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Fall 2008

Review of *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation* By Jacqueline Fear-Segal

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Coleman, Michael C., "Review of *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation* By Jacqueline Fear-Segal" (2008). *Great Plains Quarterly*. 1300.

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White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation. By Jacqueline Fear-Segal. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007. xxiii, 395 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$55.00.

So many studies have been published on nineteenth-century U.S. government Indian schools that I initially wondered about the need for another. (My book has been published in the same series as that under review). Jacqueline Fear-Segal, senior lecturer in American history at the University of East Anglia, England, acknowledges her debt to this literature. Yet she validly insists on the importance of her contribution. Believing that previous studies have not “fully unpacked” issues of race, Fear-Segal contrasts the overt egalitarian rhetoric of white educators with what she sees as covert racist agendas, while probing the complex responses of Indian children and adults, many from the Great Plains region.

Briefly placing the campaign of acculturation in the context of tribal education, rising American racism, and missionary enterprises, she proceeds in her core chapters to make

creative use of archival and less-exploited source materials, such as pupil artwork, school newspapers, maps, and photographs. She compares the racial pessimism of General Samuel C. Armstrong, founder of the Hampton Institute in Virginia (schooling both Indians and African Americans), with the apparent optimism of General Richard H. Pratt, founder of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania. Fear-Segal critiques the “monstrous power game” of surveillance at Carlisle; moreover, her depiction of the spatiality of racism is a major contribution to the literature. Regardless of Pratt’s rhetoric, “Indian children lived and dined separately from whites and if they died, they were buried in a segregated cemetery.” The last part of *White Man's Club* examines the diverse effects of boarding schooling on students and later tribal generations, but also demonstrates Indian resilience and manipulation of white learning.

This is a rich and rewarding book. Scholars generally concur with Fear-Segal’s depiction of educator contempt for tribal cultures. Her dissection of possibly racist agendas is arrestingly impressive. Yet some historians, myself included, may still insist that the goal remained a form of equal citizenship for Indians. Despite an excellent discussion of Dakota language use at the Santee Normal Training School, perhaps Fear-Segal underrates missionary influence on the government school system. Her highlighting of Indian views further strengthens the study, yet we learn relatively little of actual classroom life; ex-pupil autobiographies might have been drawn on more extensively.

There is no conclusion, but in an ironic epilogue the author dramatizes the joy and sorrow of the commemorative pow-wow held at Carlisle in 2000. “Performing” their survival as distinct peoples, Indians danced at the site of the long-defunct school established to obliterate tribal identities. “It was a good day,” declared one of the participants.

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