

items thieves stole from them (110). As the pages go by, one begins to question the objectivity of the author. For example, Manion portrays a prison visitors' society that reported adequate provisioning of inmates as motivated by miserliness (71). But if that were true, one wonders, why did this charitable organization exist at all?

The methodology of the study is also suspect; evidence is unnecessary. Manion does not hesitate to report "a belief that was widely held but rarely spoken" or "popular theories" about which persons "were unable to speak openly"—not even in preserved private correspondence (93, 152)? That carceral advocates had ulterior motives Manion takes as a given. "[T]he penitentiary has been exposed as a powerful tool of social and individual manipulation" she reports, as if the conclusion were uncontroversial (4). Omitted from Manion's footnotes is any reference to modern studies posing a challenge to this view—as though those studies never existed.

Then again, as Manion declares, she is doing "politically engaged" history (6, 275). Students who prefer conventional history must read her work with a skeptical eye. But even if this book is not definitive, its pioneering stabs at neglected aspects of the sociology of incarceration make *Liberty's Prisoners* worth looking at.

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Masters of Empire: Great Lakes Indians and the Making of America. By Michael A. McDonnell. (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 2015. Pp. 416. \$35.00.)

For the past generation, Richard White's seminal work, *The Middle Ground*, has had a profound impact on how historians interpret Native American-European relations. White identified periods in early colonial history in which neither Indians nor Europeans dominated trade and diplomatic relations in the Great Lakes region, resulting in the establishment of "middle grounds." In his stunning new book, historian Michael McDonnell sets out a new paradigm for historians of the Great Lakes region. Where White saw the development of shared power relations between indigenous and European people during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, McDonnell sees a region in which dynamic, multiethnic Indian polities—the Seneca, Mohawk, Huron, Ojibwe, Miami, Sauk, Fox, Winnebago, and Odawa—dominated the region (9).

In eight thoroughly researched and compellingly argued chapters, McDonnell transports readers into the indigenous societies of the *pays d'en haut*, paying

particular attention to the Anishinaabe Odawa at Michilimackinac, a region stretching from the straits between Lake Superior and Lake Michigan. McDonnell explores the native cultures of the region, early colonial encounters, two Anglo-Indian Wars [1752–1757 and 1763 respectively], and concludes with what for Native Americans was the disastrous era of revolution and the emergence of the American Republic.

McDonnell's history of Michilimackinac is a story driven by native decisions and native actions. *Masters of Empire* is a native-centered history in which McDonnell explains that the patrilineal *doodemags* of the region framed a flexible kinship system in which both trade and exogamous marriage practices operated to make it possible for indigenous communities to incorporate outsiders into native kinship systems (11, 93). Michilimackinac, McDonnell argues, was "the door to North America"; if European newcomers in the region, notably the French, wanted to pass through that door they had to play by Indian rules (13).

McDonnell's analysis is an important reinterpretation of the region. He argues, correctly, that the seventeenth-century French saw a region in chaos. This was a part of North America that early French colonists had little power to influence, much less control (31–32). Indeed, the French routinely became caught in inter-Indian diplomatic maneuvers and warfare. The Odawa in particular thwarted French aspirations to establish and control stable trade networks throughout the Great Lakes region during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (68).

By the 1750s, the *pays d'en haut* was a diverse and hotly contested region. This was not simply a region dominated by the French and British battling for imperial supremacy. The *pays d'en haut* witnessed Canadian, French, Spanish, British, Métis, and Indians fighting to control the region and its lucrative trade networks (216–217). Pontiac's leadership of a pan-Indian alliance and siege on Detroit in 1763 reminded the British that their projected influence over the *pays d'en haut* was far from assured (232). Indeed, even after the British gained control of Fort Chartres in the mid-1760s, the Odawa did not slip into dependence on British trade but instead continued to maneuver European colonial powers "to get what they wanted from the British" (249).

Masters of Empire is an impressive scholarly accomplishment. McDonnell's analysis of warfare, diplomacy, and Indian coalescence throughout the *pays d'en haut* reveals just how complex the history of this region was during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This is a landmark book that is sure to prompt new and important historiographical conversations.