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Author

Collins, Cary C.

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REVIEWS

American Indians. Edited by Nancy Shoemaker. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2001. 291 pages. \$27.95 paper.

American Indian history isn't what it used to be. The new Indian history, born in the 1970s, has reclaimed Indians from the margins of the historical landscape and positioned them center stage as the lead actors in their own unfolding drama. Nancy Shoemaker's *American Indians* brings into dramatic relief the contrasts between the two perspectives and illustrates the rising acceptance of this positive shift within the academic community. Designed for use as a classroom reader, *American Indians* incorporates the finest contemporary scholarship. It is the latest in Blackwell's American Social and Cultural History series that includes volumes on a diversity of topics, such as the Old South, the Civil Rights Movement, radicalism, popular culture, sexuality, and technology. Like its companion pieces, *American Indians* combines provocative selections culled from the secondary literature with relevant readings in primary source material. Divided into seven chapters and organized chronologically, the book expands the borders of American Indian history. Opening with a section on pre-Columbian America, it closes with a chapter on Red Power and the political activism of the 1960s and 1970s. Between are chapters on contact, international diplomacy and cultural exchange, Cherokee removal, sacred places, and boarding schools.

Shoemaker's collection shows how in the decades preceding the historiographical watershed, scholarly articles and monographs typically portrayed Indians as subjugated, defeated peoples who had fallen victim to the dual forces of contact and government policies. Historians selectively concentrated on individual Indians who had either helped or hindered Euro-American settlement and expansion attempts. The histories they wrote reflected the viewpoint of the dominant culture: that the important players were not Indians, but government officials, missionaries, and military figures. The stories had as a beginning point the arrival of Columbus in 1492, followed by a chronology that closely paralleled the sequencing of federal Indian policies. Indian cultures were generally presented as static and unchanging and by extension incapable of incorporating outside cultural elements and influences without

suffering consequent degeneration and loss. Government records and contemporary non-Indian accounts were looked to as the only valid sources.

But the field of American Indian history has undergone a sea change and has succeeded in formulating a vastly more interesting, inclusive, and accurate approach. Greater emphasis is now placed on the role Indians have had in shaping their own past, present, and future. In the words of Shoemaker, new Indian historians have “focused on Indian perspectives, voices, actions, and decisions.” Rather than studying how Europeans have treated Indian people, the emphasis has turned to documenting “agency,” which means showing how Indians have been “active participants in the making of their own history” (p. 7). Tapping broader specialization, the new model has invited the contributions and expertise not only of historians, but also anthropologists, archeologists, and ethnohistorians. New themes have risen to the fore—survival, resistance, accommodation, and adaptation—that require knowledge of new terminology. The new history, stopping short of a complete break with the old, has strengthened past patterns through deeper meanings and enriched contexts. Collectively, these changes have constituted a revolution in the methodology of researching and writing Indian history.

The theme of agency—the ability of Indian people to maintain a semblance of control over their lives in the midst of extraordinary circumstances—cannot be overemphasized. Perhaps the most vivid example of the challenges that have been faced is contained in the chapter on education. At the height of the assimilation era Indians were shipped off to large off-reservation boarding schools located far from homes, families, tribes, and reservations. Those institutions sought to strip away children’s Indianness and replace it with a Euro-American identity. To achieve that transformation, school officials imposed military discipline and strict regimentation. Yet, as a selection by anthropologist K. Tsianina Lomawaima makes clear, something unexpected happened on the road to assimilation. Prolonged contact among a diverse student population failed to break down tribal identities; instead, it fostered the formation of a new and unanticipated intertribal Indian identity. According to Lomawaima, in a passage emphasizing themes of agency, resistance, and adaptation, “Indian people at boarding schools were not passive consumers of an ideology or lifestyle imparted from above by federal administrators. They actively created an ongoing educational and social process. They marshaled personal and shared skills and resources to create a world within the confines of boarding-school life, and they occasionally stretched and penetrated school boundaries” (p. 234). Lomawaima’s writing has informed virtually all recent literature on Indian education.

Two documents follow the essay by Lomawaima. The first is from Indian commissioner Thomas J. Morgan’s 1889 “Supplemental Report on Indian Education.” This report gives readers a very different perspective on Indian education that perhaps may expand their understanding of the national government’s goals. In boarding schools Morgan advocated compulsory attendance, mastery of the English language, and an acceptance of the principles of citizenship. With that as his guide, he considered education “the medium through which the rising generation of Indians are to be brought into

fraternal and harmonious relationship with their white fellow-citizens, and with them enjoy the sweets of refined homes, the delight of social intercourse, the emoluments of commerce and trade, the advantages of travel, together with the pleasures that come from literature, science, and philosophy, and the solace and stimulus afforded by a true religion" (p. 236). Morgan's essay provides an entry point for provocative classroom discussion as students begin to grapple with the conflict that has come to shroud American Indian policies—policies that seemingly were devised to insure survival, but which, tragically, have assisted in the disintegration of Indian cultures and societies.

The second selection is the transcription of a speech delivered by Henry Roe Cloud in 1914 at the annual Lake Mohonk conference in upstate New York. It articulates the philosophy of the most influential Indian educator of the early twentieth century. Roe Cloud supported formal education for Indians; however, similar to other Native leaders of his day (for example, Henry Sicade of the Puyallup tribe in Washington State), he grew disenchanted with the federal Indian education system. In response to their dissatisfaction, both Roe Cloud and Sicade founded alternative schools. Roe Cloud, preaching his own brand of accommodation, accepted assimilation as an unavoidable reality but believed that as Indian people progressed through the process of acculturation, a level of autonomy needed to be maintained. Through reading Morgan and Roe Cloud, students will gain a better appreciation for the complexity of Indian education and a greater understanding of the historian's craft, as authors such as Lomawaima strive to extract meaning from a cache of documents as diverse as these.

American Indians comes highly recommended. The heavy emphasis on historiography and methodology combined with the stimulating nature of its essays makes it a strong addition to the reading list of any college course that focuses on the American Indian experience.

Cary C. Collins

Maple Valley, Washington

Blue Jacket: Warrior of the Shawnees. By John Sugden. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000. 400 pages. \$29.95 cloth.

In this study, John Sugden has written an excellent biography of Blue Jacket, or Waweypiersenwaw. He also provides a description of pan-Indianism in the late colonial/early republic era, an overview of Native woodland cultures, and a study of Indian-white relations.

Blue Jacket was born probably in Pennsylvania around 1743. When he was a young adult he participated in the Revolutionary War; before this time, however, there is little mention of him. He would fight the whites over Indian land for the rest of his life. Blue Jacket grew up in an egalitarian, individualistic culture that respected personal bravery and honor, values that clashed with Euro-Americans' more centralized society.