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Evan Haefeli, Kevin Sweeney, eds. *Captive Histories: English, French, and Native Narratives of the 1704 Deerfield Raid.* Native Americans of the Northeast: Culture, History, and the Contemporary Series. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006. xx + 298 pp. $22.95 (paper), ISBN 978-1-55849-543-2.

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Other Voices Heard From: Uncovered Histories of 1704 Deerfield Raid

In 1707, the first printing of Reverend John Williams's narrative, *The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion*, which recounts his captivity as a result of the 1704 raid on Deerfield, appeared for mass consumption. Since then it has taken its place alongside Mary Rowlandson's 1682 account of her captivity during Metacom's War, *The Sovereignty and goodness of God*, as one of the most famous and widely read colonial captivity narratives. Rowlandson's and Williams's accounts have provided centuries of readers with their understanding of the frontier experience in colonial New England, which primarily focused on the religious and political significance of the captivity experience, almost strictly from a puritan perspective. Moreover, Williams's account has served as the inspiration and centerpiece of scholarly accounts of the 1704 raid as well as collections of captivity narratives.[1]

Haefeli and Sweeney have been adding to our understanding of both the Williams narrative and the raid on Deerfield for over a decade. Now they have followed up on their 2003 award-winning Deerfield study *Captors and Captives* with a most diverse and valuable collection of primary sources regarding the Deerfield raid of 1704.[2] In *Captive Histories* the duo continue in their quest to rethink the raid by providing a collection of sources that includes John Williams's famous narrative–indeed, no collection would be complete without it–but places it, not as the centerpiece, but within the larger scope of English narratives and recollections of the event. In addition to *The Redeemed Captive* is an account by Williams's young son Stephen from 1707 that provides a child's view of the experience, as well as the 1729 recollections of Joseph Petty regarding his escape from New France in 1705 and Joseph Kellogg's c. 1740 story "When I was carried to Canada," which is particularly valuable in shedding light on how captive children were converted to Catholicism and New England's overwhelming fear of the Roman Catholic Church.

While the English narratives give us a much broader view of the captivity experience beyond that of the jeremiad, the most unique and valuable aspects of this collection are the inclusion of both French narratives and, most especially, Mohawk and Abenaki oral traditions. French sources include letters from Phillipe de Rigaud Vaudreuil, governor general of New France, and Claude de Ramezay, governor of Montreal, to the minister of the marine in 1704. These letters allow us a closer look into political struggles within New France as the two men were rivals for power in the colony. We are also able to learn of the political and military importance of the Deerfield raid in the larger context of imperial rivalry. Other French sources include the Jesuit Louis d'Avaugour's 1710 letter in which he describes Lorette, the Jesuit mission to the Hurons. Several individuals from Lorette took part in the raid, and in this letter, which describes the spiritual life of the Lorettans, it is possible, "if one looks beyond the particular names and religious authorities involved," to see "remarkable continuities with pre-Christian times" (p. 192). For example, d'Avaugour discusses the Lorettans' participation in the Feast of All Saints, at which they "attend the divine mysteries, and relieve by pious prayers the souls of the dead, a duty which they perform with remarkable piety and attention" (p. 195). Haefeli and Sweeney note the connection between the Lorettans' "remarkable piety" and the Hurons' continuation of the rites of their Feast of the Dead.[3]

Yet more significant than ethno-historical information gleaned from European sources is the inclusion of both Mohawk and Abenaki sources regarding their own understanding of the Deerfield raid and its aftermath. Haefeli and Sweeney begin the Mohawk sources with an

1882 transcription of "The Story of the Bell," an oral tradition that remains a part of the Kahnawake community today. The story describes how the Kahnawake Mohawks raided Deerfield in order to retrieve a bell that had been captured by the English before it could be installed in their church. The editors identify the writer of the story as Mrs. E. A. Smith, a non-native, who offers some interpolation that is quite condescending to Mohawk spirituality. And while the story is not a factual recounting of events–there was no bell present in Deerfield–the editors note "that this story's function is more mythical than historical" (p. 214). The story of the bell can "convey certain cultural truths about the Mohawks involvement in the raid … for example the important role of women and children in the religious and political life of the community" (pp. 214-215). Furthermore, "the story can be seen as an allegory about captive taking" (p. 215). So while such oral traditions have been ignored as factually inaccurate and therefore not useful, Haefeli and Sweeney provide the proper context in which this oral tradition becomes a window into understanding the Kahnawake Mohawk community and its motives and role in the Deerfield raid.

The editors also include the 1995 presentation of Taiaike Alfred, a member of the Kahnawake community and a political scientist, to the guides and employees of Historic Deerfield Inc., not only as an example of continuing oral tradition, but as "an informed commentary on the issues raised by the story from a contemporary Mohawk perspective" (p. 245). In his presentation, Alfred focuses on the importance of community-building by absorbing captives–the mourning war–as a reason behind the Deerfield raid and others like it. And while John Williams stands as the most famous author on the raid, his daughter Eunice, who became a member of the Kahnawake community, remains the most famous captive. Eunice is that "Unredeemed Captive" at the center of John Demos' book. Yet Alfred notes that from the Kahnawake perspective "Eunice Williams is remembered no differently than any other ancestor" (p. 250). He continues, "there is no unique sense of the captives who came to Kahnawake … there is no attention paid to the individual character … there is a collective sense–a collective history–and we share that history" (p. 251).

While the Mohawk perspective is presented as one of a community history of survival, the Abenaki oral traditions included in *Captive Histories* focus on their "abiding sense of their ancient ties to the land now a part of the United States" (p. 255). Elizabeth Sadoques' 1922 "History of Eunice Williams" emphasizes movements of people upon the land, particularly up and down the Quanitagook, or Connecticut, river. As with the Mohawks, in the Abenaki tradition, the story of Eunice is used to uncover the larger truths within the Abenaki community, in this case their continuing connections with their traditional homeland.

Haefeli and Sweeny have provided a great service in compiling this collection of primary sources. It should prove particularly useful to undergraduates as they read these accounts along with the editors' own *Captives and Captors* or Demos's *Unredeemed Captive*. Used on its own, it can also provide the basis of discussion for a wide variety of subjects including racial, ethnic, and religious identities. Charles B. de Saileville's 1842 account of Eunice Williams alone could easily be the centerpiece of lively discussion concerning ideas of identity and what it meant to be of Mohawk and European descent in nineteenth-century New England. The numerous explanatory footnotes provide excellent factual clarification and understanding for the uninitiated in the complexity of the Deerfield raid, and the introductory pieces to each individual source will give students sufficient explanation to understand the texts' greater significance. This is particularly true for the Mohawk and Abenaki sources. By including and contextualizing these oral traditions and scholarly perspectives, students should be challenged to consider the significance and contributive value of Native American sources not only for understanding Deerfield, but also for the multitude of events in which Native peoples participated but for which their voices have not been heard. It will also hopefully serve as a call for scholars to look more seriously at Native sources in order to gain a truer and more inclusive understanding of Native and European encounters of all types.

Notes

[1]. See John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America* (New York: Knopf, 1994); Richard VanDerBeets, ed., *Held Captive by Indians: Selected Narratives, 1642-1836* (Knoxville: Tennessee University Press, 1994); and Alden T. Vaughn and Edward W. Clark, eds., *Puritans Among the Indians: Accounts of Captivity and Redemption, 1676-1724* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press/Belknap Press, 2005).

[2]. Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney, "Revisiting the Redeemed Captive: New Perspectives on the 1704 Attack on Deerfield," T*he William and Mary Quarterly* 52, no. 1 (1995): 3-46; Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney, *Captors and Captives: The 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 2003); and Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney, " 'The Redeemed Captive' as Recurrent Seller: Politics and Publications, 1707-

1853," *The New England Quarterly* 77, no. 3 (2004): 341-367.

[3]. Reuben Gold Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, 73 vols. (Cleveland: Burrows Brothers, 1896-1900), 10, 278-303.

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