

and its documents, which are more familiar to readers and other legal historians. Finally, Jagodinsky has developed what she describes as an “anti-colonial history” in which she seeks to open spaces to reexamine the assumptions that naturalize settler ascendancy.

Oregon Historical Quarterly readers will be particularly interested in the three Puget Sound case studies. Nora Jewell’s case, which hinged on charges of rape against her non-Native guardian, evokes the precarious legal rights of Native women who married settler men and their children as Washington transitioned into statehood. Rebecca Lena Graham, the daughter of a Duwamish woman and American man, allows for a careful focus on interracial marriage and the lack of federal recognition for many Washington State tribes. Louisa Enick’s struggle to hold onto her public domain allotment illustrates the constraints placed on Native people, especially women, to prove up land in ways legible as improvements to federal agents as well as how many Indigenous women lost their land holdings administratively. The Southwestern case studies spark comparisons in a region that shared some similarities with the Northwest but was often harsher in its treatment of Native people. A final chapter rejects drawing conclusions about the studies in lieu of a discussion of the author’s methodology, crystallizing what Jagodinsky means by “anti-colonial history.” It is a fitting epilogue that makes the author’s methodology, which is informed by Indigenous research methods, transparent.

This structurally complicated book uses microhistories to interrogate the relationships between Indigenous women and settlers and their legal systems, as well as Indigenous resistance to those systems to maintain corporeal sovereignty and property. As such, Jagodinsky demonstrates how Indigenous biography can be used to examine the ambiguous and transitional spaces of indigeneity and gender in American borderlands.

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**MAKING THE WHITE MAN’S WEST:
WHITENESS AND THE CREATION OF THE
AMERICAN WEST**

by Jason Pierce

University of Colorado Press, Boulder, Colorado, 2017.
Notes, index. 296 pages. \$45.00, cloth.

In 1848 at the conclusion of the Mexican War — a war that added 500,000 square miles to U.S. territory — New York Senator John Adams Dix argued before Congress that he held it to be “our sacred duty to consecrate these [Western] spaces to the multiplication of the white race” (p. 133). In his book *Making the White Man’s West*, Jason Pierce investigates assertions such as this one by Dix, detailing how boosters of the West, federal and local politicians, railroad companies, and ideologues explicitly argued that the West serve as a refuge for a White society increasingly overwhelmed in the urban east by non-Anglo immigrants. Intellectually, they imagined a place where there would be no African Americans, no slavery, and few undesirable immigrants, and they worked to create political and economic conditions to make that a reality. While promoters of the West recognized that the region was inhabited by Native peoples and Mexicans, these groups’ numbers were sufficiently small. Anglos identified them as “colorful” and “quaint,” and they were easily rendered politically and economically powerless through the reservation system, disfranchisement, and quite often violence (p. 5, 96, and 109). While Pierce’s underlying argument is not necessarily novel, this work brings together the myriad ways in which many powerful actors created exclusive spaces and opportunities for what nineteenth century social Darwinists and “racial theorists” identified as superior peoples: Anglo American pioneer settlers. This work would serve well students in an upper-division American history course as a well as a general readers interested in how the ideology of Manifest Destiny for Whites took many forms, creating a West where White settlers

would dominate the physical, economic, and political landscape.

Pierce covers a lot of ground in this work, detailing the initial trepidation about the “opening” of the West held by many social and biological scientists, who worried that White American settlement in the West would lead to racial degeneration through exposure to the warmer climate. They were also concerned that White settlers would adopt what observers identified as the barbaric farming methods and lazy living habits of Native peoples and Mexicans. Other eugenicists, however, would counter these claims by arguing that Anglo pioneers were biologically fit and less effete than their European counterparts who did not venture West, and therefore had acquired the rugged characteristics needed to thrive in the West. In fact, as Pierce details nicely, boosters of the West, such as popular writer and magazine editor Charles Lummis, intellectually imagined the West as a restorative space for Anglo pioneers whose inherent character was at risk of decline when located in the urban East among “motley” immigrants, a place where Whites could bring superior civilization and development (p. 113).

Also serving the project of creating a White man’s West were the practices of settler recruitment by transcontinental railroad companies that owned millions of acres in federal land grants. Agents of the railroads explicitly recruited Anglo Americans to purchase and settle on railroad lands, thus promoting vibrant economic and socially stable development of the region, and bringing profits to railroad companies. Railroad agents also traveled specifically to Germany and Scandinavia to encourage immigration to the West with the assumption that these groups were hardworking, sober, and, as opposed to the Irish and other immigrant groups, would contribute positively to the character of the region. Mormon settlers and their effective missionary work with northern Europeans also informed the Whiteness of the region. Additionally, as is detailed in other scholarly works, Pierce

identifies how state legislatures passed laws to either physically exclude African Americans, Asians, and other undesirables or nullify their political power. Finally, violence was used with great frequency by the U.S. Army, Texas border patrol agents, and vigilante groups, disseminating populations and thus removing groups who might challenge White hegemony.

Pierce does not sufficiently identify the ways in which gender and race intersect in this narrative of White settlement of the West, and integrating this form of analysis into this work could add complexity to the larger argument. As Peggy Pascoe has argued, for example, intermarriages between Anglo American male settlers and Mexican or Native women were critical to the process of developing political and economic White supremacy, and prevailing sexualized and racialized ideologies about non-White versus White women informed the consequential results of those marriages.

While the West in 2017 is clearly more racially diverse than it was in the post–Civil War era, many interior western communities have populations of more than 90 percent non-Hispanic White. Additionally, one has to look no farther than the former province of Mexico, Arizona, to see how conflicts between Anglo legislators, law enforcement, and Mexican and Mexican-American communities have centered on the legitimacy of non-White peoples to live, work and participate politically in this region. Pierce’s work lays a terrific historical backdrop to contemporary debates about race and power in the West. Finally, the work is important to documenting how the West was made White not just in settlers’ intellectual imaginations but also through active federal and state legislative and economic policies prioritizing White settlement — and with violence, if needed. White dominance in the West was due not just to happenstance; various actors worked to make it so.

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