

migrated north into the borderlands, the American military became concerned about Métis traders supplying the Lakota with guns. Mounting military efforts to evict the Métis from the United States were constantly foiled by the resistance they met from Assiniboines who had strong family ties with the Métis.

The American military's desire to contain "their" indigenous peoples and expel those they considered "foreign" was finally echoed by concerns from the Canadian government that their sparsely-settled Western region might explode into violence from Lakota and Dakota fleeing north and supplied with guns by the Métis. The British North America Boundary Commission therefore delineated the actual contours of the forty-ninth parallel on the ground, building large mounds to mark the border. And, although controlling the movements of the Métis was central to establishing precisely where the border lay, it was largely the Métis themselves who assisted in constructing the markers, acting as guides and suppliers.

Once the border was secure, it enabled both nations to decisively engage in policies to control "their" indigenous populations. As reservations were established on the American side, many American-based Métis became members. In Canada, Métis people similarly sought inclusion in the treaties being negotiated with their kin. While they were initially successful, when Canada created the Indian Act, they characterized the Métis as "half-breeds" who were to be omitted from future treaties. Implicitly, the Métis would no longer be recognized as an indigenous nation. This racialization, first accomplished by legal fiat in Canada and subsequently through crushing the Métis uprising in 1885, was then replicated in the United States with the Dawes Act. As individuals on American reservations were subjected to blood quantum measurement and allotment, the Métis were isolated and excluded as "Canadian halfbreeds." The Métis were thus exiled as an indigenous people from an "Indianness" that became normative on both sides of the border. By racializing the inhabitants that were settled on reservations in the United States, or reserves in Canada, as "Indians," the Métis were racialized as mixed-blood, rather than being recognized collectively as an indigenous people.

*Bonita Lawrence*  
York University

**My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks: Ojibwe Family Life and Labor on the Reservation.** By Brenda J. Child. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2014. 224 pages. \$19.95 paper.

American Indian studies scholars have developed a body of work that emphasizes Native American agency amid imperialism and colonialism. The passive Indians featured in earlier scholarship, acted-upon rather than acting, have now been supplanted by Indian leaders and individuals who shape their own lives and maintain their own communities and nations within the imposed strictures of the United States. The current scholarly narrative is one of people maintaining their cultures and politics despite the assimilationist policies of the United States and the grinding

poverty these policies impose. One group of scholars has constructed a particularly strong edifice of Indian agency utilizing studies of the Anishinaabeg, or Ojibwe (called Chippewa in United States parlance). The terms denominating them are used interchangeably depending on context and the writers' intent. Among several scholars who have made relatively recent contributions to the Anishinaabeg studies, Brenda Child is a major contributor who draws upon documentary sources as well as Ojibwe family narratives that personalize her work. The stories she began to tell in *Boarding School Seasons* (1998) and *Holding Our World Together* (2012) have now been enhanced by *My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks*.

Her latest work emphasizes the constancy of Ojibwe labor generally and also in the lives of her grandparents, Fred and Jeanette Auginash. Child's narrative is centered on Red Lake Reservation's people during the period from about 1900 to the 1950s. This generation had to accommodate the "catastrophic dispossession" of the reservation (3) and adjust to the intrusive micromanagement of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), in addition to the experience of being treated as unwelcome strangers or aliens in their own land. Minnesota's government and people acted to take as many resources as they could and control the lives of Ojibwe, but the Auginashes and other Chippewa did not capitulate. In the first two chapters, Child provides anecdotal, biographical evidence to punctuate her generalization that the Ojibwe were agents in their severely circumscribed world. For example, despite having a state marriage license her grandparents had to have a white person's corroboration of their marriage. Stories of how they struggled to gain veteran's benefits, their challenges in hunting, fishing, and ricing, and their constant humiliations all illuminate the realities of colonialism. Whether employed or unemployed, they labored to make a living and learned to tap all of the resources available for survival.

Jeanette Auginash delivered babies and was a source of homeopathic medicines as well as a jingle-dress dancer. Fred Auginash continued to speak Ojibwemowin, and they kept kinship ties and participated in the continuation of traditional government on Red Lake Reservation. They also adjusted to the new "opportunities." For them, the abundance of Christian churches meant accessibility to donations of clothing and food rather than religious conversion. Jeanette became a respected bootlegger. Although the family narratives of this reviewer are centered within Northern Wisconsin, they are similar to those of Child in many ways. My grandmother had to have an agent's permission to buy a cow with her own money. Fortunately for her children, permission was granted because the BIA considered her to be a "worthy Indian." She labored at multiple jobs and learned to wind her way through the ignominious treatment accorded Indians during the same period. Our family riced, hunted, and learned in spite of the BIA.

Child enriches her work with analysis of the relationship of labor to cultural beliefs in its treatment of the Jingle Dress healing dance during the 1919 influenza epidemic. One can see the integrated nature of Ojibwe culture and its worldview where labor and culture evolve. Ojibwe ricing and other economic and cultural activities flesh out the narrative of Ojibwe adaptations. At times adaptation required changes in gender roles, while at other times cultural continuities were possible. The "knocking sticks" of the title

are a meme for the Ojibwe experience. Traditionally, women used them to harvest wild rice but gender roles changed. Brenda Child's grandfather made and used them, but Ojibwe still harvested wild rice and observed cultural connections to the sacred plant. Fishing remained a male and female activity even if Minnesota and the United States insisted that fishermen did it and that fishing was part of a chartered cooperative.

Child explores Red Lake Reservation's larger history using a more traditionally scholarly focus. A chapter on the Red Lake Reservation fishery demonstrates the state of Minnesota's exploitation of tribal resources, abetted by the BIA. The battle over wild rice provides another narrative. She documents the tenacity of Red Lake Chippewa leaders' opposition to becoming subsumed by Minnesota greed and laws. Red Lake traditional and elected leaders obdurately fought to maintain their sovereignty and managed to avoid the devastation of allotment visited on other reservations.

*My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks* is an important contribution to American Indian studies, particularly to what has been styled Anishinaabeg studies. Those interested in this accumulation of scholarship should begin with *Centering Anishinabeg Studies: Understanding the World Through Stories* because it introduces many of the key contributors writing from within the United States and Canada. Editors Jill Doerfler, Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark have collaborated with many authors of traditional scholarship, cultural studies, imaginative storytelling and Ojibwe perspective. Chantal Norrgard's book emphasizes labor and politics for the Lake Superior Chippewa during the same period, and that of Erik Redix provides yet another aspect of the Anishinaabe narrative of maintaining agency through family, labor, politics, and living in a good way. Matthew Fletcher's multiple publications are also a rich source of Anishinaabeg studies.

Child is particularly effective describing the oppressiveness of American colonialism. The constancy of surveillance of Indians and the consistent sacking of Indian country by individuals, states, and the federal government combined to form Indian country. Poverty, poor health, anomie, and societal dysfunctions were the products of colonialism, but Indians did not lose their cultures and their agency. *My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks* not only offers benefits to students just beginning to explore the meaning of colonialism, but to scholars too. Ojibwe readers will benefit greatly from hearing stories and being reminded of events similar to our family narratives, as I did.

Gregory Gagnon

Loyola University of New Orleans

**Natchez Country: Indians, Colonists, and the Landscapes of Race in French Louisiana.** By George Edward Milne. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015. 312 pages. \$84.95 cloth; \$26.95 paper; \$84.95 electronic.

The Natchez have received less study from historians than other Native peoples of the Southeast, most likely because nearly all the sources are in French, and also because the French colonists' wars against the Natchez in 1730 to 1731 were so