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safely to Virginia to relate what they had heard and seen. Her father Powhatan died circa 1618; although the able ruler Opechancanough led the Powhatan paramount chiefdom, English expansion foretold its dissolution.

A postmodern message resonates from *The True Story of Pocahontas*: There are many sides to history, and some contest much of the colonial Virginia saga schoolchildren have grown up with. This narrative exemplifies how specific alternative histories reside in different cultures and can produce much different portraits of historical figures, particularly of Powhatan and “the nonpareil of Virginia,” as John Smith described Pocahontas. *The True Story of Pocahontas*’s readers may find themselves reexamining one of America’s most beloved origin myths. This book’s publication is another step toward understanding the American saga from multiple perspectives.

A taking back of history—and possibly of Pocahontas—is in process as part of the 2007 commemoration of America’s first permanent English settlement, its long-lasting effect on indigenous peoples in America, and their contributions to our nation. Virginia Indian descendants look at the scholarly primary sources through indigenous eyes as indigenous knowledge. As more of them share their views of history in 2007 and beyond, the resulting cultural dialogues will enrich us all.

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**Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West.** By Ned Blackhawk. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006. 384 pages. \$35.00 cloth.

Ned Blackhawk explores the themes of colonialism and imperialism in *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West*. He focuses on the Great Basin that encompasses northern New Mexico and Arizona, Nevada and Utah, western Wyoming and Colorado, eastern California, and southern Oregon and Idaho, concentrating on the Utes but also examining the strategies of Paiutes, Shoshones, and others. The book is essentially divided into two parts. The first four chapters focus on the Ute Indians and their relationship with the Spanish to the south from first contact through the 1840s. The last three chapters focus on the relationship between Basin Indians and the expanding United States from Lewis and Clark through the end of the nineteenth century.

Blackhawk’s purpose is “historicizing colonialism” through the lens of violence (3). The first encounters between the Spanish and the Utes were violent, the Utes visited that violence on others as they adapted to Spanish intrusion, and the violence continued when the United States entered the picture. Perhaps the frontier experience was a “self-democratizing” one, but Blackhawk argues that this violence was “equally foundational . . . to the American experience” (9). One factor of Great Basin power dynamics that comes up again and again is the acquisition of the horse. Those who adopted horses fared much

better in the face of European expansion than those who didn't, but horses were highly disruptive to Native societies either way, and their presence was instrumental in the functioning of both war and the slave trade.

This book is not an easy read. The introductions to the chapters sometimes reference events decades past the topic at hand, and the arguments of individual chapters are not always clear. The reasons for dividing the first four chapters as they stand seem quite arbitrary—readers will wonder why one chapter ends and the next begins. It is an uneven book—chapter 4 is twenty-five pages long, and chapter 6 stretches to forty-nine pages. The final three chapters are not clearly integrated into the dissertation material that comprises the first four, and the tone and level of detail change in the book's final stretch.

The overarching argument of *Violence over the Land* is thus not easily summarized. The first chapter details the key role Ute Indians played in Spanish military plans to 1750. Next, Blackhawk discusses the eighteenth-century slave trade in New Mexico. The story moves north to Utah in chapter 3, and chapter 4 focuses on the ways in which the entry of Americans and Canadians changed the dynamic after the Spanish began to lose control of the region and Mexico won its independence. At this point, Blackhawk shifts his focus from a north/south to an east/west axis. Americans were not interested in the incorporation model practiced by the Spanish nor did monopolistic British trading companies hamper them—most were free agents intent on cornering whatever market they could. From the Lewis and Clark expedition to the gold rushes and civil war of the mid-nineteenth century, Blackhawk traces the ravages of disease, poverty, slavery, and violence that Americans left in their wake.

Authors such as James F. Brooks, Ramon A. Gutierrez, Elliott West, and Paul H. Carlson are some of latest scholars to detail cultural interaction in the Southwest and on the Great Plains. In focusing on the Great Basin, Blackhawk has chosen a region that has never gotten much attention. Blackhawk's sources are the records, journals, and government documents of Spanish, Mexican, and American officials, military men, travelers, and explorers. He paints a vivid regional picture of the shifting nature of the balance of power between various Native and European groups that is comparable in scope to his mentor Richard White's book *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (1991). Other works that explore the pivotal role violent interaction between whites and Indians played in the evolution of American culture include Neal Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500–1643* (1982), Eric Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673–1800* (1997), and Jane T. Merritt, *At the Crossroads: Indians and Empires on a Mid-Atlantic Frontier, 1700–1763* (2003). All these works start with the Atlantic coast and move west, however—Blackhawk emphasizes the necessity of looking south and west for encounters that lay at the heart of the American experience.

Even though readers run the risk of getting lost in the main body of the book, Blackhawk's epilogue will grab them by the throat and keep them engrossed until the end. "Born on the Fourth of July, or Narrating Nevadan

Indian Histories” focuses on the only western state in which Indians failed to adopt the horse. Shoshones and others have been labeled a primitive people and are generally left out of scholarly narratives. In the nineteenth century, Secretary of the Nevada Territory Samuel Clemens displayed utter disdain for the Goshutes. The poverty of the first Indians that he encountered made quite an impression on him, for throughout his later writing career as Mark Twain, Clemens portrayed all Indians as if they were primitive and subhuman at the deepest core of their being. In the twentieth century, anthropologist Julian Stewart labeled the Shoshones as lowly hunters and gatherers always on the verge of starvation. His opinions influenced Bureau of Indian Affairs policy to the detriment of many Indian groups for years to come. What has gone unacknowledged is that Shoshone poverty is a legacy of American colonialism and imperialism in the form of the mining industry. During the nineteenth century’s second half, new technology destroyed the ecology of Nevada’s fragile landscape making it impossible for the nonequestrian Indians to live off the land in any meaningful way. When they were forced to turn to miners and others for employment, they were given only jobs with the lowest wages that no one else wanted.

The Shoshones never fit the stereotype of horseback warriors that so many Americans envision when they think of the Great Plains—history is exciting only when the narrative is dominated by battles between heroic Americans and warriors like the Sioux. According to Blackhawk, taking a long hard look at the Shoshone would force Americans to acknowledge the impact of colonialism and imperialism in the settling of the West. Blackhawk closes with stories of how Nevada Indians successfully navigated the perils of twentieth-century life and highlights his own family’s history. He then asks, “Is there adequate space within the wellspring of American history to begin discussing the pain of America’s indigenous peoples? Without recognition, first, of the magnitude of Europe’s impact upon the Americas, histories of the nation will remain forever incomplete” (293).

Reading this book, I was reminded of an essay by Patricia Nelson Limerick in the November 1997 issue of the American Historical Association’s *Perspectives* entitled “Has ‘Minority’ History Transformed the Historical Discourse.” Limerick posited the idea that newer studies about the agency and self-determination of women, workers, and various ethnic groups glossed over basic power relationships. She made me wonder if “cultural survival” was a booby prize for those who had no real economic or political power. David J. Weber made a similar point at the end of *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (1992). You can discuss cultural blending all you want, but at the end of the day, those of Hispanic descent speak Spanish or English and most worship in Catholic churches. Just as the traditional narrative of American history that attempts to promote nationalism leaves much to be desired, so, too, do histories that celebrate self-determination among those outside the mainstream of power without acknowledging their true status.

Ned Blackhawk tackles this issue head on. At first, he seems to succeed only in conjuring up negative images. He uses the terms *horror* and *terror* so often in the first half of the book that the reader becomes numb. Those of

Indian and European descent alike seemed to have experienced only negative emotions (anger, hate, despair, fear) and displayed only negative personality traits (arrogance, cruelty, deceit, greed). Women and children enter the main narrative primarily as victims of rape and exploitation. But just as one must juxtapose Thomas Jefferson's "All men are created equal" from the Declaration of Independence with his portrayal of slaves as bestial in *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785) to understand American racism, Americans must juxtapose Mark Twain's celebration of the frontier experience with his portrayal of the land's original owners to understand American imperialism. In both cases, we must see that it is the contradiction that exposes core American values. Histories that inspire either pride or guilt about the actions of earlier generations of Americans are not the most useful. The real job of historians is to provide Americans with an understanding of how modern society came to be—only then can people come to understand the point of view of others and begin a realistic discussion about how to move forward to a more equitable and just future for all citizens. Ned Blackhawk has done that job, and, in the process, he has produced a powerful narrative that deserves to be widely read and discussed.

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**Wisconsin Indian Literature: Anthology of Native Voices.** Edited by Kathleen Tigerman. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2006. 426 pages. \$75.00 cloth; \$26.95 paper.

*Wisconsin Indian Literature* is a welcome addition to the small but growing body of literary anthologies that respect and emphasize the national, tribal, landed, and community contexts of Native cultural production. *Wisconsin Indian Literature* also represents an important step forward in the relationship between American Indian nations and state governments. Published with the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Wisconsin Humanities Council, the collection represents one practical outcome of Wisconsin Senate Act 31 of 1989, which mandated teaching "the meaning of Native sovereignty, history, and culture at grade levels in all Wisconsin schools" (4).

The anthology is divided into seven parts, reflecting the seven different tribal communities that reside in the state of Wisconsin. Within each section, the editor has followed through on the broad conceptualization of literature laid out in the introduction by selecting excerpts from historical narratives, treaties, oratory, creation stories, poetry, and autobiography. The historical sweep of the collection is similarly expansive, ranging from the Effigy Mound period (600 BC to AD 1050) to contemporary times. Within the pages of this anthology, readers will discover the rich variety of Wisconsin Native expression, including excerpts from a Menominee creation story, a Ho-Chunk autobiography, a Potawatomi novel, and contemporary Oneida verse.