

the Sioux found it equally difficult to travel farther east than the Straits to trade for European goods.

We are thus presented with a reading of historical events that foregrounds Indian agendas, casting the Seven Years War, in North America, at least, as the First Anglo-Indian War and Pontiac's Rebellion as the Second Anglo-Indian War. From this perspective the American Revolution was not a catastrophe for the Anishinaabeg, but merely another diplomatic challenge to be dealt with. Moving into the nineteenth century, McDonnell argues for an Anishinaabeg who were able to avoid formal Indian removal even as they are forced to give up much of their land and then later repurchase parts of it in order to continue living near the Straits.

Instructors seeking monographs that reflect current historiography in this field will find *Masters of Empire* a useful book for students who already have an understanding of the basic chronology of colonial events. The introduction and/or conclusion to the book might also be used as excerpts for classes where a three hundred plus page monograph would not work. By shifting his primary perspective from Europeans to Indians, McDonnell not only engages with contemporary historiographical issues but also helps point the way to a new standard colonial narrative that hopefully avoids both European triumphalism and Indian declension while helping bring into view the far more complicated and compelling histories of the many varied regions that comprise North America.

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Daniel Geary. *Beyond Civil Rights: The Moynihan Report and Its Legacy.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015. Pp. 265. Cloth, \$45.00.

In *Beyond Civil Rights: The Moynihan Report and Its Legacy*, Daniel Geary, assistant professor of history at Trinity College in Dublin, draws on prodigious research, including numerous archival sources, to investigate the longstanding controversy surrounding Daniel Moynihan's 1965 position paper, *The Negro Family: A Case for National Action*, popularly known as the Moynihan Report. Assistant Secretary of Labor in the Johnson Administration at the time, Moynihan urged government action to stimulate black employment. But the report's correlation between the breakdown of the patriarchal family and what Moynihan identified as the pathology of black poverty proved contentious from the start. Johnson backed away and ignored Moynihan's policy proposals. Regardless, Geary contends *The Negro Family* was significant for the fierce debate it generated. Moynihan asserted critics misunderstood his report. Geary instead argues that the "multiple and conflicting meanings" within *The Negro Family* allowed for varying interpretations among liberals, conservatives, civil rights leaders, Black Power advocates, feminists, and academics who came to view

it as a "Rorschach test ... reflecting deep ideological cleavages" of the past fifty years (206).

Geary examines how Moynihan's grounding in the liberal mindset of the post-war era helped shape *The Negro Family*. As a progressive Catholic, he championed social justice as well as the prospect that government reform could manage black poverty. His attention, however, focused exclusively on male unemployment, as he embraced the conventional view that men should work while women stay home and raise children. World War II had provided opportunity for men such as Moynihan. Military service, he suggested, could again provide job training for black men of the 1960s. Moynihan believed his Irish background afforded him personal insight into the African American experience, which he equated with that of other European immigrant groups. The emphasis of ethnicity over class became a central feature of *The Negro Family*. Moynihan, Geary argues, had hoped to write about African American families to highlight economic inequality, but instead he "slipped into defining that inequality primarily in racial terms" (65).

Geary demonstrates how Moynihan struck a nerve as his report raised key questions about racial politics amidst an emerging culture war. Americans took sides over whether the destruction of black families demanded government action to encourage black employment or whether black poverty was self-inflicted and beyond the reach of government help. *The Negro Family* appealed to some African Americans who appreciated its spotlight on racial inequity. Others, however, lambasted it as an excuse for government inaction and smeared Moynihan as a racist intent on sending black men to die in Vietnam (95). While some Black Power advocates "shared Moynihan's disdain for matriarchal family structures," feminists, both black and white, condemned the report as sexist and perpetuating a matriarchal myth (122). Sociologists also questioned Moynihan's research for failing to account for class and historical variables. Their charges, Geary argues, had an upside of reinvigorating scholarship on the resiliency of the black family, including Alex Haley's *Roots* (1976).

Assailed by critics from the Left, Moynihan defended his report and repositioned himself as a leader of an emerging neoconservative movement. His infamous 1971 memo to President Nixon urging a position of "benign neglect" on civil rights issues refueled debate over *The Negro Family*. Although Moynihan had meant to limit talk rather than action, "it is easy to see," Geary argues, how people interpreted his memo "as marking a national retreat from racial equality" (202). As a Democratic Senator from New York between 1977 and 2001, Moynihan struggled to find middle ground as his colleagues on the Left and the Right continued to spar over the meaning of his seminal work. Even in more recent years, *The Negro Family's* call for government action could never break through the controversy the book unleashed.

Although sympathetic with Moynihan's plea for racial equality, Geary concludes that his emphasis on the black family distracted from more genuine problems of political economy. Those who support "economic and social justice," he argues, can do better than appeal to a report "that embodies only the ambitions of the 1960s

liberalism but also all of its shortcomings" (223). However, for those looking for coverage of the vicissitudes of civil rights politics over the past fifty years, Geary's examination of the controversy surrounding the Moynihan Report is a good place to start. It deserves consideration for use in courses on the civil rights movement and modern American history.

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