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Sacagawea's Child, The Life and Times of Jean-Baptiste (Pomp) Charbonneau. By Susan M. Colby

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neutral homelands on the Ontario peninsula, well west of Wôbanakik” (233). The distribution of ceramics that were believed to be Iroquoian in origin is indicative of a form of tunnel vision that develops when an artifact is named after the place it was uncovered. Another example of this tunnel vision is the Susquehanna projectile point found in the Susquehanna basin in New York and Pennsylvania. The projectile points have subsequently been found across a wide geographic area from southern Ontario to Quebec’s Gaspé region and on to Nova Scotia. For Wiseman, the attribution of cultural traits and origins by the academic community based on the naming of an artifact says much more about the history of archaeology than it does of indigenous people.

The challenge of modern-day Wabanaki (and indeed all indigenous people confronting colonial history) is one that confronts the notions and identities cast on them first by Christian colonizers that sought to understand (and later assimilate) who it was they encountered, and later by archaeologists who sought to understand (and subsequently define) who it was that lived there. While something like the naming of the projectile point may seem banal, Wiseman concludes there are very real political consequences linked to the control academia has maintained over the naming and subsequent placing of cultural identity on indigenous people throughout much of the twentieth century. This identity politics is filtered through the mainstream media and subsequently misrepresents conceptions of who lived where, for what period of time, and what degree of cultural sophistication they possessed.

Wiseman is consciously aware of these politics at all times throughout the book. The effect of this is grim, “the threat is from the malice of well-funded hostile state governments and that can fashion an ethnocidal weapon from heretofore academic speculation” (235). The reclaiming of identity then becomes one predicated on cultural survival. This is one that can potentially be decided by the interpretation of legislatures and courts of archaeological evidence, or the further exploration of both classic and emerging scientific paradigms along with the traditional values and knowledge base that are proving invaluable in the decolonization process.

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**Sacagawea’s Child, The Life and Times of Jean-Baptiste (Pomp) Charbonneau.**

By Susan M. Colby. Spokane: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 2005. 203 pages. \$28.50 cloth.

This book is a delightful contribution to the body of work on the Lewis and Clark expedition. Susan M. Colby provides much information about Jean-Baptiste and the Charbonneau family. However, a deeper analysis from a Canadian, Métis, and indigenous perspective would have made this book even better.

Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau was the first child of Sacagawea, the Shoshone woman who traveled with the “Corps of Discovery,” and Toussaint

Charbonneau, a French-Canadian fur trader, both of whom served as interpreters for Captain Meriwether Lewis and Captain William Clark. The famous military expedition began less than two months after Jean-Baptiste's birth on February 11, 1805, and he was the only baby who traveled with the corps. The Charbonneau family accompanied Lewis and Clark from April 1805 to August 1806, as they traveled what is now North Dakota to the Pacific Ocean and back. In seven chapters, Colby examines the Charbonneau family and answers, "What ever became of Jean-Baptiste?"

Stories about the Lewis and Clark expedition are varied and complex. It is the story of diverse people, including the Mandan and Hidatsa people who helped the corps survive the winter of 1805. It is the story of the Shoshone and other tribal nations who claim Sacagawea as their own. It is the story of many other indigenous people. The expedition is also the story of several families. It is about the reunion of the Shoshone leader Cameahwait and his sister Sacagawea. It is about William Clark's marriage and the naming of his first child, Meriwether Lewis Clark, after his cocaptain.

Colby's story focuses on Jean-Baptiste and the Charbonneau family of Boucherville, Quebec, who originally came from France. As many students of the expedition may attest, Jean-Baptiste's father, Toussaint Charbonneau, is often characterized as an arrogant wife beater, relegated to expedition scapegoat and buffoon. Colby paints a different picture. Perhaps Toussaint had reason to have airs. He had experience in the West, and his family had been in North America for five generations before Toussaint was even born. Most American expedition storytellers and historians tell few good things about him, but clearly he was a valuable asset to the expedition or he would not have been included.

Colby outlines a helpful four-page chronology of the Charbonneau family, revealing the heritage and legacy of Jean-Baptiste. We are introduced to the different faces of the famous child traveler, who later became a businessman, interpreter, mountain man, fur trader, guide, and magistrate. He also spoke at least five languages. Jean-Baptiste eventually traveled much farther away from his birth home than the Pacific Ocean; he went to Europe with his friend, the Duke Paul of Wurttemberg. Colby describes how that experience likely affected Jean-Baptiste. She also makes a convincing, albeit sometimes confusing, argument that a controversial drawing may be of Jean-Baptiste.

Colby's research on the Charbonneau family is extensive. However, various problems sometimes detract from the otherwise wonderful story she tells. A greater understanding of the entire expedition may have helped. For example, she states that President Jefferson selected Lewis and Clark for the expedition. Actually, Jefferson asked Lewis to lead the expedition, who later invited Clark to join him. Colby also implies that York experienced the dangerous flash flood that occurred on 29 June 1805. Although York had started this venture with Clark, Sacagawea, Jean-Baptiste, and Toussaint Charbonneau, he had departed from his companions before the storm hit to hunt buffalo.

Besides these historical problems, Colby makes other claims that appear to lack empirical support. She presents the notion that Toussaint Charbonneau

helped edit the journals while in St. Louis. She cites one source to document this claim, but provides no discussion to give the reader more insight. On another issue, Colby portrays Clark as the benevolent father figure looking out for Jean-Baptiste as his guardian. Her claim that the two had a “father and son” relationship needs more evidence. Jean-Baptiste’s father, Toussaint, was still alive. Colby also writes that when Clark’s wife Julia died, Jean-Baptiste “suffered the loss of his second mother” (97). More evidence is needed to demonstrate that Jean-Baptiste lived in and “fit” into the Clark household. The events leading up to Jean-Baptiste’s St. Louis education are more complicated than just Clark’s love for his charge. President Jefferson had instructed Lewis to offer to teach, instruct, and take care of influential Indian chiefs or young people in an attempt to acculturate them into American “civilization.” This factor is often neglected and needs to be added to the discussion of Clark’s relationship with Jean-Baptiste. Also, Clark was reimbursed by the government for Jean-Baptiste’s education, so the schooling was not solely the result of Clark’s benevolence.

Colby’s reliance on received stereotypes does not always provide the contextual analysis desperately needed on this topic. Too often she celebrates the multicultural view of the expedition at the expense of reasonable interpretation. For example, she writes that Sacagawea’s “emotions must have been running high as she realized a dream she had envisioned for the fourteen months this goal had been on her mind” (60). But would a young Shoshone woman have had the same dream that President Jefferson and members of the corps pursued?

At times the book resembles the body of poorly researched children’s literature on Sacagawea. The young mother is “ready for whatever fate sent her way” (47). This implies that Sacagawea was always an adventurer, taking on a persona like so many of America’s first rugged individualists. But was she prepared for her capture by the Hidatsa? Was she prepared for a seventeen-month trip with men who were very different from her Shoshone people? Was she prepared to send her firstborn son to be “educated?” Clark’s journal reveals that she did not always accept her “fate.” Sacagawea challenged the captains’ decision to exclude her from a trip to the ocean and on one recorded occasion had expressed that she was upset with Clark.

Colby believes that Sacagawea participated: “The first vote ever cast by a woman in (what would soon be) all of America, Sacagawea confidently weighed in with her opinion as to where they should build their winter quarters” (59). Sacagawea’s name and opinion was not tallied with the other members. Next to her nickname “Janey,” Clark wrote, “In favour of a place where there is plenty of Potas.” This does not constitute a vote by democratic standards and claiming that it does discounts the Native women whose “vote” had been counted in their communities long before the corps arrived. Additionally, the emphasis of St. Louis as a harbinger of cultural interest, “civilization,” and the “ideal” life neglects any analysis and comparison to the wonders and benefits that a childhood near the Knife River and Hidatsa village offered.

From an indigenous perspective, a few times the language is disappointing. For example, the Iroquois people do not protect their homes. They

are, rather, “raiding parties of Iroquois” and conduct “relentless Iroquois raids” (23, 25). Colby wrote, “For many, the call of California’s gold rush was the voice of Greed, [*sic*] but, for men like Jean-Baptiste, it had more to do with adventure, freedom, and a man’s life among other men in the out-of-doors than with finding gold. There is no indication he ever ‘struck it rich’ or that he ever wanted to. The Indian in him rejected avarice, and his whole life illustrated that he was content with the simple life of a lone bachelor” (163). Colby does point out that the Indian egalitarian lifestyle creates a different outlook on the accumulation of material possessions. However, the phrase “The Indian in him” reeks of stereotype, suggesting there is just one way to be an Indian. Certainly, Jean-Baptiste was interested in some financial gain or advancement; otherwise, he would not have sought positions or business opportunities, such as searching for gold.

Colby astutely points out how scholars focus on controversial details of Sacagawea’s life. For those keeping score as to scholars’ opinions on when Sacagawea died, Colby believes she died at a young age in 1812. Native oral traditions are not discussed in detail, but Colby does provide a better outline of Sacagawea’s life and participation in the expedition than many other works.

Scholars may also wonder why Colby used the Reuben Gold Thwaites’s and Elliot Coues’s editions of the Lewis and Clark journals more often than Gary Moulton’s edition. Thwaites and Coues strongly edited the journals, and their biases are reflected in their interpretations. Moulton’s newer edition presents the journals in their original form as much as possible. It would have been useful to explain why the author elected to reference certain editions.

Despite some areas that call for more discussion and development, this book is a must-read for Lewis and Clark enthusiasts and an interesting read for those wanting to learn more about the time period. Colby, a descendant of the Charbonneau family, takes the lives of Jean-Baptiste and Toussaint Charbonneau and puts them into a better perspective than many of the myths that have perpetuated American heroism.

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**Silko: Writing Storyteller and Medicine Woman.** By Brewster E. Fitz. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005. 288 pages. \$34.95 cloth; \$19.95 paper.

In *Silko: Writing Storyteller and Medicine Woman*, Brewster E. Fitz’s claim that Leslie Marmon Silko’s syncretism of spoken and “written” languages in *Ceremony*, *Storyteller*, *Almanac of the Dead*, and *Gardens in the Dunes* makes her a postmodern medicine woman bears consideration. Through his examination of these works, Fitz offers innovative, intelligent, and insightful analyses of how Silko uses irony, writing, and a vision as medicine or a perfect language for her characters and herself. Scholars such as Louis Owens have addressed Silko’s postmodernity. However, Fitz has undertaken a more comprehensive examination.