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Chiefs and Chief Traders: Indian Relations at Fort Nez Per &, 1818-1855. By Theodore Stern.

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### Author

Wells, Merle

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**Chiefs and Chief Traders: Indian Relations at Fort Nez Percés, 1818–1855.** By Theodore Stern. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1993. 288 pages. \$33.95 cloth.

Two exceedingly different cultures came into direct economic contact when Donald Mackenzie finally established a Snake country fur trade, in spite of chaotic conditions that delayed his initial efforts between 1812 and 1816. His original plan for a lower Clearwater base a few miles above the Snake River did not develop satisfactorily, and Bannock tribal opposition had wiped out a lower Boise post early in 1814. He nonetheless returned to try again as a North West Company partner in 1816. Overcoming many obstacles, he finally started another Fort Nez Percés at a different Columbia River site near the Snake River in 1818. As in 1814, he picked a traditional regional trading center where many diverse tribes assembled. His choice was very awkward for company traders, but his concern emphasized Indian operators rather than trappers' convenience. Snake country posts at Fort Boise and Fort Hall followed his Indian site priorities in 1834.

Unlike most accounts of early nineteenth-century fur trade operations, this presentation explains company transactions in the context of an already complex Indian economy. Regional trading areas had developed long before European adventurers intruded into the Columbia basin terrain. Prepared by a highly competent ethnologist, this analysis adjusts for serious misunderstandings of traditional cultures by consolidating later tribal information with fur trade documentation. European trappers simply were not equipped to appreciate other peoples' concerns and attitudes.

Mutual inability to allow for wide variations in cultural values and plausible economic pursuits characterized both parties in the Columbia and Snake country fur trade. For example, even after 1830, a Shoshoni guide for some Snake country trappers took great pride in leading a four-day tour to a fine elk herd, because he could not imagine how grown men could be so foolish as to waste their time chasing beaver. At least he showed them what they should be doing. His presumably demented trappers, disappointed to find almost no marketable fur during their unanticipated elk hunt, had an equal absence of success in understanding Nez Perce, Cayuse, Walla Walla, or Shoshoni cultures. Because tribal societies made important contributions to major posts like Fort Nez Percés, their systems are explained as an appropriate setting for fur trade history.

Everything from regional pre-nineteenth-century regional society, including camp life, religion, social and economic structure, and migratory cycles, receives appropriate recognition. Another series of chapters offers similar coverage for trappers' activities. Interrelationships among trappers and their tribal associates stand out clearly in this carefully organized presentation. Stern carefully analyzes the cultural differences that provoked clashes and hostility between trappers and their suppliers and examines the trading preferences of regional tribes that needed to be accommodated to develop a successful joint economy. An excellent synthesis—essential for a sound treatment of interior northwest fur trade history—results from this multicultural approach. Stern's expert investigation gives the reader a superior grasp of Indian cultural preservation, modified by acculturation resulting from fur trade experience.

One problem occurs in the index: Page numbers are inaccurate. Each index page number has to be reduced by thirteen in order to obtain references that correspond to actual text pages. In any event, *Chiefs and Chief Traders* has great merit.

*Merle Wells*

Idaho State Historical Society

**The Crow and the Eagle: A Tribal History from Lewis and Clark to Custer.** By Keith Algier. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, 1993. 326 pages. \$14.95 paper.

At the time of white contact in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Crow homeland extended over the Yellowstone River drainage, including roughly the southern quarter of Montana and the northern two-thirds of Wyoming. Keith Algier dedicates *The Crow and the Eagle: A Tribal History from Lewis and Clark to Custer* to an "examination and analysis of the United States government's displacement of the Crow" from this homeland (p. xiii). In a detailed and well-documented manner, he traces the establishment of Euro-American economic and military influence in Crow territory.

Algier describes the almost constant pressure on Crow society after the early 1800s when their land's economic potential became known to Euro-American businessmen and investment interests. His emphasis on economic factors determining white interest in