

plotation of nature and of marginalized beings, including nonwhites, women, and nonhuman animals. That being said, Dolan beautifully defines the social justice implications of her work, arguing on behalf of literature as the “foundational site of cultural production, as a nation defines itself through its literary works” (4) and promotes “hopeful positive action through literature” (26). With her epilogue, Dolan repeats her call to action, arguing that if she can uncover such clear patterns and repetitions between literature of the nineteenth century and literature being produced in our contemporary moment, perhaps the monoculture and exploitation that remains inherent in large-scale industrial agricultural practices can be successfully combated and ultimately eliminated in favor of local, sustainable food production.

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Old Blue's Road: A Historian's Motorcycle Journeys in the American West.

By James Whiteside. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2015. ix + 282 pp. Illustrations, maps, index. \$19.85 paper.

It is unusual to be able to peer into an historian's mind just as he or she is about to initiate a major research project. I do not mean the long preface outlining vital archival work done prior to writing the first page of the manuscript that will reflect months or often years of preparation. In *Old Blue's Road*, author James Whiteside clearly sets the stage for this book in the first sentence.

“This is nuts.”

“Sitting on my motorcycle just after sunrise on a cool, misty August morning . . .” (1). So

begins this odyssey of a now retired historian seeking to add vigor to a world he has lectured about and written of for decades. The mechanism he has selected for such vitalization is a series of trips around the American West on a new 700-pound Harley-Davidson motorcycle that the Milwaukee manufacturer calls the *Heritage Softail*. Whiteside refers to it as “Old Blue.”

And lest you think that Whiteside *was* nuts to undertake this mission, consider a paragraph at the end of the book. “It was a privilege to see all of these Wests and to think about their history on Old Blue's road. The road connected me to history in a very personal way. Out there I saw the past, touched it, and sometimes even felt it emotionally. Out there I sensed more clearly than I ever had in books and archives how the past and the present rub up against one another” (265).

Early in the book, Whiteside gives one further glimpse into his mindset. “Many years ago I penned something called the *Immutable Second Law of History*, revised edition: . . . ‘For any historical question having two or more plausible explanations, the correct interpretation is ‘yes’” (7). He supports this multiplicity of potential answers to historical questions because he is focused not on the America West, but rather on the American Wests.

There are the plains West, the arid Southwest, and the rainy Pacific Northwest. . . . And there are the human, cultural, and idealized Wests. There are polyglot Wests, filled with conflict, nostalgia, and contradiction. . . . Historian Clyde Milner II has written, “the American West is an idea that became a place.” . . . I think the reverse is equally true, that the West is a place that became an idea, or a collection of ideals

and values—individualism, freedom and democracy, opportunity—all deeply imbedded in American notions of who they are. (262–63)

Old Blue's Road is given over much more to historical chronicle—developed primarily around issues of Indian–white conflicts, resource extraction, and the transformation of these Wests through quest for water and its control—than it is to Whiteside's biking narrative. However, the buzz that comes from his conversations and observations along the way—"We got 60 kinds of beer here" which later turned out to mean "20 Coors, 20 Budweisers, and 20 Miller Lites" (93), or "Silverton makes its living these days by mining the pockets of skiers, mountain bicyclists, and other tourists" (150), or "Jackson Hole dude ranchers, who made their living by herding summer tourists rather than cattle, were among the first proponents of conservation" (185)—bring a refreshing energy to the prose.

One facet of the book that is of enormous value to a reader who is more at home with archives than biker customs is the notes that follow each chapter. Annotation is provided by superscript in the text corresponding to chapter-ending notes that include detailed classic archival sources, as well as Internet sites and sources, films, government documents, and even song lyrics. One of the frustrations of the book is the black and white photography. Resolution is especially poor in the broad landscape vistas, but on the other hand, a thirteen-page index adds a significant additional dimension to the historical discussions that are the major substance of James Whiteside's book.

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*Malinche, Pocahontas, and Sacagawea:
Indian Women as Cultural Intermediaries
and National Symbols.*

By Rebecca Kay Jager. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015. vii + 343 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paper.

Malinche, Pocahontas, and Sacagawea (and perhaps all women) were born with a "flaw": that as women they could and would be used as pawns in the sometimes treacherous world of men. They surely sensed their female vulnerability while growing into strong and determined women. As the children of "heathen and uncivilized" mothers and fathers, they proved themselves civil activists, advocates, and ambassadors whose stories were not only recorded but also immortalized and mythologized beyond what was recognizable in their lives. All young, all on the verge of womanhood, their loyalty to white males was initially interpreted as either proof of their attraction to European men and/or a rejection of their Indianness. Jager artfully explores the complexities of these women's agency and provides a detailed background on Malinche's Mesoamerican culture, Powhatan's expectations of Pocahontas, and the Shoshone and Hidatsa traditions that affected Sacagawea.

Malinche, Pocahontas, and Sacagawea were all cultural intermediaries, evidenced by the historical record; certainly there are parallels and interesting comparisons to be made. These women were the offspring of the North American continent, but truth evades capture in this manuscript. These females' lives were so distinct and separated by vast distances, that their commonality as "Indian" is suspect. Perhaps *all women* created agency in spite of frequently being objects of exchange in a system where men typically were subjects acting on their own volition.