shift to research that was “less troubling,” she heeded Avery Gordon’s 1997 call to confront ghostly presence in a way that enables “profane illumination” (204). In doing so, Jacobs successfully brings to the fore the ever-present specters of settler colonialism and child removal so that settler-colonial nations may be forced to reckon with their unjust past, present, and most likely future.

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**Lewis and Clark among the Nez Perce: Strangers in the Land of the Nimiipuu.** By Allen V. Pinkham and Steven R. Evans. Washburn, ND: Lewis, 2013. 332 pgs. \$29.95 cloth.

In 1805 the American federal Corps of Discovery, commanded by co-leaders William Clark and Meriwether Lewis, traveled to the Pacific Ocean through Ni Num Wéetes, the Nez Perce homeland, and, in 1806, back again over the mountains to what was