

very different professional, social, and economic backgrounds) become, in effect, book-ends to his argument, and as he introduces more than a few hints of the “boy problem” that would obsess reformers and writers in the early twentieth century.

In a concise and clear summary statement, Ringel suggests why all of this is important. The magazines published during the century after 1830, “like the genteel cultures that had spawned them ... were part of the nation’s transition from a set of predominantly rural, localized producer societies into a compilation of more urban, industrial, and centralized consumer cultures.” The magazines “had helped white Protestant families adapt their standards of children’s behavior to the conditions of those cultures,” and provided the “basis from which twentieth- and twenty-first-century adults would continue to contest the commercial roles of young people in American society” (197).

One reason Ringel is so convincing is that he does not attempt to provide a survey of all juvenile magazines from this period. But it would have been useful to have seen a bigger role – at least as counterpoints to the more famous magazines featured in the book – for publications such as Oliver Optic’s monthly *Student and Schoolmate*, which reflected less Protestant angst and a more direct approach to commercialization than the *Youth’s Companion* and the others. Finally – and this is not a criticism, but a hopeful suggestion for future work by Ringel or other scholars in the field – an appropriate sequel to *Commercializing Childhood* would examine the ways in which children received the lessons they were supposed to learn, and the ways in which they actually incorporated their roles as consumers into their lives. That is, of course, a tall order, but such an exploration would be a perfect complement to Ringel’s useful and well-written book.

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Michael McDonnell, *Masters of Empire: Great Lakes Indians and the Making of America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2015, \$35.00). Pp. 416. ISBN 978 0 8090 2953 2.

It is hardly news to note that the integration of Native American subjects, their experiences and agency, into the mainstream narrative of early American history has been one of the most, if not *the* most, important developments in the last forty years or so of colonial historiography. Few would attempt to write about, let alone teach, the field these days, whatever their regional and/or chronological proclivities, without due reference to the now rich and voluminous available literature. Introducing undergraduates to this literature usually means beginning with a historiographical thumbnail sketch, noting the classic, epic, but incorrigibly Eurocentric and racist early studies by folks such as Francis Parkman which were first challenged by archaeologists and anthropologists and later by the rise of ethnohistory and revisionist studies by scholars such as Francis Jennings beginning in the 1960s. Post-Jennings, in the 1980s and 1990s, historians reconceived “frontier” clashes as moments of encounter, cultural exchange, mutual self-discovery and transformation, often located on one or another form of an accommodating “middle ground.” This salutary shift recovered the complexities of Indian agency, beyond mere victimhood, and emphasized the long-observed contingency and fragility of early European North American settlements and the negotiations and alliances needed to preserve their colonizing

communities down through the eighteenth century. One limitation of the “middle ground” as an organizing metaphor was its focus on European and Native meeting points, negotiations, and clashes, which, given the bias of European written sources, were often unavoidably interpreted from the standpoint of the newcomers.<sup>1</sup> In 2001 Daniel Richter articulated the rising discomfort with this perspective and the increasing effort to view events facing east from “Indian Country.” Since then various studies have moved west to investigate Native communities and develop this eastward perspective on European settlement and contest for the continent.<sup>2</sup> In his new, richly researched, and elegantly written book, Michael McDonnell synthesizes and provocatively extends this recent scholarship with enviable concision and clarity. His book is tour de force of historical scholarship and will likely be the standard work on the topic for some considerable time to come.

*Masters of Empire* is unabashed narrative history, conceived and executed on a grand scale befitting its retelling of a drama played out across large swathes of the North American continent. In this respect it provides a timely counter to Gordon Wood’s recent and controversial condemnation of current scholarship for what Wood considers its myopic and self-righteous focus on inequality and dispossession and consequent loss of connection to his preferred concentration on “how the United States came to be.”<sup>3</sup> McDonnell – a Canadian who secured his PhD in England, wrote a first book about class struggle in revolutionary Virginia, and now lives and works in Sydney, Australia – presents a reimagining of early American geography and the peoples and processes that gave rise to the early republic which should placate the most curmudgeonly of critics while demonstrating how colonial history is enriched rather than impoverished by an expansive and inclusive rather than narrowly nationalistic framing. To begin, in an era of geographic, often oceanic, “turns” in colonial historiography – the Caribbean, Atlantic, Pacific, global – McDonnell builds on the work of those who have explored Native American communities beyond frontier encounters with European settlement. Open any standard American history text from 1950s

<sup>1</sup> Francis Jennings, “Goals and Functions of Puritan Missions to the Indians,” *Ethnohistory*, 18 (1971), 197–212; and his trilogy of books beginning with Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975); Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Daniel K. Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); and Richter, “Whose Indian History?,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 50, 2 (1993), 379–93.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Kathleen DuVal, *The Native Ground: Indians and Colonists in the Heart of the Continent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Pekka Hamalainen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Brett Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance: Indigenous and Atlantic Slaveries in New France* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

<sup>3</sup> Gordon S. Wood, “The American Vision of Bernard Bailyn,” *Weekly Standard*, 23 Feb. 2015, at [www.weeklystandard.com/history-in-context/article/850083](http://www.weeklystandard.com/history-in-context/article/850083), in particular his judgment that the *William and Mary Quarterly*, the house journal for early American history, was in danger of “losing its way” and the response by the editor, Josh Piker, “Getting Lost,” at <http://blog.oieahc.wm.edu/getting-lost>.

through the 1980s (presumably Wood's "good old days") and the paucity of detail and specific information on Native American communities and their geography is embarrassing by current standards – standards which are still decried by experts as wholly inadequate.<sup>4</sup> In particular, *Masters of Empire* opens with the "re-centering" of the Anishinaabeg people and their home, Michilimackinac, a region between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. We have known these people, McDonnell maintains, by the names the Europeans gave them, such as Ottawa, Odawa, Chippewa, Algonquin, Mohawk, and Nipissing. But Anishinaabeg is the name they used for themselves to describe a diverse and scattered but interconnected community whose presence and influence ranged from the *pays d'en haut* – the territory comprising most of the Great Lakes and west from Montréal to the Mississippi river – down into areas claimed by the Iroquois and by the Dutch and English new arrivals whose encounters and diplomacy have usually taken center stage in the historiographical literature. In the first two chapters we get to know the Anishinaabeg and understand the source of their power in their geopolitical position, trade relations, and kin and clan connections which allowed for group autonomy and independence but also, when needed, support and collective action. Viewing events from the perspective of the Anishinaabeg, McDonnell reinterprets European–Native relations from the beaver wars of the seventeenth century to the eighteenth-century Anglo-French competition for continental predominance. What becomes clear is that the Europeans – long considered the strongest players and managers of their various Indian "allies," who assumed subordinate and ultimately dependent roles – were in fact pawns in a vast and subtle Native American diplomatic world of which they had little understanding. Across decades McDonnell convincingly demonstrates that French and English geopolitical strategies were effectively permitted and/or restrained by Anishinaabeg aims and ambitions. He also manages to present a detailed discussion of social and geopolitical developments across decades as a gripping narrative, culminating with the significant reappraisal of the French and Indian (Seven Years) War, 1756–63, as, in fact, a First Anglo-Indian War. This sets up the closing argument concerning the course and implications of the Second Anglo-Indian War or, as we are more accustomed to call it, the era of the American Revolution and early republic. The final chapters take the story beyond the traditional revolutionary chronology and up into the early nineteenth century.

There is much, much more in this constantly fascinating book than can be captured in a short review. In addition to providing a compelling discussion on Native America and European North American relations across two centuries, McDonnell convincingly insists upon the need for greater focus on the significance of the French empire in America, precisely because of their proximity to the Anishinaabeg power brokers. French power and influence depended on their relations with the inhabitants of Michilimackinac. When the Anishinaabeg withdrew their support for the French, their subsequent collapse encouraged English expansion that threatened Native clients and interests in the West. This reorientation emphasizes the limitations of traditional colonial chronologies, keyed to colonial and European narratives of populist political developments and imperial fiscal and constitutional reform. McDonnell also takes on the established narrative of Native decline, demonstrating not just the vigor but also the continuing predominance of Anishinaabeg diplomacy. This is in keeping with his tendency to cut against the

<sup>4</sup> James H. Merrell, "Second Thoughts on Colonial Historians and American Indians," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 69, 3 (2012), 451–512.

historiographical grain: in his first book McDonnell considered the internal divisions and discontents that undermined Virginia's efforts to mobilize and fight the English during the American Revolution. His presentation of patriot disaffection and disunity was so convincing that this reviewer once heard a fellow historian observe that it was only when he got to the final chapter that he remembered that the Americans won! One could ask a similar question of McDonnell's presentation of continuing Native American power and presence, given their ultimate fate and arguable erasure. This is just one example among many of the questions and controversies, some long considered more or less settled, that *Masters of Empire* opens up for new debate.

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Thomas A. Foster (ed.), *Women in Early America* (New York: New York University Press, 2015, \$28.00). Pp. 320. ISBN 978 1 4798 9047 7.

*Women in Early America* encapsulates the diversity and vibrancy of scholarship on women in North America between the seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries. As Carol Berkin and Thomas A. Foster explain in the foreword and introduction respectively, the collection aims to reflect the sophistication of recent work in gender history while still foregrounding "women's lives and experiences" (3). The companion to Foster's similarly wide-ranging *New Men: Manliness in Early America* (2011), *Women in Early America* contains eleven essays that readers will find particularly useful in undergraduate teaching.

In keeping with early Americanists' turns toward Atlantic and continental perspectives, the volume extends well beyond the thirteen colonies of mainland British North America. Matthew Dennis and Elizabeth Reis's essay on witchcraft, for example, incorporates West Africa and Spanish New Mexico as well as New England. Adopting a consensus position, Dennis and Reis suggest that witchcraft accusations reflected both gendered power and colonial tensions between Europeans and others. Christine Walker's essay on female slave owners persuasively argues that in eighteenth-century Jamaica, the most profitable colony in the British Empire, slave ownership was far from an exclusively male enterprise. Both white women and free women of color routinely acquired, sold, and supervised slaves.

Essays by Ramón A. Gutiérrez and Kim Todt likewise move beyond the British Empire. They demonstrate that different legal regimes presented distinctive constraints and opportunities for women. In Spanish New Mexico, Gutiérrez finds, the Inquisition became a tool in men's rivalries, leading the wife of a seventeenth-century governor to be imprisoned and ensnared in a protracted legal battle. In contrast, Todt contends that Dutch law and educational practices afforded women in the New Netherlands greater economic freedom than their British American counterparts.

Three essays concern borderlands and North America's interior. Essays by Joy A. J. Howard and Karen L. Marerro highlight women's ability to acquire social and economic authority as they crossed porous boundaries between European and Native American societies. Howard examines the little-known case of Rebecca Kellogg Ashley, a white woman who became a trusted Iroquois interpreter, thus cultivating an identity that was associated with her repeated movements across cultures rather than her parentage. Marerro likewise argues that French and Native American women in the