

# Unexpected Languages: Multilingualism and Contact in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century North America

*Lisa Philips*

Expectations, like blinders, allow only certain images and sounds to be processed. Observations that aren't clearly contained within the bounds of those expectations remain invisible and inaudible, or, in cases in which unexpected images or sounds persist, they are simply repudiated. Theories and models of analysis are particularly fraught with the tensions of expectation. Researchers are torn between the anticipation of discovery and the dampening expectations that comprise those models. It is precisely those expectations that inhibit insight beyond the enduring boundaries of those models. Philip Deloria's *Indians in Unexpected Places* elegantly exposes a number of external expectations of Indianness in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century. He puts unexpected images and sounds in front of the reader, refusing the denial that comes so easily to those who cannot imagine a world beyond the expected. Deloria exquisitely removes one set of blinders only to reinforce a somewhat different set of expectations within the confines of a contemporary, binary model built around a colonial discourse of power and domination:

---

LISA PHILIPS is a professor and chair of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Alberta. Her work on current and historical First Nation and state relations in the United States and Canada has taken many unexpected directions, including the study of comparative Aboriginal Englishes, Canadian Parliamentary discourse, backlash communities, and the historical exploration of hegemonic processes.

When you encounter the word expectation in this book, I want you to read it as a shorthand for the dense economies of meaning, representation, and act that have inflected both American culture writ large and individuals, both Indian and non-Indian. I would like for you to think of expectations in terms of the colonial and imperial relations of power and domination existing between Indian people and the United States.<sup>1</sup>

This article, an initial exploration of the languages of contact in the North American British-US borderlands during the period between 1783 and 1860, actually began as a collection of “anomalies” that kept surfacing as I was reading historical documents in a long-term project studying hegemonic processes and the impact of the imposition of state structures on preexisting communities. Because my goal was not to write an article about early multilingualism in the British-US borderlands, I was not constrained by expectations of what that multilingualism should look like, who was involved, or the directions of learning. It was only after compiling a sizable collection of unexpected acts of multilingualism (a small freak show of languages coming from unexpected mouths) that I realized I needed to reconsider my expectations. Other discussions about Aboriginal multilingualism, although brilliantly and impeccably documented, follow a familiar but unsatisfactory furrow that presents multilingualism as a stutter step on the way to an Aboriginal language shift to a colonial language, especially English.<sup>2</sup> The economies of meaning, representation, and act have inflected Indians and non-Indians alike.

This article provides insights into the types of extended contact that occurred in the areas north of 42° (now the border between California and Oregon) and south of 50° (see fig. 1).<sup>3</sup> Rather than focusing on specific features

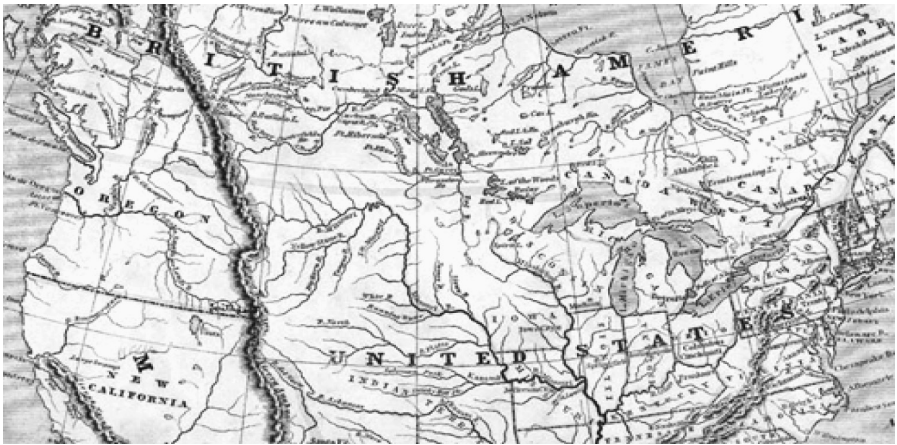


FIGURE 1. North America circa 1844 as represented in Morse's North American Atlas published by Sidney Morse and Samuel Breese (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1842–[45]).

of individual bi- or multilingualism, this study explores ways in which multilingualism might add to our understanding of early, extended, and possibly unexpected contact between diverse peoples and the widespread and continuing use of languages, particularly Aboriginal languages of North America.

In brief, this article investigates multilingualism as an indicator of contact between groups, highlighting the languages that were spoken, categories of translators, reasons for multilingualism, and ways of becoming bilingual in order to underscore the many different types of social interactions—many that are outside the realm of a simplistic power and domination model—prevalent in those regions. By tracing the differences between multilingualism in two regions, the study also reveals key indicators of societies in flux.

In the North American borderlands regions between 42° and 50° latitude, two areas were jointly administered by Great Britain and the United States: the first was the Old Northwest, centered around the Great Lakes in the eastern-central region of the map; the second was the old Oregon Country, also known as the Columbia District, the region located along the Pacific slopes west of the Rocky Mountains, which included portions of present-day British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. The Old Northwest was contested by Great Britain and the United States until the Jay Treaty of 1794, and the old Oregon Territory was under joint administration until the imposition of the border along the 49th parallel by the 1846 Oregon Treaty.

## TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS: IMPLICIT MULTILINGUALISM

The most problematic aspect of dealing with multilingualism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is that, on the surface, the discussion might appear to be served better by linguistic mapping, which has been done far better and more extensively elsewhere.<sup>4</sup> However, rather than looking at a linguistic map and assuming that the languages delineated have some metonymic relationship with societies often imagined as discrete entities, this alternative type of linguistic mapping emerges from the evidence of social interactions that kept appearing in the documents being studied for other ethnohistoric purposes. That is, I do not presume a one-to-one relationship between a language and a culture (or speaker); instead, in these two regions—regions marked by intense social, political, economic, and religious interactions—most people had multiple ties to communities that had exceptionally fluid boundaries.

Initially, this article was an attempt to bring together some of the widely scattered, but tantalizing, fragments of information about language contact and multilingualism, which occasionally surfaced in primary sources but were surprisingly minimal in the secondary historical literature. Considerations of

languages other than English in these regions were limited almost exclusively to discussions of translators or cultural brokers. The categories of translators in such documents included Indian agents, negotiators (who were often Indian agents), official translators for treaties (often Native), and translators of religious materials by missionaries and teachers. In these secondary sources, the typical translator or interpreter was a male who held a recognized position of political, military, or religious leadership. The following two excerpts exemplify how the utilitarian focus of the roles of the translators entirely eclipsed any consideration of the languages spoken:

In 1756, the British government established the centralized management of Indian affairs by creating two separate Indian departments in North America with superintendents. These Indian departments came to be manned by the leading interpreters, who had proved themselves to be experts in handling Indian affairs.<sup>5</sup>

[George Croghan] was an exceptionally effective deputy superintendent, acting at the same time as his own interpreter. His field of operations during the first half of the 1760s expanded so greatly that he could no longer carry on the work by himself. His staff came to include four assistant agents, who were all provided with interpreters. . . . His chief assistants were experts in Indian affairs, such as Edward Ward, Thomas McKee, and Alexander McKee, who had served the colonies in the capacity of interpreter.<sup>6</sup>

The few women who have been recognized as interpreters include Pocahontas (Powhatan in Virginia; 1590–1617), Hillitie (Mohawk and Dutch; translator during the 1680s–90s), Mary Musgrove Bosomworth (Creek and English in Georgia; 1700–65), Madame Montour (French and Algonkin, reported to speak six Aboriginal languages along with French and English; 1667–ca. 1750), Sacajawea (Shoshone [captured by Hidatsa at age 10]; ca. 1784–1812 or 1884), and Sarah Winnemucca (Paiute; 1844–91), among others farther south.<sup>7</sup> Of these, only Montour and Winnemucca came close to fitting into either the appropriate time period or regions addressed in this article.

## EXPLICIT MULTILINGUALISM: REASONS FOR SPEAKING MORE THAN ONE LANGUAGE

After assembling examples of language contact and multilingualism from a wide variety of primary sources, including interviews, diaries, journals, letters, fur company records, the *Congressional Record*, parliamentary records, foreign office records, autobiographies, newspapers, and fiction, they were examined to shed light on the multiple aspects of multilingualism addressed here. One of the first findings was that the reasons for learning another language were

more extensive than even current models of multilingualism might suggest. The most common reasons for speaking more than one language found in the primary sources were trade, employment, evangelizing/proselytizing, religious observance, teaching/training, cultural brokering/political alliances, entrepreneurship, and personal interaction (friendship and kinship).

The underlying motivations for multilingualism extend well beyond those most commonly proposed, which focused on realizing religious, economic, or military advantage. Histories of individuals—and languages—follow trajectories built on contemporary understandings of accepted or “mainstream” outcomes of now more than two centuries of exploration, trading, migration, and even war. These trajectories are usually framed in terms of state domination and control of economic capital. The histories are framed in terms of winners and losers, and, more recently, in terms of power and domination or of colonizer and colonized. Although it is true that many people have learned other languages for utilitarian purposes, an admittedly compelling Foucaultian analysis of power relations would preclude other possible configurations that facilitate individual (and group) interactions that do not involve mediation between powers.<sup>8</sup>

Although the imposition of languages is a powerful means of domination, during these periods of early contact, a colonial agenda was probably only rarely the motivation for learning another language, though it may have been much more commonly a by-product of such an agenda. However, it is the case that most documented cases of multilingualism in these regions were associated with (fur) trade and employment, evangelizing and proselytizing, entrepreneurship, and negotiating political alliances. For example, all the women translators noted previously were involved in negotiations between First Nations and settler governments. The importance of bi- or multilingual cultural brokers was well recognized by British and US governments during the period when the border was set in the Old Northwest, but as Kawashima in his examination of interpreters pointed out, the British success in building alliances with First Nations was far superior to that of the Americans, due in no small part to their access to bi- or multilingual agents.<sup>9</sup> In his description of the failure of the American effort in the Old Northwest, Kawashima placed the blame for the failure squarely on the Americans’ lack of skills in First Nations languages:

With the imperial superintendency turned increasingly into a device for winning friendship for the British, the Americans felt the need of establishing an efficient system of handling Indian affairs. Individual colonies began sending commissioners to the Indians. In June, 1775, the Virginia assembly appointed George Washington, Thomas Walker, James Wood, Andrew Lewis, and Adam Stephens

commissioners for holding treaties with the Ohio Indians and appropriated 20,000 pounds toward expenses. . . . The Americans, however, largely failed in securing the Indians as allies. They even failed to keep the natives neutral: Indians traditionally regarded Americans as encroachers, the colonists totally lacked goods to supply to the Indians, and, above all, few American commissioners were expert in Indian languages, tradition, and culture.<sup>10</sup>

However, one of the most fundamental reasons for encouraging multilingualism not addressed directly in secondary historical sources is for basic interpersonal interaction. For example, in the Oregon Territory, Chinook Jargon, originally a trade language, became a *lingua franca* for emigrant children's everyday interactions. Ida J. Davis Oakerman (b. 1859 in Oregon) recounted an example of this in an interview with Fred Lockley: "The Indians used to bring us gifts of salmon, deer meat and huckleberries. When you get acquainted with Indians they are very jolly. I soon learned to speak their jargon, and because there were practically no white children in that part of the country, I played with Indian children."<sup>11</sup>

Another instrumental use of multilingualism was to encourage Protestant versus Catholic worship. Notice that this exercise in multilingualism was bidirectional: students and teachers were learning each other's language(s):

Students were taught to read the scriptures in their own language so they could respond properly in church and be filled with Christ. After the students had mastered the rudiments of reading written Ojibwa, English would gradually be introduced. By utilizing the catechetical mode—combining Ojibwe and English questions and responses—the students learned the basis of English. These pedagogical methods also enable the Chances [a missionary couple] to learn Ojibwa. Moreover, the couple believed that a good English education would be the best way to attract the Catholic priest's pupils, since he only taught French. Once in attendance, [Rev.] Chance believed the students would not only gain the functional use of English, the language of commerce and industry, they would also learn about the "true religion."<sup>12</sup>

A final example given here illustrates a combination of trade and kinship that involved bilingualism in two unrelated First Nations languages in the northern regions of the Columbia District. Although the language shift described by Julie Cruikshank occurred after 1847, it was based on earlier stable bilingualism.

[Coastal Tlingit] jealously guarded their [trade] monopoly, effectively barring white traders from going to the interior, and interior Natives from going to the coast until the 1880s. Inevitably, the coastal Tlingits held the balance of power in these arrangements, and they regularly established trading partnerships with interior men, who were then obligated to trade exclusively with their Tlingit

partner. These partnerships were frequently formalized through marriage. Tagish people gradually began to adopt the Tlingit language as well as a number of Tlingit customs.<sup>13</sup>

Cruikshank's description of Angela Sidney (b. 1902), who narrated one of the accounts of Skookum Jim in the article, notes that Mrs. Sidney "was one of the last living speakers of the Tagish language. She learned it as a child but said that by the time she was five or six years old, most people were using Tlingit as their principal language."<sup>14</sup>

## LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN THE OLD NORTHWEST AND THE OLD OREGON COUNTRY

An examination of the languages spoken in the two regions tells us much about the kinds of relationships that held between interlocutors. Where were these people from? Why did they interact? Why were those the languages used? What was or were the *lingua franca*? In table 1, which outlines the languages spoken in the two regions during the time periods under consideration for each, we find interesting similarities and differences that speak to the shared and divergent histories of each region.

Most First Nations/Native American languages that were on the ground prior to (European) emigration to the Old Northwest belonged to two large language families, the Iroquoian and the Algonquian, with Siouan languages spoken mostly on the western edge of the region. However, in the area associated with the Oregon Territory, there were at least eight major language families (with three isolates) represented. In both areas, there was considerable multilingualism within the communities, but the extremely diverse linguistic situation in the Pacific Northwest undoubtedly accounts for the two Aboriginal contact languages, Chinook Jargon and Plains Indian Sign Language, that were used in that region.

### *Languages*

Table 1 lists the major languages spoken in both regions.<sup>15</sup> Although key exemplars of the Native American language families spoken in the Old Northwest region are itemized, due to the extreme linguistic diversity found in old Oregon Territory, only the language family names have been entered with the individual languages and dialects left unnamed due to space limitations. Although other emigrant languages, especially those from Europe, were used by families in both regions, the languages listed in the table are those that were

TABLE 1  
LANGUAGES SPOKEN

OLD NORTHWEST (1760–1830s)	OLD OREGON TERRITORY (1811–47)
<b>First Nations/Native American Local</b>	<b>First Nations/Native American Local</b>
Algonquian	Salishan (local, many)
Ojibwe	Wakashan (local, many)
Potawatomi	Tsimshian (local, three)
Odawa	Other families (Athapaskan, Tlingit, Haidan, Kutenaiian, Eskimo-Aleut)
Shawnee	
Delaware	
Other Algonquian (Miami, Sauk, Fox, Kickapoo, etc.)	
Iroquoian	
Wendat/Wyandott (Huron/Petun)	
Other (5+ nations) Iroquoian	
Other: Siouan (esp. Dakota)	
<b>From Outside the Region</b>	<b>From Outside the Region</b>
Cree	Cree
European Languages	Ojibwe
French (Canadian)	Iroquois (Mohawk)
English	Aboriginal Contact Languages
(Dutch/German)	Chinook Jargon
	Plain Sign Language (outside region)
	European Languages
	English
	French
	Canadian French
	(European) French
	Spanish <sup>a</sup> (?)
	(Russian)
	Other
	Hawaiian <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>In W. Kaye Lamb's biographical article, "Tolmie, William Fraser," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online* (2000), he notes that, during William Fraser Tolmie's long-awaited furlough during 1841–2 in London, Tolmie "had studied Spanish in the expectation that he would be sent to the company's post at Yerba Buena, on San Francisco Bay, but soon after his arrival at Fort Vancouver in May 1843 letters directed McLoughlin to send him to Fort Nisqually instead." In the documents that I have found, there is little to no evidence that Spanish was a language of any significance within the Oregon Territory until after 1846 and the imposition of the border. However, there were many trips to Spanish-held areas.

<sup>b</sup>Only one Chinese person was recorded in the 1850 Oregon Census. Chinese workers came north from California with the gold rush after that.

documented as used regularly by members of the wider communities during the periods under consideration.

Examples of multilingualism in First Nations (Aboriginal) languages in the Old Northwest were seen in references to Madame Montour and her son, Andrew Montour:<sup>16</sup> “By the late 1740s, [Andrew Montour] often translated between Mohawk and Delaware for [Conrad] Weiser and frequently traveled to Philadelphia in the east and Logstown in the Ohio Valley to the west to interpret the words of Delawares, Miamis, Shawnees, Wyandots, and Six Nations Indians for Pennsylvania agents and officials.”<sup>17</sup>

This level of multilingualism was also associated with other types of movement across boundaries. In the spring of 1756, Montour left Pennsylvania to work with Sir William Johnson, the new superintendent of Indian Affairs. He remained in the service of Johnson and the Northern Department of Indian Affairs until the end of Pontiac’s War.<sup>18</sup> Montour’s first wife was a Delaware who lived on the Atlantic coast, and his second wife was a Huron who lived in the Great Lakes region in what became Michigan and southwestern Ontario. A later example of First Nations (and other) multilingualism was William Walker (1800–74), head chief of the Wyandot tribe in Ohio, and later provisional governor of the Nebraska Territory. According to the history found on the Wyandotte Nation’s (Oklahoma) Web site, Walker “was given a good education at a Methodist school at Worthington, Ohio. Besides the [*sic*] English, he read and spoke Greek, Latin and French. He spoke the Wyandot, Delaware, Shawnee, Miami, and Pottawatomie Indian languages.” Notice the overlap of languages between those spoken by Montour and Walker.<sup>19</sup>

### *First Nations Bilingualism in the Oregon Territory*

In the Oregon Territory, contact between groups led to widespread First Nations language multilingualism in Native communities. Reasons for multilingualism across Aboriginal languages included the large number of language families in the region; widespread polygamy of leaders whose cross-tribal marriages formed political alliances; shared pasture, fishing, and hunting grounds; trading relations; and the practice of capturing, maintaining, and adopting slaves, especially along the coastal regions. Many of these factors came into play simultaneously, as is evident in reports of Chinook Chief Com-comly’s offspring. According to W. S. Lewis and Naojiro Murikami, Com-comly “was the principal chief of the confederacy of all the tribes of the lower Columbia (except the Clatsops) who spoke the Chinook language, between the Cascade Mountains and Cape Disappointment. He had a wife, according to Indian custom, from nearly every tribe in the confederacy and some from the neighboring tribes. With these wives he possessed a considerable

family and many slaves.”<sup>20</sup> The marriages of Com-comly’s children show the importance of marriage across linguistic and cultural boundaries in efforts to solidify relationships in the region. Two of his sons were mentioned by Alexander Ross in his diary, one son was by Com-comly’s “Multnomah wife” and the other was reported to “talk, read and write English fluently and was much beloved by the tribe.”<sup>21</sup> Com-comly’s daughters were equally remarkable for their cross-cultural linkages:

Chief Com-comly had several daughters; the eldest, “the Princess,” the daughter of Com-comly’s Scappoose wife, married the Astor partner, Duncan McDougal; the second married our author’s father [Archibald McDonald, the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) officer in charge of Fort Colville, 1836–44]; a third married Calpso, a chief of the Chinook village near Cape Disappointment. . . . E-lo-wah-ka was a daughter of Com-comly by a Willapa woman; she married into the tribe and died in 1861 at Ilwaco, a thriving village named for her. The “Princess Margaret,” Kah-at-lau, Com-comly’s daughter by his Chehalis wife, married Louis Rondeau, a Hudson’s Bay Company trapper in 1825. Another daughter of the Chief married a Scotchman named McKay, also a Hudson’s Bay Company’s employee.<sup>22</sup>

Multilingualism was also reported on the east side of the Cascades. For example, as the Presbyterian missionary, Elkanah Walker, was struggling to learn the local language (Spokane), he was forced to rely on translators. Walker’s diary entry from Sunday, November 27, 1842, spoke of this dilemma: “Lapwai. Attended the Indian worship to day and [spoke] afterwards to them through the Lawyer. I do not like to talk in this way as I do not know what he may say to them. We had a long conversation last night on the language.”<sup>23</sup> The editor’s footnote from the same page reports that “the Lawyer’ was an intelligent Nez Perce chief from Kamiah who spoke both the Flathead and Nez Perce languages and who had some knowledge of English. Thus, he was able to interpret for Walker, and also judge the correctness of words Walker used in his Spokane Primer. Lawyer served as Head Chief of the Nez Percés, 1849–1871.”<sup>24</sup> Multilingualism was apparently common among those who would have leadership roles, either as a result of having been born into a high-ranking society or perhaps due to their facility in multiple languages, which would allow for broader interactions.

### *Trade Languages in the West*

Another way that the complex linguistic situation in the old Oregon Territory was negotiated was through the use of the pidgin language, Chinook Jargon. Reports of early emigrants detail its widespread use from Fort Vancouver to Nanaimo and beyond. William Fraser Tolmie, HBC officer and surgeon in the Columbia District during the period from 1833 to 1871, described Chinook

Jargon in the 1830s as “the gibberish by which we communicate with the Indians . . . a vile compound of English, French, American & the Chenooke [*sic*] dialect.”<sup>25</sup> Tolmie had a deep interest in Native American languages and societies and recorded word lists from at least sixteen of the local groups during his tenure.<sup>26</sup>

Reports from two teachers, one in Fort Vancouver and one from Vancouver Island, illustrate the importance of Chinook Jargon as a *lingua franca* among children as well as adults during the period from 1830 to 1850. When John Ball opened his school at Fort Vancouver in November 1832 for children of the HBC employees, they “ranged in age from six to sixteen years and talked the Cree, Nez Perce, Chinook, Klickitat and other Indian languages.”<sup>27</sup> In Ranald MacDonald’s biography, he wrote about attending the Fort Vancouver school from 1833 to 1834: “I attended the school to learn my A.B.C. and English. The big boys had a medal put over their necks, if caught speaking French or Chinook, and when school was out had to remain and learn a task. I made no progress.”<sup>28</sup> The following year he was sent to the HBC (Anglican) mission school at Red River.<sup>29</sup>

A description of the multilingual community on Vancouver Island some twenty years later shows that the linguistic situation was very similar to that found earlier at Fort Vancouver. As C. A. Bayley recounted to H. H. Bancroft during his 1879 interview:

1853 The population of Nanaimo or Colville Town as it was named by the H.B. Co. was about one hundred and twenty five composed of Whites, French Canadians, Iroquois, Kanakas [Hawaiians] and a half Breeds [*sic*], a motly [*sic*] crowd to draw from for the formation of a school which position I was appointed to and retained until the year 1856. All languages and no language was spoken the latter being a Jargon called Chinook and it entailed a severe task upon a Teacher to make them understand school teachings still I succeeded after a while.<sup>30</sup>

Chinook Jargon was well documented throughout the early twentieth century in this region with widely disseminated grammars, dictionaries, and other pedagogical resources. In 1879, Mrs. Hubert Howe Bancroft toured New Westminster with Cecelia (Douglas) Helmcken, daughter of HBC Chief Factor, James Douglas. In an unpublished journal entry from this trip, Mrs. Bancroft noted that Cecelia greeted everyone in his or her own language, including “the Indians.” This would indicate that the level of multilingualism evident on Vancouver Island during the 1850s did not diminish throughout the 1870s. In Adams’s book about the Douglas family, he outlined that

the Douglas children, like many others in HBC posts, were fluent in English and French. They also knew Cree because Amelia [James Douglas’s wife] enjoyed

conversing in her mother's tongue with them and other Cree speakers at Fort Vancouver. The Chinook jargon, a pidgin widely used for trade among the diverse native language groups of the Columbia River and beyond, was adopted and influenced by Europeans. It was commonly used at Fort Vancouver and all the members of the Douglas family learned it.<sup>31</sup>

Evidence existed that Plains Indian Sign Language held some currency in the Oregon Territory during 1845. The following story, told by Mrs. J. F. Galbraith (Oregon) about her grandfather's prairie crossing in 1845 and the travails of the "Meek cutoff," reminds us that the ability to communicate with others may be the difference between life and death. It also presents a vivid illustration of "foreigner talk."

Some time later [after wandering around lost] when they were in the desert country, the party met an Indian. They asked him how far it was to water. The Indian did not understand. Finally, one of the men in the party told the others to be still, as he could talk to the Indian. He spoke very loudly and distinctly, beating time to each word as in music and said, "How far-is-it-to-water? We are thirsty." This amused the Indian and he laughed. Finally someone made a motion as though drinking. The Indian in sign language told them it was two days on horseback, or three days by ox team, to water. This was on a ridge between John Day and the Deschutes River.<sup>32</sup>

### "Canadian" French

In the Oregon Territory, as in the Old Northwest, "Canadian" French came into the area with traders and their families.<sup>33</sup> Canadian French became a *lingua franca* at the HBC posts and was associated with Catholicism in both regions. When Archbishop François Norbert Blanchet came to the Oregon Territory in 1838 with Reverend Modeste Demers, they worked primarily in French, ministering in French Prairie especially to the First Nations and the families of the retired engagés (fur company contract workers), most of whom were Canadiens or voyageurs hired by fur companies in Québec.

The wives of the HBC officers, such as Marguerite McLaughlin, wife of John McLaughlin; Amelia Douglas, wife of James Douglas; and Josette Work, wife of John Work, all spoke French as their primary language. "During the 1850s Amelia and Josette were the undisputed matriarchs within the Hudson's Bay Company's aristocracy at Fort Victoria. . . . Amelia and Josette were both raised speaking French and were most at ease conversing in that language."<sup>34</sup> However, the French that they spoke was considered by those from England to be a substandard variety and was used, along with their mixed heritages, to denigrate them in their positions as powerful women in HBC society.

When Lady Jane Franklin and Sophia Cracroft, her niece, visited Victoria in 1861 they were intrigued by Amelia and her daughters. . . . One day the visitors were invited to luncheon with Amelia, “in place of paying her a formal visit.” They concluded that as the wife of the governor she kept far too much “in the background” and were told that until recently Amelia had not entertained any outside visitors, partly because she spoke English “with some difficulty,” her usual language being “either the Indian, or Canadian French which is a corrupt dialect.”<sup>35</sup>

Although it would be easy to claim that Canadian French was the language of the Métis who had moved to the Oregon Territory, one would miss the fact that Canadian French became a *lingua franca* in the area. Charles Wilson’s journal entry of June 30, 1860, describing the upper Columbia valley near Fort Colville illustrates the variety of people residing in the region:

Descending into the valley we soon were among cornfields, cattle & houses. . . . [S]uch a curious medley of people these said people are, nearly all of them old servants of the HBC, the old trapper, the voyageur, the Canadian, French, Iroquois and half-breed . . . the hardy pioneer of civilization now quietly settled in the valley with their wives and families round them.<sup>36</sup>

The “wives and families” as well as the “half-breed” were indigenous to the area. The “Canadian, French, Iroquois” were not. Again, given the variety of local languages, French Canadian functioned as a *lingua franca* and not necessarily as the language of a dominant group. Wilson’s journal also reported that “the languages are as various as the races, the prominent one being Canadian French of the worst kind, which of all languages or dialects I ever heard offends my ears; it is murdering French with a vengeance.”<sup>37</sup>

### *Iroquois*

Most contemporary writers refer to the final language found in the Oregon Territory that I address here as “Iroquois.” These people were probably Mohawks from east and west of Montreal who had moved west with the Northwest Company as engagés from 1812 to 1825, and who had remained in the region, often becoming independent traders. As there were no women reported among the Iroquois companies, it is clear that these men married local women. For example, one group of Iroquois men settled near the area that became Jasper House. Father Jean Pierre de Smet met them in April 1845 and reported that “on the banks of Lake Jasper, we met an old Iroquois called Louis Kwaragkwanté, or Walking Sun, accompanied by his family, thirty-six in number. He had been forty years absent from his country. . . . The little Iroquois camp immediately set out to follow me to Fort Jasper. Most of them know their prayers in Iroquois.” Some fifteen years later, Dr. Hector

of the Palliser expedition (1857–60) met the same group with this report: “These Iroquois were originally trappers in the service of the NW Company, and on the junction of that company with the Hudson Bay Company, they turned ‘freemen.’ . . . There are only 30 tents of them, and they all talked the Cree language besides their own, and have latterly intermarried a good deal with Cree Half-breeds of Lac St. Ann’s.”<sup>38</sup> These reports show that Iroquois (or Mohawk) was spoken for some forty or fifty years after they left the Montreal region.

The multinational and multilingual flavor of HBC employees was nicely documented in Ross Cox’s journal entry of April 16, 1817, at Fort George: “Our party consisted of eighty-six souls, and was perhaps the largest and most mixed that ever ascended the Columbia. In it were five Scotchmen, two English, and one Irish; thirty-six Canadians, twenty Iroquois Indians, two Nipissings, One Cree, and three half-breeds; nine natives of the Sandwich Islands; with one boy, a servant, two women and two children.”<sup>39</sup>

Although the *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest* recorded entries such as the death of “John Iroquois,” consistent with the Catholic priests’ practice of providing the designation of the First Nation affiliation for each Aboriginal person, the Iroquois men who settled along the Columbia or in the Willamette Valley were later often assumed to be part of the “Canadians” (or the Métis but not mixed blood).<sup>40</sup> Although the American settlers may not have differentiated between those retired employees who settled in French Prairies, the French-speaking priests did.<sup>41</sup>

## WAYS OF BECOMING BI- OR MULTILINGUAL

As is evident in the earlier examples, there are a variety of ways that people become bi- or multilingual, but in most of the secondary literature about language contact in North America, these are assumed rather than explored. Not unexpectedly, I found that the means of learning another language was far broader than typically addressed. These means included captivity, marriage into a community, active second-language acquisition (language training [Lachine and HBC], missionaries *in situ* from those able to teach, missionary [and other] grammars, [mission] school, and immersion), and child language acquisition (languages learned from parents and languages learned from peers).<sup>42</sup>

One person may fit into several categories simultaneously. For example, Madame Montour was “the daughter of a Frenchman, captured by the Iroquois in the mid-1690s at the age of ten, and adopted by the Oneida, who raised her.”<sup>43</sup> Montour, the child of a mixed-language marriage (French father and Algonquin mother), was captured by the Seneca and then adopted by the

Oneida. She married an Oneida man, and one of their children, Andrew, also became a renowned translator. Andrew married two women, the first a Delaware (Algonquian) woman and then a Huron (Iroquois) woman, Sally Ainse (herself a famous trader and multilingual).<sup>44</sup>

Active second-language training is often ignored in secondary sources. For example, I had not anticipated the language training provided by the HBC at Lachine, Quebec, located on the southwestern end of the island of Montreal, which was the jumping-off point for traders going to Rupert's Land or the Columbia District. At Lachine, as outlined by Roderick Finlayson in his 1891 memoir, the English-born traders were coached in the use of Canadian French, the *lingua franca* of HBC traders across what would become the Canadian north extending into the Oregon Territory, including into the regions that would later become "American."<sup>45</sup> The resulting use of French at Fort Vancouver and Fort Victoria is well documented.

Although grammars written by Jesuit scholars are the source of much of our knowledge about First Nations languages in North America, the creation of such grammars was not limited to the Catholics. Another case of active language learning with the goal of creating a grammar for use in missions, and teaching was accomplished by a somewhat unexpected linguist, a single, white woman who went to Sault Ste. Marie to work in the Baptist mission in 1830:

Within a month after her arrival . . . Miss Macomber had become convinced of the necessity of learning Ojibwa in order to impart instruction and began applying herself to its study. In August 1831, Macomber considered herself linguistically proficient. Once she believed herself capable of understanding the Ojibwa language, Macomber began working on translating various religious texts. According to Bingham's correspondence, these linguistic efforts were based upon the orthography used in the Sandwich Islands that Macomber, Dr. James, and Mr. Loomis had adapted to the Ojibwa language. . . . Her initial effort would be to prepare an Ojibwa spelling book that could be used in the infant and common school. Bingham reported that Macomber was also considering publishing a translation of the Baptist catechism. Macomber's linguistic abilities also enabled her to act as a translator for Bingham, his wife, and others at the mission who did not speak the local language.<sup>46</sup>

### *Women and Multilingualism*

As I read early documents about the languages spoken, very few authors addressed female bi- and multilingualism, and if they did, it was assumed to be limited to women who were born into mixed-language families or who were taken captive, such as Madame Montour. This produces inappropriate stereotyping of who might (or could) be bi- or multilingual. For example, one

Methodist missionary in Sault Ste. Marie unsuccessfully wooed Charlotte Johnston, sister-in-law of Henry R. Schoolcraft, who was renowned for her abilities in Ojibwa, French, and English. As Hele noted, "Rev. William Boutwell eventually married Hester Crooks, 'the daughter of American Fur Company official Ramsey Crooks and an Ojibwa woman.' . . . Unlike Charlotte Johnston, Hester Crooks 'did not speak fluent Ojibwa and seemingly had no cultural connections to the predominately French/Indian Community.' Crooks' lack of connections with the Native population and poor knowledge of French and Ojibwa made her as much of an outsider as her husband."<sup>47</sup>

Another gap engendered by the stereotyping of multilingualism as the exclusive domain of multicultural marriages (typically between traders and their offspring) is located in the paucity of descriptions of non-Native women's proficiency in other languages. As I examined which women became bi- or multilingual, I found much more opportunity for multilingualism than is typically recognized by historians. By not limiting our search to First Nations or Métis women, I discovered abundant evidence of contact between children and women of different languages; there was much more than was expected, including captives, wives of traders, children of bi- or multicultural families, students in schools, missionaries and teachers, missionary and teacher support staff, and children raised near or with those speaking other languages.

One of the most widely retold stories from the Oregon Territory is that of the Whitman massacre that occurred at Waiilatpu Station. Only in an interview with one of the survivors of the massacre, Elizabeth Sager Helm, do we learn that she, then a young woman in her early teens, and missionary daughter, Eliza Spaulding, were spared in no small part due to their ability to speak Cayuse.

We stayed at the Mansion House a month [following the massacre]. Eliza Spaulding understood the Indian language and I did also, but not so much as Eliza. Joseph Smith and James Young worked at the mill, grinding wheat for the Indians. The Indians had Eliza stay at the mill to interpret for them. I stayed with Eliza most of the time. It was cold in the mill, so we dug a hole in the straw stack near the mill and put a blanket in front of it. Eliza and I crawled in there, where we would be out of the wind, and when the Indians wanted us they would come and raise the blanket and tell Eliza to come and talk for them.<sup>48</sup>

In no other account of this event do we find the importance of cross-linguistic facility by these women acknowledged or addressed. As a missionary daughter, Eliza was part of the Presbyterian mission "to the Indians" (as opposed to the Methodists in the old Oregon Territory whose efforts were directed to the settler society very soon after arriving in the Willamette Valley). Reverend Spaulding's lack of facility in the Aboriginal language was

well documented, but it appears that the linguistic facility of his wife, Eliza Hart Spaulding, helped bridge the gap; she was apparently much more kindly received in the community than was her husband. Their daughter, Eliza, clearly shared her mother's ability with languages.

Elizabeth Sager (later Helm) had been adopted into the Whitman family along with her six siblings after they had lost both parents to camp fever on the prairies on the way to the Oregon Territory. Her description of her first meal at the mission at Waiilatpu illustrates the range of languages to which she would have been exposed:

Mrs. Whitman had us all come in to supper, and Dr. Whitman walked around the table and waited on us. . . . When we all sat down to the table there was a table full. There were Dr. and Mrs. Whitman, Dr. Whitman's nephew, Perrin Whitman, who was about 16, David, a little half-breed Spanish and Indian boy; Helen Meek ["daughter of Joe Meek by his Nez Perce wife"] and Mary Ann Bridger, both of whom had white fathers and Indian mothers, and we seven [Sager] children.<sup>49</sup>

Two other examples from the Old Northwest illustrate how widespread multilingualism among non-Natives might have been. The first mirrors the Whitman/Spaulding situation in which missionaries were located in First Nations areas where they and their children (adopted or otherwise) had considerable contact with the local languages. For example, the Chance children, who worked in a Sault Ste. Marie mission from the 1850s to the early 1870s, spoke "fluent Ojibwa and English with a slight accent," in no small part because of the Ojibwa nannies that were hired to care for them.<sup>50</sup> The contact between the missionary children and the locals was not limited to interactions with nannies, as can be seen from the following discussion:

Foulkes Chance, unlike her husband, does not appear to have worried greatly over the children's contact with Natives, although the family was horrified to discover that Caroline, with the encouragement of Elizabeth Heal [an "orphaned" Ojibwa girl raised by the Chances], had been secretly corresponding with Native boys. The Chance children, however, were educated alongside the other children of Garden River. . . . Nevertheless, like other missionaries, the Chances sent their children to boarding school in more civilized locales once they were of age.<sup>51</sup>

The use of Aboriginal languages among non-Native schoolchildren has always been more widespread than expected. Although later than the time period covered by this article, Deloria's documentation of his grandfather's teaching his schoolmates some Lakota during the early twentieth century fits the pattern precisely: "When his mother died in 1915, my grandfather [Vine Deloria Sr., at age 14] boarded the train to Kearney, Nebraska, to attend an Episcopalian military school. . . . He learned English and went by the name

of Pete. . . . At the same time, however, the boys with whom he lived learned to speak small vocabularies of Lakota. Rather than simply assimilating, my grandfather helped create a new, cross-cultural world for himself and his companions.”<sup>52</sup>

Finally, I ran across a fascinating interchange in Upper Canada from 1836 to 1849 between Isabella Reynolds (widow of John Reynolds) and the Crown, in which she repeatedly attempted to gain a deed for land that she and her family had settled and improved. Isabella was the daughter of United Empire Loyalists who had, shortly after the beginning of the American Revolutionary War, relocated to Detroit and then across the river to Upper Canada during the 1780s. As one of the earliest emigrants into this region, Isabella would have grown up among First Nations people. Based on petitions from Gayosh and Notawanin, two local chiefs in the Moore community, it is clear that Isabella had interacted with them as peers, which would have included speaking their language at that point in time.<sup>53</sup>

## CONCLUSION

By looking at multilingualism as an indicator of cultural contact and by setting aside many theoretical expectations such as state boundaries, gender, and an individual’s class or occupational assumptions, which typically constrain such studies, we now have a much more complex and subtle picture of cultural interactions. In outlining potential interactions, we find that specific political, economic, religious, and social events frame and contextualize the types of multilingualism that were found. Conversely, by beginning with the evidence of interaction (multilingualism), we are not confined to only political, military, or economic explanations for the types of contact that have occurred throughout the history of cross-cultural interactions. An analysis of specific incidents of multilingualism highlight specific factors at play in an individual’s life, but this exploration of the broadest range of language contact also helps to trace larger, multidimensional movements of people that occurred in a variety of domains and contexts.

Multilingualism in “frontier” North America crosses lines of gender, ethnicity (“race”), and class. This calls into question the appropriateness of such categories as a starting point for explanations of contact and interaction. As with the example of the Iroquois, the movement of groups may be precipitated by the depletion of resources at home and their replacement by employment in the fur trade, but the use of the home language in another region may have its roots in kinship (“they all talked the Cree language besides their own”) or religious training (“most of them know their prayers in Iroquois”). The reason

for a person moving from one place to another may be very different from the reason for choice of language in that region.

Multilingualism was the norm in the Old Northwest and the old Oregon Territory during the nineteenth century, just as it was almost everywhere else in the world where different groups were in contact. Although many people spoke Aboriginal languages from many different backgrounds during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the lack of recognition in published sources has built a false assumption that Aboriginal languages should no longer be viable during the twenty-first century. As Barbra Meek suggests, “the complicated, messy varieties of everyday interaction” need to be included in our analyses.<sup>54</sup> It is precisely these everyday interactions that break down expectations of an inevitable and immutable end of Aboriginal languages. To this day, there is a surprising amount of multilingualism in many of the same “unexpected” languages in the two regions.

### *Acknowledgments*

I wish to acknowledge the extensive input into this article by Allan McDougall, who has been a valued partner and co-investigator in all aspects of the research represented and alluded to in this article. In turn, we would like to extend our gratitude for research support from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada for our grants entitled *Imposed Sovereignty: Comparing the Impact of the USA/Canadian Border on First Nations and Middle Ground People in the Great Lakes region (1750–1846) and the Old Oregon Territory (1810–1872)*; *Translocality, Identity, and the British-USA Borderlands (1810–1848)*; and *Contrasting Hegemonic Impositions: State, Church and Law in the Hawaiian Vortex and the Pacific Northwest Borderlands (1810–1898)*.

### NOTES

1. Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 11.

2. E.g., see Michael Silverstein’s “Dynamics of Recent Linguistic Contact,” in *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 17, *Languages*, ed. Ives Goddard (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), 117–36. See Wesley Leonard’s astute discussion of the “extinction” of *myaamia* in his article, “On Setting Expectations: Challenging ‘Extinction’ through Modern Miami Language Practices,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 35, no. 2 (2011): 135–60.

3. Sidney Morse and Samuel Breese, *Map of North America*, *Morse’s North American Atlas* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1846).

4. For an excellent example, see Goddard, *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 17.

5. Yasuhide Kawashima, “Forest Diplomats: The Role of Interpreters in Indian-White Relations on the Early American Frontier,” *American Indian Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (Winter 1989): 10.

6. Ibid.

7. "In the native village where [Hillitie] was reared—her mother was Mohawk and her father Dutch—she had been impressed by the teachings of French priests. Ridiculed for her beliefs, she moved to Schenectady, and sometime before 1673 she became one of a handful of Indians who received baptism at Albany before the arrival of Delliuss. By 1680 her bicultural background and linguistic talents had come to the attention of the Albany anglicizers, who could always use someone fluent in both Dutch and Mohawk. Although her twin handicaps as a woman and a *metis* prevented her from ever becoming an equal to Schuyler, Livingston, and Delliuss, Hillitie possessed ideal credentials to mediate between Dutch anglicizers and Iroquois anglophiles, and by the early 1690s the province was regularly paying her a salary for her services." As quoted in Daniel K. Richter, "Cultural Brokers and Intercultural Politics: New York-Iroquois Relations, 1664–1701," *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 1 (June 1988): 52–53.

As mentioned in Nancy L. Hagedorn's article, "Faithful, knowing and prudent': Andrew Montour as Interpreter and Cultural Broker, 1740–1772," in *Between Indian and White Worlds: Cultural Broker*, ed. Margaret Connell Szasz (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 44–45: "Madame Montour began to serve as interpreter at Anglo-Iroquois conferences in New York [around 1709]. By the time of her son's [Andrew] birth in the mid- to late 1710s, she exercised considerable influence in New York's Indian affairs, having made herself indispensable to the colony's lieutenant-governor, Robert Hunter (1710–19). . . . Throughout the 1710s and 1720s, Madame Montour and her Oneida husband, Carondawana, their young children presumably nearby, attended many Indian conferences in New York."

8. Even contemporary anthropological discussions of multilingualism begin by addressing the linguistic capital of language acquisition, e.g., see Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991). A typical example is Pauline Burton's statement in her article, "Women and Second-Language Use: An Introduction," in *Bilingual Women: Anthropological Approaches to Second-Language Use*, ed. Pauline Burton, Ketaki Kushari Dyson, and Shirley Ardener (Oxford: Berg, 1994), 1–29: "Second-language competence is not value-free; its acquisition, its use and the way in which it is perceived are affected by the status of the users" (11). Although true, this need not be the only or even first question to explore.

9. Yasuhide Kawashima, "Forest Diplomats," *American Indian Quarterly* 13 (Winter 1989): 1–14. Kawashima addressed early translators, or forest diplomats, "such as Croghan, Montour, Wiser, McKee, Robert Rogers, and Abraham Bosomworth, who regularly served as messengers, arbitrators and negotiators, diplomatic agents, and peacemakers." He continued his discussion with an outline of how he differentiated translators from interpreters: "These men, different from the interpreters on the subsequent frontiers, whose function was largely limited to translation, served as forest diplomats, whether they were employed by the colonial governments or by the imperial superintendents. They rendered valuable services because they were experts in the Indian languages and possessed a broad understanding of Indian customs and tradition" (12).

10. Ibid., 11–12.

11. Fred Lockley, *The Lockley Files: Conversations with Pioneer Women*, 2nd ed., comp. and ed. Mike Helm (1981; repr., Eugene, OR: Rainy Day Press, 1993), 171.

12. Karl Hele, "I have only a comrade's constancy, a fellow-soldier's frankness, fidelity, fraternity': Hannah Foulkes Chance, 1851–1871," *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* XLIV (2002): 256.

13. Julie Cruikshank, "Discovery of Gold on the Klondike: Perspectives from Oral Tradition," in *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History*, ed. Jennifer S. H. Brown and Elizabeth Vibert (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1996), 437–38.

14. Ibid., 438n1.

15. This does not include other reading languages commonly mentioned such as Latin and (Ancient) Greek. We also do not include examples from other European languages such as German and Dutch, which were commonly spoken during an earlier period on the eastern edge of the Old Northwest, or Russian, which was spoken on the northern edges of the Oregon Territory.

16. This was reported in Hagedorn, "Faithful, knowing and prudent," 46–52.

17. See the *Biography of Conrad Weiser*, <http://www.berksweb.com/weiserext.html> (accessed April 5, 2005); and John J. Vrooman, "Conrad Weiser and the New York Colony," [http://www.berkshistory.org/articles/weiser\\_ny\\_1960.html](http://www.berkshistory.org/articles/weiser_ny_1960.html) (originally published in the *Historical Review of Berks County* [Summer 1960], accessed April 5, 2005), for a fascinating example of sending a European teen to live with local Native peoples in order to train him as an interpreter. Hagedorn, "Faithful, knowing and prudent," 46.

18. Hagedorn, "Faithful, knowing and prudent," 52.

19. The ability to speak for other groups across linguistic boundaries was highly valued in the Old Northwest, as outlined by Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region 1650–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 39: "The prototype of Algonquian alliance chiefs was Onanghisse of the Potawatomis. . . . His activities at the great peace conference of 1701 which ended the Iroquois wars are typical. He spoke to the French for the Sauks in order to arrange compensation for a Frenchman the Sauks had killed among the Sioux. He spoke for the Mascoutens who wished to make retribution for pillaging Perrot's goods and attempting to burn him at the torture stake. On different occasions at the same conference, he spoke for the Potawatomis, Fox, and Winnebagos." Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma, [http://www.wyandotte-nation.org/history/walker\\_journals/04\\_walker\\_family.html](http://www.wyandotte-nation.org/history/walker_journals/04_walker_family.html) (accessed September 15, 2009).

20. W. S. Lewis and Naojiro Murakami, eds., *Ranald MacDonald* (Spokane: Eastern Washington State Historical Society Spokane, 1923), 74–77, 75n46.

21. Ross as cited in *ibid.*, 77.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Clifford M. Drury, *Nine Years with the Spokane Indians: The Diary, 1838–1848, of Elkanah Walker* (Glendale, CA: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1976), 216.

24. *Ibid.*, 216n79.

25. W. Kaye Lamb, "Tolmie, William Fraser," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, [http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id\\_nbr=5873&&PHPSESSID=gg7ipmiifunvd0joevl3dnhh6](http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id_nbr=5873&&PHPSESSID=gg7ipmiifunvd0joevl3dnhh6) (accessed June 3, 2010).

26. When the Washington Territory (1853) was set up with Isaac I. Stephens as governor, Tolmie was instrumental in negotiating a marginally reasonable treaty for the Nisqually people. His fluency in Nisqually and his commitment to the relationships he had built in the region during the time that he had been in charge of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company made Tolmie a formidable advocate.

27. Lewis and Murikami, *Ranald MacDonald*, 25n16.

28. *Ibid.*, 25.

29. Ranald MacDonald was the son of Archibald MacDonald and grandson, on his mother's side, of Chief Com-comly. His personal history is a tale of multilingualism. The act for which he was most famous occurred in 1848, when he "permitted himself to be set adrift from a whaler off the coast of Hokkaido, North Japan, and became the first teacher of English within the Japanese Empire. Some of his students served as interpreters when Commodore Perry visited Japan in 1853." *Ibid.*, 23.

30. C. A. Bayley, *Early Life on Vancouver Island*, series C, no. 3, Bancroft Collection, Pacific Coast Manuscripts (University of California, Berkeley, 1879), as transcribed in National Archives of Canada (hereinafter referred to as NAC), Manuscript Group 29 C15.

31. John Adams, *Old Square-Toes and His Lady: The Life of James and Amelia Douglas* (Victoria, BC: Horsdal and Schubart, 2001), 59.

32. Lockley, *The Lockley Files*, 169.
33. Cf. Finlayson's discussion of language training at Lachine, QC.
34. Adams, *Old Square-Toes and His Lady*, 87.
35. *Ibid.*, 144–45.
36. Cited in Jan Grabowski and Nicole St-Onge, "Montreal Iroquois Engagés in the Western Fur Trade, 1800–1821," in *From Rupert's Land to Canada*, ed. T. Binnema, G. J. Ens, and R. C. Macleod (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001), 47–48.
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*, 45–47.
39. *Ibid.*, 42.
40. Harriet Duncan Munnick and Mikel Delores Warner, *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest*, 6 vols. (Portland, OR: Binsford and Mort, 1979).
41. Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries often refer to their calling in the Oregon Territory as originating with the Flathead Indians, who apparently made their way to St. Louis to ask for missionaries who would bring them the Gospel. In the following account, the call for Christianity came through the Iroquois interactions with the Flathead. The denominational wars pitting Protestants against Catholics (and English against French) in the Old Northwest was reproduced in this version of the call for (Catholic) missions to the Oregon Territory, with the Iroquois as the middle men: "Writing in 1871, Mr C.S. Jones [*Rep. Comm'r Ind. Aff.*, 1871, p. 425], United States Indian Agent at the Flathead agency, Jocko reserve, Montana, attributes to Iroquois from Canada the stimulating of the Flathead Indians to send to St Louis in 1839 the deputation whose visit resulted in the coming to their country of Father de Smet, the famous missionary, who labored so well among the Indians of Idaho, Montana, and British Columbia—Kootenay, Flatheads, and others. According to Mr Jones, 'nearly forty years since [about 1820] some Iroquois from Canada, trading with the Flatheads, told them of the teaching of the Jesuit fathers, who for many previous years had been laboring among them.'" Alexander F. Chamberlain, "Iroquois in Northwestern Canada," *American Anthropologist* (New Series) 6, no. 4 (July–September 1904): 463.
42. One of the most fascinating examples of bilingualism by immersion is the case of Conrad Weiser (b. 1696), a native of Germany who emigrated with his father and several siblings to New York during his teens. According to John J. Vrooman, in his article for the Historical Society of Berks County, [http://www.berkshistory.org/articles/weiser\\_ny\\_1960.html](http://www.berkshistory.org/articles/weiser_ny_1960.html) (accessed April 1, 2009), "Conrad Weiser and the New York Colony, . . . recognizing the acute need of having someone in their group who could converse directly with the Indians rather than making use of a doubtful and possibly untrustworthy interpreter, John Conrad was successful in arranging for Conrad [Weiser] to spend the winter [of 1713] at the Indian Castle (village) at Fort Hunter at the mouth of the Schoharie River, where he might learn the Indian tongue." Weiser became a famous translator and raised his son (born of Weiser's German-born wife) as bilingual. However, the son died within two years of finishing his schooling at Harvard, effectively quelling the elder Weiser's dream.
43. Hagedorn, "Faithful, knowing and prudent."
44. As Hagedorn (*ibid.*, 53) notes, one of Madame Montour's daughters, "a Moravian convert at New Salem, Ohio, was described in 1791 as 'a living polyglot of the tongues of the West, speaking English, French and six Indian languages.'" An interesting outcome of such fluid identities was that one of Andrew Montour's descendants was among the earliest "American" (read "white" settler) emigrants to the old Oregon Territory during the mid-1830s.
45. Roderick Finalyson, *Diary* (unpublished manuscript, Bancroft Library, 1891).
46. Karl Hele, "*Fully Equal to a Missionary in Herself*": *Female Missionaries to Sault Ste. Marie and Area, c. 1828–1871* (n.d., manuscript), 61–62.

47. Karl Hele, "By the Rapid": *The Anishinabeg-Missionary Encounter at Bawating (Sault Ste. Marie), c. 1821–1871* (PhD diss., McGill University, 2002), 349n119.
48. Elizabeth Sager (Helm) in Lockley, *Conversations with Pioneer Women*, 38.
49. *Ibid.*, 32–33. At least six of the people seated around that table died in the massacre or in its aftermath, including Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, Helen Meek, Mary Ann Bridger, and two of the Sager children.
50. Hele, "Hannah Foulkes Chance, 1851–1871," 250.
51. *Ibid.*, 251.
52. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*, 114. See also his footnote on p. 114 referring to other examples of learning Native languages on the playground.
53. NAC, Record Group 10, vol. 456, *Reynolds*; and Lambton Room records.
54. Barbra A. Meek, "Failing American Indian Languages," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 35, no. 2 (2011): 56.

