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in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Ronald N. Satz. *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002. xv + 343 pp. $19.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8061-3432-1.

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Published on H-Tennessee (July, 2004)

Revisiting the History of American Indian Policy

The 1960s served as a transitional period for historians of Native America. After a century of general neglect and marginalization, Indians emerged as a popular topic of study during an era characterized by civil rights struggles, neo-imperialism, and publicized political corruption. Less than a decade after the emergence of this new focus, however, historians and non-historians alike began to challenge the ways that scholars interpreted natives and their past. Advocates of social history, anthropology, and the new field of ethnohistory contested earlier conclusions and ongoing emphases in the field, especially those that centered on policies, perceptions, and personalities affecting indigenous peoples rather than indigenous peoples themselves. Though the full impact of what became known as New Indian History would not be felt until the 1980s and 1990s, the die had been cast. Nevertheless, traditional portrayals of Native Americans continued to surface and reinforce older paradigms. Of these offerings, few highlighted conventional perspectives more than Ronald Satz's *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era*, first published in 1974.

On its face and at its core, this work is a policy history. Satz sets out to evaluate U.S. governmental attitudes towards natives and illustrate the methods politicians employed to deal with them between the 1820s and 1840s. In his preface to the new edition written in 2001, the author claims that his work still remains "the only comprehensive monograph on the subject" (p. ix). A key theme is the role played by Andrew Jackson in Indian affairs and more specifically, his portrayal in historiography. Criticizing authors such as Francis Paul Prucha and Robert Remini for celebrating Jackson's humanitarian impulse, as well as Michael Rogin and Anthony F. C. Wallace for demonizing the president's intentions, Satz asserts a middle of the road approach. De-emphasizing the rhetoric of the period, the author under review looks at the actual deeds and accomplishments of government in order to make an even-handed evaluation. Satz's conclusion is best stated by one of the major subject's of his work, longtime U.S. Indian affairs administrator Thomas McKenney. In his words, those officials charged with managing governmental policy affecting natives were "too powerless to be effective, and too responsible for its feebleness" (p. 153). Rhetoric aside, U.S. Indian policies during this period failed in major ways, regardless of one's perspective or expectations.

In terms of organization and presentation, this work follows a standard policy history model. Chapter 1 deals with Andrew Jackson's rise to political fame and his viewpoints on Indian autonomy within the boundaries of the United States. Satz next deals with the origins and passage of the Indian Removal Act, paying particular attention to political party maneuverings in the process. Chapter 3 analyzes the "Test Case" of removal policy, one involving the Choctaw, and how government officials handled, or mishandled, unexpected developments associated with physical relocation of eastern Indians. The degree of autonomy enjoyed by removed tribes in Indian Territory comprises the next section in which Satz illustrates the poorly anticipated reality of life for Indians in the West. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 survey the evolution of governmental entities charged with administering Indian affairs and the myriad problems they faced in carrying out their duties. The final section deals with the process of "civilizing" Native Americans that preoccupied government officials long before, during, and after the period covered by this book.

Satz's effort is most effective in reminding readers about significant aspects of U.S.-Indian relationships during the Jacksonian era, areas that are often obscured in more recent works. For instance, he points out that public and private citizens had been clamoring for the relocation of eastern Indians at least since the American Revolution, despite the policy's identification with Andrew Jackson and his contemporaries. Along those lines, Satz offers evidence that the controversial Indian Board-

ing School system that reached its zenith during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries had its origins in the 1820s (p. 250). The author too reminds us that much like modern politicians, Jackson and his associates orchestrated an extensive propaganda campaign to convince citizens that the nation would benefit from their policies, in this case, the passage of the Indian Removal Act. Also in terms of politics, Satz notes that many of the most visible and vocal opponents of the Indian Removal Act had aspirations for high public office in 1832, including the presidency, and used removal-related debates, events, and legal maneuverings to promote their campaign platforms. Perhaps more substantive, he provides a good brief analysis of the "commutation system," a cost-cutting procedure adopted by the U.S. government during the removal process by which officials would pay Indians an up-front fee of $10 if they then agreed to pay the costs of relocation themselves (p. 81). A similar analysis of the role Euro-American traders played in both exploiting and protecting natives in the removal process is thought-provoking as well (p. 113). Finally, Satz briefly indicates the influence of new (for the period of his writing) interpretive techniques when he adopts an ethnohistorical perspective for assessing why many Indians resisted the removal policy (p. 274).

The book's weaknesses generally reflect the interpretive perspective utilized by the author. Treatment of native agency and attitudes is often antiquated and paternalistic. Satz writes that among Indians of the Southeast in the 1820s, "a sizeable population of mixed-bloods [existed] who frequently acted as intermediaries between their less sophisticated tribesman and white Americans," a statement that reifies baseless racial categories and ignores recent interpretations by scholars such as Claudio Saunt and Theda Perdue (p. 2). Similar patterns can be seen in the author's assessment of Choctaw leader Greenwood LeFlore as a "shrewd mixed-blood," (p. 67) and conclusions regarding treaty disagreements among the Choctaws that, according to Satz, took place along "mixed-blood" or "full-blood" lines (p. 70). The author surrenders to exaggeration when he states "the slaves living with the Seminoles enjoyed an almost luxurious life compared to their counterparts elsewhere in the South" (p. 103), and adopts a presentist/ahistorical outlook by claiming "the Chickasaws had early accepted the inevitability of removal" (p. 106). At various points throughout the work, Satz also provides repetitive information pertaining to certain individuals (especially Thomas McKenney), and the final chapter is poorly organized and oddly placed considering the content of previous sections.

These faults should not minimize the importance of Satz's work. Though its terminology, perspective, and methodology are rarely incorporated in modern Native American Studies, the book's message is still sound. This text would be an effective introductory or supplementary reading for courses on North American Indian history in which an ethnohistorical approach dominates lectures. Established scholars working in the field can also benefit from re-reading the text and other investigations from this by-gone era. Past efforts such as the one under review have provided the framework for current cultural studies based more on theory and interdisciplinary research than historical narrative. Further reflection on works by Satz, Reginald Horseman, Robert Berkhofer, and others is needed to continue exploring issues of identity, race, and gender that in recent years have provided a great deal of nuanced information on past native communities. In this sense, *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era* continues the trend begun in the 1960s of integrating new perspectives into evaluations of the Indian past, even if this outcome deviates from the book's original intention.

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Citation: Daniel S. Murphree. Review of Satz, Ronald N., *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era.* H-Tennessee, H-Net Reviews. July, 2004.
URL: http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=9642

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