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Battle for the Soul: Metis Children Encounter Evangelical Protestants at Mackinaw Mission, 1823-1837. By Keith R. Widder.

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model for explaining Native American copper procurement by presenting geological evidence that native copper deposits occur in the Northeast and that these sources are not as rare and as localized as many previously thought. Elizabeth A. Little contends that carbon 14 dates of marine samples appear older than contemporary terrestrial samples. She effectively describes adjustments that are required to calibrate the radiocarbon ages of marine materials to approximate calendar years.

In the last part, two articles examine contributions to the archaeological Northeast made by cultural resource management (CRM). In an attempt to demonstrate how northeastern archaeology and archaeologists can reach a wider audience and contribute to issues of broad anthropological importance (i.e., “centering”), Michael S. Nassaney discusses three CRM projects from a locale in western Massachusetts. He reminds us that sites lacking “cultural superlatives” may still be significant for the information they contribute to the larger fields of anthropology and history (p. 233). Chapter fifteen, by Mitchell T. Mulholland, describes a CRM study that combined archaeology, architectural history, and historic archival research to investigate two seventeenth-century houses, which were once occupied by Pilgrims, near Plymouth.

There is much to recommend about this valuable and refreshing addition to the archaeological literature on the northeastern United States. Anyone familiar with the archaeological record of this region will likely agree with the editors’ description that it is “sometimes evasive, particularly complicated, and always fragmentary” (p. xv). Not only do the articles address various theoretical and methodological difficulties faced by northeastern practitioners, but many also offer thoughtful and innovative responses to such challenging conditions. A minor shortcoming of the volume, which presumably has the northeastern United States as its geographical focus, is that all but a few chapters are based on data and sites from New England (principally southern New England). Similarly, discussion in both forewords and the preface refers interchangeably to the region under study as northeastern North America, northeastern United States, and New England. Nevertheless, as a whole, the book contributes to centering northeastern archaeology. It contains the ingredients to inspire future research to do the same.

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**Battle for the Soul: Métis Children Encounter Evangelical Protestants at Mackinaw Mission, 1823–1837.** By Keith R. Widder. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1999. \$24.95 paper.

Keith Widder’s thought-provoking *Battle for the Soul* provides insight into three neglected aspects of United States history: the role of Protestant missionaries in “Americanizing” Métis residents of the early-nineteenth-century Great Lakes area; the impact of evangelical Protestantism on Indian and Euro-American relations; and, to a lesser extent, the attitudes of the mixed-descent

people themselves toward these proselytized efforts. Widder convincingly argues that nineteenth-century evangelical Protestantism impacted Métis, Indian, and Euro-American relations as well as redefined social boundaries and ethnic definitions. In describing the Protestant evangelical efforts at Mackinaw Mission, Widder traces the story of a multiethnic community negotiating diverse goals, worldviews, and values.

In the 1820s the Mackinac Métis, consisting primarily of peoples of French, Chippewa, and Odawa descent, faced a series of challenges brought on by changes in the fur trade that had sustained the community for generations. The arrival of Americans during these years was only the latest in a series of disruptions that the community had endured, one of the first being the 1760 British takeover of the French fur trade. British control of the trade relegated fur-trade employees of French descent, including the Métis, to the lowest company positions. Numerically, French speakers continued to dominate the Great Lakes fur trade, despite the fact that Americans gradually gained control of Mackinac after the War of 1812. Through the 1830s Mackinac was still a meeting place of diverse cultures and ethnicities. Some Métis married Americans, but most continued to marry other Métis, French-Canadians, or Indians.

In the early 1820s Protestant missionaries arrived with a set of assumptions centered on their belief that Americanization required acceptance of republican principles of government, an agricultural economy and lifestyle, and the use of the English language. Initially, at least, they believed that the Native people (they often did not distinguish Métis from Indians) were capable of achieving these virtues and, with the missionaries' guidance, could prepare themselves for participation as Americans. The path to an evangelical version of responsible citizenship was not smooth, however. The "Indianness" of the Métis and their persistent (if unique) Catholicism led the Protestant missionaries to define them as Indians with little prospect for making the spiritual and cultural transformations needed for full participation as Americans.

For their part, the Métis were ready to accept the educational benefits brought by the evangelical missionaries, although they were far less willing to accept the newcomers' religion. In fact, rather than accepting Protestantism, Métis commitment to Catholicism grew. Increased interest from Catholic clergy after the 1820s reinforced Métis beliefs, pulling them and their distinctive "folk" Catholicism into mainstream American religion without disturbing the Métis sense of religious identity or culture. Widder points out that, through Catholicism, Métis families joined mainstream American religious life without the cultural loss and transformation that the Evangelical Protestants thought essential.

Widder's is a sensitive and perceptive account of missionary goals, successes, and limitations. It is a fascinating portrayal of cultural accommodation and conflict that gives depth to a neglected aspect of United States history—the Euro-American confrontation with preexisting multicultural communities. His account of this meeting is informed by Richard White's "middle ground" concept (*The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991]). Here various Indian, Métis, British, French, and Euro-American groups met in a mutually advantageous, but not always mutually understood,

series of relationships and built communities at the interstices of their worlds. The Americans and later the Protestant missionaries simply brought one more variable to a complex web of social and economic variables.

Widder is most successful in his examination of the American side of this middle ground. The sources consulted are largely those from the missionaries themselves. In keeping with his goal of “emphasizing the important role played by the Métis” in the Great Lakes region’s history, the work is less successful (p. xiii). The tendency to see the region from a missionary perspective lends itself to the portrayal of the Métis world as a place “in between,” a space squeezed between dominating cultures with no real identity or permanence, rather than a place of richness and variety, a world of its own. While *Battle for the Soul* adds to our knowledge of Métis history, it does not move Great Lakes history away from its tendency to portray Indian and Euro-American groups as dominate, and Métis society as secondary—lost, possibly overwhelmed, and inconsequential.

Another group, Indian and Métis women, also appears secondary in the account, due in part to the nature of fur trade sources. The work gives the reader little feeling for women’s roles in the cultural negotiations that follow the missionaries’ arrival. Although Widder acknowledges the centrality of kinship in the fur trade community, Euro-American, Canadian, and Métis men arrange trade, see to children’s education, and make family decisions. This is a story of a male-dominated fur trade society. Although a few women (especially the prominent Métis trader Magdelaine Laframboise) appear in this story, they are connections in a male kinship network, vehicles for male aspirations. We learn little of women’s active participation in fur trade society and family decisions about religion and education outside their male relatives’ agenda.

Despite these objections, Widder’s work is an important addition to the neglected field of United States Métis history and to the role played by Evangelical Protestants in Indian and Euro-American relations. In the end, Widder explains, the evangelical missionaries’ attempts to “civilize” the Métis gave younger Métis tools that enabled them to retain their former world while incorporating into it new elements that helped them meet the challenges ahead on their own terms.

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**Black Elk Lives: Conversations with the Black Elk Family.** By Esther Black Elk DeSersa, Olivia Black Elk Pourier, Aaron DeSersa Jr., and Clifton DeSersa. Edited by Esther Black Elk DeSersa, Hilda Neihardt, and Lori Utecht. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000. 168 pages. \$25.00 cloth.

Perhaps more ink has been spent on Nicholas Black Elk than on any other American Indian. Ever since *Black Elk Speaks* began enjoying immense international popularity in the 1960s, countless books and articles have been written about the book as well as about Black Elk himself. Joseph Epes Brown’s