

that led to her court case; and even the identity of the person who filed the writ of habeas corpus that resulted in her freedom, are mostly incorrect. The most embarrassing error occurs on p. 157 with the inclusion of a purported photograph of Bidly Mason. Anyone who is familiar with the case of Bidly Mason would likely point out, at first glance, that the photograph is not of her. A quick Google search reveals that it is a portrait of her daughter, Ellen.

In all, Pfaelzer deserves praise for trying to write an ambitious new history of California, but that ambition should have been counterbalanced by a rigorous attention to detail, veracity, and the ethics of historical research. Researchers should appreciate Pfaelzer's passionate storytelling and her earnest desire to uncover the horrors of California's past, but they would do well to use caution when citing or quoting *California, A Slave State* without thorough fact-checking first.

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*Damming the Gila: The Gila River Indian Community and San Carlos Irrigation Project, 1900–1940.* By David H. DeJong. (Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 2024. 392 pp.)

Many Americans have only a broad sense of Indigenous history. To the extent that they think about it at all, it's often about the deep past, or calamities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with less attention paid to tribal communities in the twentieth century. David DeJong helps remedy this in *Damming the Gila*, the third of his planned five-book series on the Gila River Indian Community, the U.S. government, and the river itself. He makes a valuable contribution, but the book is a bit too intricate for a non-specialist reader.

Focusing on the period from 1900 to 1944, DeJong lays out the political history of irrigation water in the Gila River. At the start of the twentieth century, the federal government's goal was to make Native Americans into small farmers, applying the Jeffersonian ideal to Indigenous communities. But the Akimel O'otham, whose ancestors had actually farmed in what's now Arizona since well before the arrival of Europeans, had had their water stolen—the subject of DeJong's first Gila book—and, unable to irrigate their fields, endured starvation in the early twentieth century. The San Carlos Irrigation Project, centered around the 249-foot Coolidge Dam, was supposed to remedy the situation, but foundered amidst political machinations and problems with capital and infrastructure.

DeJong goes into minute detail on every aspect of the story—*Damming the Gila* is one of the most granular books I have ever read. It is a true feat of scholarship, and DeJong has obviously spent many, many hours in the archives. He delivers a tremendous wealth of well-supported information but makes it fairly dense—do we really need to know, for example, that the road on top of the dam was 20 feet wide, expanding to 26 in places? A more efficient approach that prioritized important points and moments might have made the material more accessible and expanded its audience beyond professionals.

All the same, DeJong does well as he shows some of the major problems afflicting tribal communities and western water. Processes like land severalty and allotment and reserved rights get the attention they deserve here. He also shows the specific impacts of the central problem of the American West—that there isn't enough water for all the people who want it, no matter how many dams and canals the Bureau of Reclamation builds. These are region-defining issues, and it is great to have this strong account of how they evolved and took hold.

The book would have benefitted from a bit more interwoven analysis. After a short contextual chapter, the bulk of the volume is straightforwardly descriptive, and it's often difficult to see the way the events of the book contribute to his argument. DeJong describes related water issues afflicting other tribal communities and the rulings that directed tribal water, but he could have worked more connection with the broader region into the book. Telegraphing his argument and showing events' meaning for that argument would have made this work more applicable and representative. Nonetheless, the book is interesting and rich, and students of tribal rights and western water should be grateful for it.

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PETER BREWITT

*Seattle from the Margins: Exclusion, Erasure, and the Making of a Pacific Coast City.* By Megan Asaka. (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 2022. 272 pp.)

*Seattle from the Margins: Exclusion, Erasure, and the Making of a Pacific Coast City*, by Megan Asaka, is a well-researched, compelling and much-needed study of the largest city in the Pacific Northwest. In this thought-provoking study, Asaka weaves together urban and rural sites as well as