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Review of *Lewis and Clark Through Indian Eyes: Nine Indian Writers on the Legacy of the Expedition* Edited by Alvin M. Josephy Jr. with Marc Jaffe and *Lewis and Clark and the Indian Country: The Native American Perspective* Edited by Frederick E. Hoxie and Jay T. Nelson

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REVIEW ESSAY

Lewis and Clark Through Indian Eyes: Nine Indian Writers on the Legacy of the Expedition. Edited by Alvin M. Josephy Jr. with Marc Jaffe. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006. xviii + 196 pp. Map, photographs, illustrations. \$25.00 cloth, \$14.00 paper.

Lewis and Clark and the Indian Country: The Native American Perspective. Edited by Frederick E. Hoxie and Jay T. Nelson. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007. 366 pages. Maps, notes, index. \$70.00 cloth, \$24.95 paper.

LEWIS AND CLARK: GONE; AMERICAN INDIANS: STILL HERE

History never embraces more than a small part of reality.
—François de La Rochefoucauld

The Meriwether Lewis and William Clark expedition is a well-known part of the history and lore of the United States. Its recent two-hundred-year anniversary from 2003 to 2006 added greatly to popular interest in the expedition and to academic writing on Lewis and Clark.

Often asked during the bicentennial commemorations was the question of the expedition's actual importance. In fact, there has always been debate about the significance of Lewis and Clark in American history and to the ultimate expansion of the United States across the continent: In earlier times, the explorers were idealized as American heroes. More recently, their importance and reputation have been diminished, perhaps too much. What is clear, at least to me, is that the expedition was a critical episode in America's opening and legally claiming the West. The individual personalities, however, were less important. Never mind whether it was the Lewis and Hooke expedition (Lewis had arranged for Lieutenant Moses Hooke to accompany him if Clark refused, Stephen Ambrose tells us in *Undaunted Courage* [1996], 99, 135), or the Smith and Jones expedition—President

Thomas Jefferson intended and promised Congress that the Corps of Discovery would open the West to American commerce and begin the United States' diplomatic and commercial relations with the Indian Nations in the Louisiana Territory and as far as the mouth of the Columbia River. For those geopolitical reasons alone, I think the expedition is more crucial to American history and expansion than some may assume today.

In any event, a long-standing gap in the Lewis and Clark story has been an American Indian perspective. The vast majority of American histories barely relate the impact of Lewis and Clark and the resulting Manifest Destiny on Indian lives and cultures. The bicentennial, however, gave Indian Nations and people a golden opportunity to tell their side of history. And Indians and tribes did just that.

As one would expect, Indian Nations focused on their own stories about the explorers, their own histories, and the issues and problems they face today. The Lewis and Clark anniversary was not something Indians cared to "celebrate" but offered an opportune occasion for highlighting the sobering historical

facts regarding those explorers as the forerunners of a tidal wave of American exploration, settlement, and Manifest Destiny.

I applaud the fact that more than fifty American Indian Nations and countless Indian people participated in the bicentennial, speaking at Lewis and Clark events and publishing their own histories and stories. The two books reviewed here are excellent examples of individual Indians advancing the important goal of creating Indian scholarship. Two other examples that came out of the Lewis and Clark anniversary are the Salish-Pend d'Oreille Culture Committee and Elders Cultural Advisory Council, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' *The Salish People and the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005) and this reviewer's *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and Manifest Destiny* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006). All four of these books add valuable tribal and Indian insights into the history, law, and indigenous viewpoints of Lewis and Clark and American history.

This new scholarship continues the attempts by tribes and Indians to place their oral cultures, traditions, and histories into the accepted mainstream of historical, anthropological, and sociological writings. Tribes and Indians *have* to do this to have their viewpoints and histories considered by the majority society. I am not arguing that this is an inherent good, or the only way to bring attention to Indian concerns; but I do believe this to be a necessary evolution in the dissemination of indigenous knowledge and history, and an excellent way to bring wider attention to Indian histories and views.

In *Lewis and Clark and the Indian Country: The Native American Perspective*, editors Frederick Hoxie and Jay Nelson give voice to countless tribes and Indians both in the modern day and through tribal legends. Interestingly, the Native viewpoint changed entirely the project these editors first envisioned and ultimately led to a four-month exhibit, all sorts of related events, and this book.

In 2001, Hoxie held a meeting with four American Indian consultants to consider an exhibition on Lewis and Clark's relationship with Indians (9-10). But the consultants wanted to discuss the issues of language, tribal museums and cultural centers, sacred lands and environmental issues, and tribal histories they were involved with, not Hoxie's draft agenda (10-11). The Native consultants "talked about everything *but* Lewis and Clark," contending that "Lewis and Clark began the process that led to this situation"—the issues the consultants worked on every day and wanted to examine (11). Thus, an eye-opening connection was made: in discussing contemporary tribal and Indian issues, Indian people were addressing "Lewis and Clark," "American Manifest Destiny," and resultant modern-day history. An entirely new exhibit and book emerged.

The volume's table of contents duplicates the Newberry Library exhibit this collaboration engendered (13). Hence, we get to "read" the exhibit. The book's four parts show the themes and approaches to examining the expedition: "The Indian Country" (life, ceremonies, gifts, societies, diplomacy, and pre-Lewis and Clark trade; "Crossing the Indian Country" (the expedition and Americans in Louisiana and the Oregon country); "A New Nation Comes to the Indian Country" (maps, fur traders, settlers, and Manifest Destiny); and "The Indian Country Today" (the issues Indians and tribes currently face).

The book closes with the Native consultants' views on what the Lewis and Clark expedition and bicentennial have meant for American Indians. Darrell Robes Kipp (Blackfeet), Otis Half Moon (Nez Perce), Frederick Baker (Mandan/Hidatsa), Pat Courtney Gold (Wasco), and Marjorie Waheneka (Umatilla) eloquently tell the Native side of the story (332-41). The editors deepen this dimension by printing tribal stories, legends, and histories in each section. Although I sometimes found it difficult to follow who was relating the various tribal legends, this is a minor complaint for a book that presents these powerful voices of Native

peoples. In fact, maybe my problem is that mainstream majoritarian historical writings are what I am mostly familiar with, and I need to get more attuned to indigenous histories.

Lewis and Clark Through Indian Eyes is an essential anthology written by nine Indian authors. Editors Alvin M. Josephy Jr. and Marc Jaffe gave them one complex question to answer: "What impact, good or bad, immediate or long-range, did the Indians experience from the Lewis and Clark expedition?" (xviii). Most of the authors did not address that question directly, but wrote what was important to them and their people. They wrote about Lewis and Clark "through Indian eyes." But approaching Lewis and Clark through a circuitous route and through family and tribal histories is perhaps an indigenous way to study and explain history, and thus this book is written exactly as it should have been.

For example, Vine Deloria Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux) discusses what he sees as three main topics of the Lewis and Clark journals: Frenchmen, bears, and sandbars. Deloria demythologizes the American saga of Lewis and Clark by pointing out that Frenchmen (and English and Spanish) had preceded the explorers everywhere they travelled (6-7). And Deloria sees the French as being more in tune with tribal life and the ecological health of the West than the Americans (8-11). Lewis and Clark "had little respect for Indians or their institutions [and] tended to see Indians as scheming to do them evil . . ." (13). Deloria also sees deep meaning in the problems the expedition had with grizzly bears, as if "the bears [had] foreseen the coming chaos on the plains represented by the presence of the expedition . . ." (16). Sandbars, and nature itself, were other obstacles that the expedition and Americans in general have had lots of problems overcoming (18-22).

In "What We See," Debra Magpie Earling (Salish and Kootenai) addresses a multitude of issues, only a few of which touch on Lewis and Clark. She intermingles Salish stories, ceremonies (38-39), prophecies of the coming of white men (29), and tribal and family histories

to say something profound about tribal life and connections to Native homelands. Ultimately, her own raft trip on the Missouri River forced her to think that Meriwether Lewis must have known the true effect his voyage would have on Indians, the "death and destruction" he was bringing, and that he was the spearhead of Manifest Destiny (47).

Newspaperman Mark Trahan (Shoshone-Bannock) makes acute observations about the myopic and ethnocentric viewpoints of Lewis and Clark, while also recounting his tribal and family histories. He points out how Lewis could only see and write about the "poverty" of the Lemhi Shoshone while ignoring the contradictory facts of the four hundred "fine" horses they possessed, the trade goods, and "the most elegant piece of Indian dress [Lewis] ever saw" (55). Lewis and Clark also overlooked the democratic forms of government that most Indian tribes employed (55-60). This ethnocentric viewpoint of Indians and their governments persists into the present.

Bill Yellowtail (Crow) concentrates on Indian economic issues, arguing that individual entrepreneurship has always been the Native American way of life and that Indian tribes have to promote this kind of activity again if they are to address effectively the poverty and social problems present on most reservations today (75-78, 80-83). In a whimsical comment, he thanks William Clark for contributing fifty horses to the economy of the Yellowstone region, which apparently Crow Indians "liberated" (71).

Roberta Conner (Umatilla, Cayuse, and Nez Perce) observes that the Lewis and Clark expedition was a two-week period in the thousands of years of history of the Columbia River Plateau tribes (87-88). Yet the expedition also represented the beginning of the American invasion of the region, the almost total dispossession of the tribes, and what she calls "the unsettling of the West" (119). She also explains how Lewis and Clark were American agents of empire and used the rituals and principles of the Doctrine of Discovery to claim the Pacific Northwest for the United States (105-12).

Manifest Destiny notwithstanding, she emphasizes that Indian tribes and peoples survived, are getting stronger, and will continue to be here for thousands of years more.

Gerard Baker (Mandan-Hidatsa), the National Park Service Superintendent at Mount Rushmore, tells the history of Sakakawea, whose tribal affiliation and background remain a puzzle. Most books and Shoshone people claim she was Lemhi Shoshone and had been captured by the Hidatsa and lived with them in what is now North Dakota. She then married Toussaint Charbonneau and accompanied the Lewis and Clark expedition when they hired Charbonneau as an interpreter. Baker recounts, though, the Hidatsa history of her birth, upbringing, and death as a Hidatsa woman, her capture by the Shoshone, and her escape back to her Hidatsa people (126-29). Believing we will probably never know her exact history, Baker emphasizes that she was well respected by Lewis and Clark and played a crucial role in the expedition (135).

Nez Perce and national tribal leader Allen Pinkham Sr. writes of Ni Mii Puu (Nez Perce) history, prophecies, and legends, some of which foretold the coming of the white man and involved Lewis and Clark (140, 145-46, 151-54). He tells of the wide-ranging travels of Ni Mii Puu people to many regions of North America (147-48) and recounts the story of Watxuuwiis and her advice that swayed the Nez Perce from killing Lewis and Clark (156).

Roberta Basch (Puyallup and Coeur D'Alene) and Richard Basch (Clatsop Nehalem) write a prayer about a family ceremony held in the lands of the Clatsop and Nehalem peoples. These tribes are not federally recognized to this day, despite Lewis and Clark having given

Fort Clatsop to the Clatsop Chief Coboway, and despite the tribes having signed the Treaty of Tansy Point in Oregon in 1851 (166-68). They and their citizens have perhaps suffered even more at the hands of the United States and Manifest Destiny than most federally recognized tribes. This prayer, this ceremony, powerfully drives home the importance of both tribal and family histories to Indian people as survival tools.

Pulitzer Prize-winning author N. Scott Momaday (Kiowa) closes the book with a poem that sees the Lewis and Clark expedition as a vision quest, a quest for all Americans, an "epic odyssey of the nation's mind and imagination" (192). For Indians and all other Americans, "nothing would be the same ever again" (192).

Perhaps, then, these authors did answer the editors' charge: while Lewis and Clark and their fellow travelers may be individually unimportant in the grand scheme of things, the "Lewis and Clark Expedition" was far-reaching in American and Indian history: opening the West to American settlement, beginning the onslaught of Manifest Destiny, and setting in motion events and issues that continue to affect American Indians and their governments adversely today.

Most North Americans have much remedial learning to do concerning the histories and contemporary realities of Indian Nations and Native peoples. These two books offer an excellent way to begin that process by viewing the Lewis and Clark expedition in its widest implications "through Indian eyes."

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