

politics (p. 141). The Taiping Civil War (p. 139)—quickly recognized as a disaster for commerce—proved integral to Sino-American and Anglo-American debates about neutrality and sovereignty both in China and at home.

Such points should not, however, detract from the impressive deft with which Norwood weaves together complex political and commercial developments unfolding in the United States and China. The book is well researched, crisply written, and, importantly, addresses a long-overlooked aspect of Sino-American contact. *Trading Freedom* is certain to become a vital reference point for scholars interested in the political economy of the United States, new histories of capitalism, and U.S. imperial ambitions.

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Northern Paiutes of the Malheur: High Desert Reckoning in Oregon Country.
By David H. Wilson Jr. (Lincoln, Neb., Bison Books, 2022. 336 pp.)

I find this book to be very readable, and the concepts easily grasped for any reader. The author is not a scholarly authority on Native people's history but is instead a retired law school professor who spent some eight years researching the Paiute people. Many of the author's descriptions of the complex arrangement of the tribes in eastern Oregon make it easy for readers to envision where the reservations were and the complexity of the politics and laws and policies of the time. The project taken on by the author involves at least four tribes and associated reservations in eastern Oregon, Nevada, and Idaho, how they were organized, and the politics and legal quandaries of American settlement in tribal lands that had not yet been sold to the United States. There are good characterizations of Indian agents that established and followed Indian policies of the United States. The Paiute history of Oregon is one area in which we could find little accessible scholarship before a decade ago.

The author is right on the mark when he addresses the rights of the Paiutes when their lands were being settled. Wilson states "Paiutes had legal rights to their lands. . . . A people whose lands were invaded had no obligation legal or otherwise to capitulate. They had every right to fight back" (p. 25). The author states that he worked with many Paiute people, and that the book addresses their history, especially the history of Chief Egan.

I began reading expecting to find much more Native perspective than what is presented. Much of the narrative is from the perspectives of the

principal white men involved with Indian or military affairs of the time. It is very difficult for the period of the 1840s and later to find the written perspectives of the tribes, much less the Paiutes, so the perspectives of white men may always take precedence. At times Wilson spends too much time addressing the white men and their perspectives and this approach unbalances and detracts some from the narrative. Wilson takes tangents into the biographies of individuals like Peter Skene Ogden, Samuel Thurston, Robert Thompson, and others. Many white men in Indian Affairs were racist in their associations with tribes, and Paiutes are regularly termed as “violent,” as engaged in “warfare,” or being chased and pursued (pp. 25–27). This perspective foregrounds the tribes as criminal elements. When the author concludes sections, he appears to not agree with the white characterizations of the tribes and even sympathizes with their fight for survival. Engaging with the Paiute perspective as much as possible would have helped balance the narrative.

As I read the book, I found many small facts to quibble with. Wilson mentions the two treaty periods as 1850–52 and 1854–55, information he cites from Coen. The two treaty periods were actually 1851–52 and 1853–55 according to when the two Superintendents Anson Dart and Joel Palmer negotiated them and sent them to Congress. Then the author addresses how Superintendent Dart took over treaty proceedings from the Willamette Valley Treaty Commission and “followed the pattern set by the Commissioners” (p. 27). This point is not exactly accurate, because only one of the thirteen Dart Columbia River treaties included a reservation. Additionally, Wilson quotes an older date for the Numic expansion, 1000 A.D., when more recent analyses, supported by tribal scholars, suggests the Paiute culture appeared 11,000 years before the present.⁴ It is details like this that most readers will not be attuned to and so the facts as presented will misinform many readers.

Wilson initiates a discussion about the notion of Native character in his chapter on the Snake War. The author presents a long discussion about phrenology, the theory of how the shape of the skull represents human characters. The subject may have been significant for a few decades in some scholarly circles but was unlikely relevant to the Paiute peoples. The attainment of civilization for tribal people according to Indian Affairs during the

4. Sydney M. Lamb, “Linguistic Prehistory in the Great Basin,” *International Journal of American Linguistics* 24 no. 2 (1958): 95–100; Melvin G. Brewster, “Numu Views of Numu Cultures and History: Cultural Stewardship Issues and a Punown View of Gosiute and Shoshone Archaeology in the Northeast Great Basin,” University of Oregon (2003): 51–72. Brewster is a Paiute person, a member of the Walker River Indian Reservation.

nineteenth century was more about converting Natives to Christianity and farming than phrenology. It is potentially confusing to see this attention to phrenology in the middle of this book (pp. 58–66).

Its difficult for me as a scholar to read this book, noting the factual errors and the lack of Native perspectives. The book can help many readers understand some of the complexity of the Paiute history, but the literary side trips Wilson takes add some unnecessary confusion to the text. Wilson shines when addressing the legality and immorality of taking Native lands and treating the Paiutes like rogues. The motivations of the Army and the Indian service in managing Native peoples is also important and Wilson has done good work bringing depth to their characters. In addition, Malheur is the one Indian reservation which has poor scholarly attention because it was so short-lived, and this book begins to answer questions about its formation and termination.

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Pioneering Death: The Violence of Boyhood in Turn-of-the-Century Oregon. By Peter Boag. (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 2022. Xii + 344 pp.)

In 1895, eighteen-year-old Loyd Montgomery, the eldest son of a rural share-cropping family in Brownsville, Oregon, committed a triple homicide that sent shockwaves throughout the region. With seemingly little provocation beyond a slap in the face, Montgomery turned his rifle on his parents and a family friend. In his fascinating study of the murder and its aftermath, Peter Boag insists that typical explanations for parricides provided by psychologists and criminologists are insufficient: “Ascribing the offense to personality types and mental illness ignores a variety of temporal matters” (p. 9). Instead, Boag places the parricide within the context of 1890s agrarian Oregon at a time of economic depression, political disillusionment, and increasing urbanization.

What emerges from the book is, on one hand, a declension narrative. Montgomery grew up in the shadow of dwindling prospects for putatively self-sufficient Anglo-American farm families, ceaselessly romanticized for subduing Indigenous communities and altering the physical landscape of Oregon. In contrast, Montgomery’s family did not own their farm and were at the mercy of global markets and fluctuating crop prices. But for Boag, there’s more to the story. The violence at the root of American expansion and ethnic cleansing, combined with the danger and severity of agrarian