

Education at the Edge of Empire: Negotiating Pueblo Identity in New Mexico's Indian Boarding Schools. By John R. Gram. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015. 260 pages. \$45.00 cloth; \$30.00 paper; \$45.00 electronic.

This book contributes to a substantial body of scholarship on federal off-reservation boarding schools for American Indian studies students. John R. Gram explicitly places his work alongside the likes of David Wallace Adams's *Education for Extinction* (1995), K. Tsianina Lomawaima's *They Called it Prairie Light* (1995), Clyde Ellis's *To Change Them Forever* (1996), and Brenda J. Child's *Boarding School Seasons* (2000). Readers versed in this historiography will be familiar with certain aspects of Gram's narrative, especially his chapter on the daily routine in the boarding schools, which draws heavily on that secondary literature. Still, the author does well to illustrate the unique and compelling relationship between Pueblo communities of the Southwest and the two boarding schools that served so many of their children, the Albuquerque Indian School (AIS) and the Santa Fe Indian School (SFIS).

Through the official correspondence and records of school officials, as well as a collection of oral histories obtained in the 1990s, Gram examines AIS and SFIS from the 1890s to the 1930s, the height of the boarding school era. He describes this period as the moment when the American effort to colonize Native people shifted from one of physical conquest to one of primarily religious and cultural transformation. The military theme, however, remained central to the boarding school program. Students followed a strict daily routine, performed drills and marches, and wore military-style uniforms. The author suggests that this form of training sought to position students themselves as the "soldiers" who would "carry out the final campaign" of a cultural war on their own Native communities (5).

In the end, Gram concludes, the legacy of these schools was ambiguous at best. In some ways, school administrators viewed their work as a success. After all, the more years a student spent in either AIS or SFIS, the more likely they were to pursue further courses in mainstream American higher education. Yet Gram's sources also illustrate that there was not one unifying experience for these students. Exactly how students intended to utilize their schooling vis-à-vis their home communities could vary widely. While some did return to their homes hoping to transform Pueblo social and cultural norms, many more found it easy to reintegrate to their families and communities.

Gram argues that this relatively smooth reintegration of students from AIS and SFIS differs from what some historians have found in other boarding school settings. For example, in *Education and the American Indian*, Margaret Connell Szasz has portrayed boarding-school graduates as victims caught between two distinct cultural worlds. For Gram, the reintegration of students into their communities represents something more complex. On the one hand, it indicates the partial failure of AIS and SFIS in their straightforward mission to assimilate Native children and influence a similar "civilization" of students' home communities. At the same time, it highlights an achievement of Pueblo students. Gram shows that these students constructed notions of success and failure that rarely fit neatly into the categories set up by policymakers, and Pueblo community leaders often exerted a level of influence over the

government schools that few other tribes throughout the country could have hoped for. They successfully won concessions regarding the treatment of students, continued to influence the education and training of their children at home, and maintained their languages and cultural practices.

The central point for Gram is not that individual students maintained their tribal identities in the face of assimilation or that they gained something different from their education than administrators had anticipated. While these are important conclusions, they are well-established themes in the history of colonialism and in the literature on American Indian boarding schools in particular. Rather, the relationship between Pueblos, AIS, and SFIS is instructive because it reveals a unique degree of Native influence over the tools of assimilation on a *collective* level.

A central piece of Gram's argument is that Pueblo communities held significant influence over which of their children attended boarding schools, what type of accommodations were made for them, and when they returned home. Centuries of Spanish colonialism had left a heavy Catholic influence on the Southwest, and the entrenched infrastructure of Catholic schools could provide a point of leverage for Pueblo communities against the federal boarding schools. Because of the pressure on the government schools to maintain and expand enrollment in order to secure funding, this type of competition could even occur between two or more federal boarding schools which ostensibly strived for the same mission. The result was that boarding schools made concessions for Pueblo students, regularly granting summer vacations and in some cases coordinating Catholic services when Pueblo community leaders requested them. In this way, Pueblo students maintained regular contact with their nearby communities. At times, Pueblo students were even allowed to attend the community feast days and dances that Washington officials had viewed as hallmarks of the Native identity they strove to suppress. Another sign of Pueblo power occurred nearly every time a new superintendent arrived at one of the schools. One or more Pueblo communities would withhold students en masse until the new superintendent displayed his commitment to the previous "covenant" between school and community. By carefully noting the timing, the frequency, and the organization behind these withdrawals, Gram sheds light on the long-term maintenance of powerful Pueblo leadership structures.

As Gram indicates in his title, several of the distinct factors contributing to Pueblos' unique experience with federal boarding schools stemmed from their position "at the edge of empire." Without the necessary manpower and resources to complete their mission of assimilation, school officials in New Mexico were bound to compromise and choose which battles to fight. What resulted was a relationship fraught with ambiguous power dynamics representative of what Gram refers to as a "borderlands environment" (9). While he rarely revisits this concept in detail beyond the introduction, it is a key part of understanding how and why Pueblo communities occupied the role they did. Gram's notion of the borderlands environment aligns well with the framework outlined by Pekka Hamalainen and Samuel Truett in their 2011 article "On Borderlands." For example, at page 338 Hamalainen and Truett note that "at the edges of empires," official policy is often compromised by "spatial mobility, situational identity, [and] local contingency." These characteristics describe perfectly the struggle

between US government officials and Pueblo communities over the meaning of a boarding-school education.

Overall, Gram's study of AIS and SFIS provides not only a useful addition to the literature on American Indian boarding schools, but a valuable illustration of the limitations of imperial efforts toward Native people in a borderlands setting.

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Engineering Mountain Landscapes: An Anthropology of Social Investment. Edited by Laura L. Scheiber and María Nieves Zedeño. Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2015. 265 pages. \$45.00 paper; \$36.00 electronic.

As its title indicates, the purpose of this edited collection is to comprehend the cultural impetus and identify what drives investment in the social production of territorialized spaces on the “elevated landforms” that become home, rather than frontier, to many Native American ethnic groups. *Engineering Mountain Landscapes* reflects the output of a 2010 symposium of expert high-altitude archaeologists and anthropologists, but this does not limit the depth of the scholarly analyses of the themes. Most chapters bring notable contributions to ethnography and ethno-ecology, and together with the editorial work, comprise a trailblazer publication. In a clever twist of both human and physical geography, these anthropological views of the spatialities of mountains draw from high-altitude archaeological evidence unearthed from unexpected, isolated mountain sites to reframe the imperative of mountain lifescape translated to modernity. From geographical perspectives, *Engineering Mountain Landscapes* contributes to the contemporary narrative of sense of place, biocultural heritage, and landscape transformation in the highlands. The collection provides important geoliteracy as it traces themes of resources and altitude, highland movements, place-making and identity, refuge, retreat and vantage point, and centrality versus periphery, making this book an important contribution that bridges archaeology/anthropology with geography/ecology and environmental conservation.

Despite offering the tantalizing framework of “engineering” to understand biocultural heritage, the book depicts intergenerational commitment to the mountains from a regional perspective. The collection utilizes only North American case studies, including the Rocky Mountains of Montana, Nevada, and Arizona, southern Appalachia, and the Sierra Madre del Sur in Oaxaca, where subtle influx of hunting, fishing, farming practices, as well as other less-intrusive forms of social construction, are the signature of the past that is autographing the present. However, the coeditors themselves point to the universal trend of mountain engineering as a process to “highlight the volume’s emphasis on agency and deliberation in the physical, social and spiritual transformation of mountain landscapes” (1).

As the book points out, the common social investments and dividends of mountain dwellers are poorly recognized, even though they are ubiquitous from the Peruvian