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furnished a majority of the “renegade” Seminole, rather than the tribes mentioned (p. 239). Maps would have been helpful in the essays describing Gibbon’s explorations and Indian campaigns.

It is unfortunate that the editors did little except repeat Gibbon’s opinions about Indian leaders. Sitting Bull, for example, is dismissed as a “medicine man” (p. 144), when, for decades, students of Lakota history have understood that, in his earlier years, he was a war chief. Many Lakota followed him to Canada, and he retained devoted followers until he was killed in 1890 by agency Indian police. Likewise, Skolaskin is dismissed as a “medicine man” (p. 231) who led Indians of the Colville Reservation in harassing Joseph’s Nez Perce band. A Sanpoil, Skolaskin was a northern leader of the Dreamer religion; he established his own police force and court to intimidate reservation inhabitants who had accepted the federal Indian assimilation policy. Gibbon actually played a larger role than he implied in the three-year imprisonment of Skolaskin on Alcatraz Island.

Students of military history may find these essays more informative than will those interested in Indian history. Gibbon’s observations about Indians are superficial, adding little to what we know or need to know about Native Americans. Only two of the ten essays were previously unpublished. Nevertheless, this volume does contribute to the general accessibility of information about Gibbon’s role in the Sioux and Nez Perce campaigns.

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American Indian Children at School, 1850–1930. By Michael C. Coleman. Jackson, Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 1993. 230 pages. \$38.50 cloth.

The sources of Michael Coleman’s research for *American Indian Children at School* were limited to 102 Indian autobiographies that focused, to some extent, on school experiences. Coleman culled these autobiographies from a larger initial list selected from Martin Brumble III’s two annotated bibliographies. Drawn from thirty tribes, these accounts of school experiences were entirely retrospective, written, for the most part, in the twentieth century.

Coleman found that, although Indian children’s views of school changed, conflicted, and flipfopped at various times—before

coming to school, while at school, on returning home, and on writing an autobiography—for the most part, they held positive attitudes toward school. He analyzed seven major influences that created ambivalence among Indian students: their personal hopes and fears, kin expectations, cultural backgrounds, official institutional concerns, the broad Christian-academic-manual labor curriculum, the input of teachers and other whites, and peer pressures. He found that white and traditional native education contained similarities that eased the students' adjustment both at home and at school: "respect for adults, for incremental learning, for the increasing status that went with increasing knowledge and expertise, acceptance of hard physical labor—such tribal patterns—were clearly compatible with school goals" (p. 194). If the "holistic tribal approach to education" fostered strong individuals, the seemingly unrelated subjects taught in Anglo schools rested on shared assumptions that enveloped the young Indians "in the holistic cultural environment of the white tribe" (p. 54). All in all, anyone who has read early Indian autobiographies will appreciate the balance Coleman supplies to more recent Indian autobiographers, who emphasize only students' negative responses, at odds with the historical record.

His second major thesis, more problematic, contends that the Indian narrators' views agreed with the records of government agents, white missionaries, and educators (the subjects of Coleman's first book), thereby testifying to the reliability of both the written record and the human memory (not to mention the first book). As developed, this theme rationalizes the use of whites as collaborators and seeks to undermine the charge of embellishment by aging Indian writers. It should come as no surprise that the written accounts of white missionaries and teachers match those of their most prominent students—the narrators whose writing they often helped to publish. Coleman is similarly impressed by "how accurately" the narrators "recalled their 'original behavior and perceptions,'" yet an author cannot judge the accuracy of what was written based on what was not.

Although the core of Coleman's book—on the diverse attitudes of the Indian autobiographies themselves—seems very solid, if sometimes predictable, the study is weakened overall by the author's proclivity to arrive at conclusions beyond the scope of his evidence. The fact that little or no comparative analysis is offered between full- and mixed-bloods, nor among the tribes represented, the types of schools, the denominations, or the eras in

question does not prevent Coleman from asserting that no substantial differences existed on any of these variables. These conclusions give a static quality to the very complexities in need of examination.

Far from giving "voice to the voiceless," this work is a who's who of Indian autobiographers, of "culture brokers," who cannot, by definition, represent traditional opinion. To help remedy this problem, the author should have examined the individual files of rank-and-file Indian students at schools such as Hampton and Carlisle (the latter at Pennsylvania's Cumberland Valley Historical Society). Besides diminishing the concentration on "gifted" students as sources, this would have increased awareness of the disturbing number of files on full-blooded Indians that lie empty; they either did not learn enough English to write well or did not care to write—either case casting doubt on the success of Indian schools for those on whom our generalizations need to be based.

Coleman criticizes Frederick Hoxie's contention that, around 1900, once "infected" by racist theories of Indians' genetic inferiority, the reformer's goal of Indian assimilation was jettisoned. Coleman finds "little evidence in these autobiographies of a discernable increase in racism—indeed of biological racism at all" (p. 193). "Teachers and staff were as harsh and as kind, as culturally intolerant but racially optimistic, in one decade as in another during this period" (p. 99). But this claim is vitiated because, unlike the vast majority of Indian students covered here, by the 1910s a majority of Indian students attended white public schools, where prejudice against Indians was most virulent. His criticism even takes the wrong angle of approach. After all, since the "final promise" of whites was one of cultural genocide, most Indians feared the affliction of "transformation" over that of "improvement"; early on, Boasians recognized that the former goal was the most blatantly ethnocentric. It was certainly, for most Indians, more desirable to live on the fringes of white society than to be sucked into it.

Coleman does, however, strike the real question in his scrutiny of the mediatory role of Indian children both inside and outside the school, which "has not been sufficiently examined by scholars" (p. 127). Even as he highlights the "unofficial brokering by older pupils involved in helping the younger ones survive against predators and adjust to the school," Coleman also recognizes weaknesses of the culture broker interpretation—the aggressive recruitment (even capture) of new students by returnees, the use of Indian school officers to hunt down runaways, and the terror-

ization of students by bullies of both sexes. Even if "mutual exploitation characterized the whole school situation," the mediation was decidedly one way: "[O]nly rarely do we find a pupil attempting to convey understanding of Indian life to a non-Indian" (p. 137). Although they "never succeeded in remaking Indian children to their own formula, white educators possessed far greater access to power." This point does not diminish the "impressive" adaptive abilities of Indian children, who, while not quite movers and shakers, are nevertheless portrayed as much more than hapless victims (p. 196).

Coleman also makes a useful distinction between the day-to-day resistance of Indian children to school and their outright rejection of it. Sometimes adding native elements like speaking tribal languages or playing hooky to go on buffalo hunts, most noncooperative students who engaged in behavior such as pranks, nicknaming teachers, and note passing ultimately made school more bearable to others and thus aided acceptance by all. Even those who rejected school by means of chronic absenteeism, dropping out, escape (not *to* school like a few students but *away from* it), arson, suicide, and even disease (an inclusion which here seems obscene) often held some positive feelings. Indeed some Indian students with very negative attitudes graduated, went on to other schools, and remembered favorite teachers. Conversely, even the most "anxiously 'progressive' of the Christian Indians . . . retained elements of traditional culture . . . [M]any succeeded in achieving personally satisfying blends of tribal and white cultural traditions" (p. 121). Almost all narrators are seen as conquering the initial shock of returning home and their supercilious attitude toward elders, to synthesize their learning into a bicultural way of life.

In sum, Coleman expertly generalizes the opinions of prominent Indian students, and his text will be quite helpful in Native American studies, education, biography, cultural studies, and biographical methods in ethnology. But he should have limited his original treatment to that topic, instead of raising problems endemic to the field of ethnology by discussing conclusions beyond what the evidence can provide. Thus Coleman becomes an easy target for advocates of nontraditional sources who have largely not developed widely applicable methods such as writing.

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