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Brokers of Culture: Italian Jesuits in the American West, 1848-1919 (Book Review)

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Reviews

Social & Behavioral Sciences

46-0496 D810 2007-30423 CIP
Kaiser, Hilary. **French war brides in America: an oral history.** Praeger, 2008. 177p bibl index afp ISBN 9780275993986, \$44.95

Kaiser (Univ. of Paris-Sud) provides a welcome new perspective on the Franco-American relationship in this collection of oral histories of French war brides. The women she interviews all fell in love with US soldiers during WW I or WW II, often because they were enamored with the idea of the US. Deprived of an ordinary life in war-ravaged France, marriage offered a new beginning. Wedding a GI was not always what they expected, however, sometimes bringing hardships and isolation, but often creating new opportunities. How the women negotiated life in a new language and country animates their stories. Kaiser's introduction and conclusion contextualize and analyze these lives, emphasizing questions of biculturalism and cultural misunderstandings rather than issues of gender. As they look back on their long lives, these women share memories of how they assimilated to US culture while never losing their sense of being French. **Summing Up:** Recommended. ★★ Public, general, and undergraduate libraries.—*J. H. Jackson, Rhodes College*

46-0497 E184 2006-101464 CIP
Lehman, James O. **Mennonites, Amish, and the American Civil War,** by James O. Lehman and Steven M. Nolt. Johns Hopkins, 2007. 353p bibl index afp ISBN 0801886724, \$39.95; ISBN 9780801886720, \$39.95

It is hard to imagine a time when the Mennonites and Amish were distinguished from other agrarian, family-centered Americans almost solely by their pacifism. In the volatile decade that bracketed the Civil War, Lehman (emer. library director, Eastern Mennonite Univ.) and Nolt (history, Goshen College) offer the Anabaptist response to the conflict that helped define cultural survival strategies in use to this day. Using myriad primary documents, the authors show how three main responses evolved. With the backdrop of draft riots, some withdrew into even deeper isolation. Others abandoned their pacifism, joining actively in the war. Still others found middle ground, offering their money, property, and volunteer medic services to support what they saw as a just cause (abolition), but one in which they could not take up arms. Both authors are experts in Anabaptist and Pietist studies as well as being of Mennonite faith, which likely gave them insights beyond the academic realm. Nevertheless, this volume is so esoteric that it would be most beneficial to graduate students or professional researchers. **Summing Up:** Optional. ★ Graduate students, researchers/faculty.—*C. R. Kasee, Winston-Salem State University*

46-0498 F592 2007-15798 CIP
Lewis & Clark and the Indian country: the Native American perspective, ed. by Frederick E. Hoxie and Jay T. Nelson. Illinois, 2007. 366p index afp ISBN 0252032667, \$70.00; ISBN 0252074858 pbk, \$24.95; ISBN 9780252032660, \$70.00; ISBN 9780252074851 pbk, \$24.95

Continuing the work that produced the Lewis and Clark online bicentennial exhibit (*Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation*, <<http://www.lewisandclark.org>>), this collection of documents, essays, and contemporary commentaries edited by Hoxie and Nelson with the assistance of five American Indian consultants successfully places the famous expedition within the broader context of a continental struggle over sovereignty and cultural power. What emerges is a fascinating narrative of cultural survival in the face of momentous

changes unleashed by the expedition. Essays by noted scholars help provide insights into the broader context of the expedition's planning, course, and consequences, and ensure that readers appreciate the many ways that Native Americans were pivotal actors in the Corps of Discovery's story. Later selections highlight how US expansion into the Upper Missouri region undermined Native American traditions and institutions. The book's final section, "The Indian Country Today," includes contemporary American Indian concerns in the region—salmon restoration on the Columbia, language restoration, culturally relevant education, cultural preservation, and environmental protection—and speaks to the enduring strength and commitment of the descendants of those peoples who helped ensure the success of the famed 1804 expedition. A must read for scholars in Native American history, the history of the trans-Mississippi West, and ethnohistory. **Summing Up:** Essential. ★★★★★ All levels/libraries.—*J. L. Brudvig, Dickinson State University*

46-0499 UA23 MARC
Linn, Brian McAllister. **The echo of battle: the army's way of war.** Harvard, 2007. 312p index ISBN 9780674026513, \$27.95

Forty-five years ago, Russell Weigley published his classic survey of US army theory in *Towards an American Army: Military Thought from Washington to Marshall* (1962). Linn (Texas A & M Univ.) has now updated Weigley's work with his remarkable new history of how the army anticipated future wars and analyzed past ones. The author divides army thinkers into three groups—Guardians, Heroes, and Managers—then examines the history of the army through the lens of each group and how it perceived the US should approach the next war. The Guardians dominated much of the army's thinking in the early 19th century, as the country shored up its coastlines with strong defenses. Then the Heroes took over, with their emphasis on the fighting qualities of individual soldiers. Finally, the managerial revolution of the early 20th century introduced the Managers, who recognized the challenges of fighting large-scale wars. Linn's assessment of army thought in the post-Cold War era is especially enlightening. This is an exceedingly well-crafted book that belongs on all shelves supporting the history of the US military tradition. **Summing Up:** Essential. ★★★★★ All levels/libraries.—*E. A. Goedeken, Iowa State University*

46-0500 BV2290 2006-19061 CIP
McKevitt, Gerald. **Brokers of culture: Italian Jesuits in the American West, 1848-1919.** Stanford, 2007. 428p bibl index afp ISBN 0804753571, \$60.00; ISBN 9780804753579, \$60.00

McKevitt (Santa Clara Univ.) fills a historiographical gap in the intellectual and religious history of the US West by tracing the impact of Italian Jesuits on the region's culture and institutions, exploring especially the "implications that national difference had for missionary work." The author shows how these educated Italians—fewer than 400 in the 19th century—brought the riches of classical learning (with an Italian accent) to the diverse cultures of the US West by a whirlwind founding of institutions that included colleges, boarding schools, and publishing houses. A widely ignored but very influential group of westerners, these Jesuits had an easier time with Native Americans because they were not US citizens. Moreover, Jesuit linguistic skills were an asset in relating to their pluralist environment. *Brokers of Culture* ably fulfills the promise of its title: this is a first-rate analysis of a group of religious culture brokers as they came to terms with



their order's often conflicting goals of religious orthodoxy and cultural accommodation. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ Libraries serving history graduate students and faculty.—*R. B. Bademan, Sacred Heart University*

46-0501 F392 2007-7624 CIP
Nevels, Cynthia Skove. **Lynching to belong: claiming whiteness through racial violence.** Texas A&M, 2007. 189p bibl index afp (Centennial series of the Association of Former Students, Texas A&M University, 106) ISBN 1585445894, \$24.95; ISBN 9781585445899, \$24.95

The last several years have witnessed an upsurge in the study of racial violence, especially lynching. In Texas history alone, two major works have appeared since 2004: Patricia Bernstein's study of the infamous Waco lynching of 1915 (*The First Waco Horror*, CH, Mar'06, 43-4216) and William Carrigan's more theoretical study, *The Making of a Lynching Culture* (CH, Sep'05, 43-0513). This new work takes a somewhat different approach to this dark aspect of the recent US past. Nevels (Blinn College) focuses on Brazos County in Texas and the demographic and political changes it experienced during the late 19th and very early 20th centuries. In 1890, African Americans became a majority of the county's population; at the same time, the county experienced an influx of European immigrants. Nevels compellingly argues that the emerging black majority led to efforts to suppress black political power, and the new European minorities used racism and their participation in racial violence as a means to establish their "whiteness." Her excellent, detailed study of the region's ethnic and racial composition clearly establishes the complex diversity of Brazos County's population, and by implication, other areas of the South, and should contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the history of these communities. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ All academic levels/libraries.—*C. D. Wintz, Texas Southern University*

46-0502 E99 2007-42925 CIP
Palmer, Jessica Dawn. **The Dakota peoples: a history of the Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota through 1863.** McFarland, 2008. 269p bibl index afp ISBN 9780786431779, \$55.00

Palmer presents a cultural history of the Sioux, including some southeastern Siouan-speaking groups, encompassing such topics as religion, politics, warfare, art, gender roles, and relations with whites. The book includes Native voices such as Charles Alexander Eastman and the James Walker texts and winter count histories. It is lavishly but not always carefully illustrated. Photographs, some not actually Sioux but serving as analogies, are sometimes misinterpreted by the author. Early etchings of non-Sioux also presented as visual cultural analogies may not even be accurate renderings of the cultures being depicted. Palmer revives the term "Dakota" for the macro group, eschewing "Sioux" as derogatory. As in the 19th century, this term leads to confusion between the collective and the eastern and central groups, also called Dakota. The author sometimes presents "Dakota" culture itself through a pastiche rather than a critical use of sources. The text sometimes unhelpfully ventures off to comparisons with other ancient and contemporary world cultures. Some portions are well footnoted; others are not. The bibliography is inadequate for such a broad topic. The text shows a large amount of work and creative thinking, but it is too factually and conceptually flawed to merit a recommendation. **Summing Up:** Not recommended.—*R. A. Bucko, Creighton University*

46-0503 E607 2007-10378 CIP
Phillips, Jason. **Diehard rebels: the Confederate culture of invincibility.** Georgia, 2007. 257p bibl index afp ISBN 0820328367, \$34.95; ISBN 9780820328362, \$34.95

Phillips (Mississippi State Univ.) successfully rejoins the "lost cause" to the events of the US Civil War. According to the author, it was not historians and Southerners who passed a longing glance backward to the Confederate cause that led to the phrase "lost cause," but rather the "diehards" who throughout the war created a culture of invincibility and nationalism that were the seeds of the lost cause rationale. Phillips challenges the notion that Southern culture changed after the war. Instead, he argues that the war entrenched Southern values, whereby Confederates refused to abandon their culture in the face of Union occupation and Reconstruction. Phillips has utilized a wealth of primary sources, in particular letters from Confederate soldiers. These letters suggest that between 1864 and 1865, Confederates entrenched a belief of invincibility and moral righteousness that allowed them to overlook the reality of their impending defeat. In focusing on the diehards, Phillips has offered new insight into Southern culture and the lost cause. In addition, his work with primary sources between 1864 and 1865 highlights the murkier side of the war and gives a truer account of the minds of the soldiers. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ All levels/libraries.—*M. A. Byron, University of Arkansas*

46-0504 E540 2007-29358 CIP
Reid, Richard M. **Freedom for themselves: North Carolina's black soldiers in the Civil War era.** North Carolina, 2008. 420p bibl index afp ISBN 9780807831748, \$40.00

Reid (Univ. of Guelph) provides the first state study of African American soldiers in the Union Army. Over 5,000 mostly rural slaves aged 18-28 in North Carolina were organized into four regiments led by white officers from Massachusetts. Reid devotes a chapter to each regiment, emphasizing their diverse mobilization, combat operations, fatigue duties, and Reconstruction service. Two chapters examine soldiers' families in contraband camps at New Bern and Roanoke and the difficulties facing black veterans. The book's documentary sources are military records, roster lists, military description books, and morning reports located at the National Archives. This book expands the understanding of state soldiers previously examined by editor Weymouth T. Jordan, *North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865* (1966-2003), and Michael C. Hardy, *The Thirty-seventh North Carolina Troops* (2003). The attention to communities off the battlefield as well as the social discontent of black soldiers promises new research possibilities beyond the traditional view of patriotic black troops sacrificing for the Union. Some fine illustrations; the bibliography lists major works on black soldiers in blue. **Summing Up:** Recommended. ★★ Undergraduates and above.—*J. R. Kerr-Ritchie, History Department, Howard University*

46-0505 E125 2007-37052 MARC
Reséndez, Andrés. **A land so strange: the epic journey of Cabeza de Vaca: the extraordinary tale of a shipwrecked Spaniard who walked across America in the sixteenth century.** Basic Books, 2007. 314p bibl index ISBN 0465068405, \$26.95; ISBN 9780465068401, \$26.95

Many books have been written—some quite recently—about Cabeza de Vaca's journey through Texas and northern Mexico. Reséndez's achievement is to provide a readable, scholarly, and comprehensive account