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view, since it drives narrators to eavesdrop in unlikely ways on unlikely conversations. At other points, we are distracted from Fleur's story by the sketchy, aborted, and unconvincing stories of Polly Elizabeth's own love life. At the end, how many readers will really care that Polly Elizabeth finds happiness with a man whose tongue had been cut off by a sardine can?

Whatever its possible minor flaws, *Four Souls* is a welcome addition to the growing body of fiction from one of America's most gifted, original, and prolific writers. We are fortunate that Erdich has many more books in her. We can look forward to new surprises as she continues to follow the tracks set down in her earlier novels, and to blaze new trails.

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In Bitterness and Tears: Andrew Jackson's Destruction of the Creeks and Seminoles. By Sean Michael O'Brien. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2003. 254 pages. \$49.95 cloth.

Andrew Jackson's wars against the Creeks in 1813–14 and the Seminoles in 1818 are hardly neglected subjects. Two Creek memoirists, George Stiggins and T. S. Woodward, have left firsthand accounts. Within the present generation, Frank L. Owsley has chronicled the military side of the Creek War, while John K. Mahon has dealt with both wars in several articles. More recently, David D. and Jeanne T. Heidler have focused on Jackson's conduct of both wars and their diplomatic and political contexts. Biographer Robert Remini fits the story into his analysis of Jackson and the quest for empire. Joel Martin expounds upon the cultural revitalization that provided a religious basis for the Creek civil war, which, with U.S. military intervention, became a phase of the international War of 1812. Kathryn E. Holland Braund and Claudio Saunt have examined the source of strife among the Creeks in the class and racial divisions incident upon "contact": trade, intermarriage, the U.S. "civilizing" program, and diplomatic bribery. Tribal histories by Angie Debo, Michael Green, and J. Leitch Wright have explored the cultural and military problems of the Muscogee in relation to Jackson's ambition to displace them and their sometime Spanish and British allies in the Southeast.

These are only a few of the sources on which a popularizer such as O'Brien might draw to construct an account of the wars and of Creek dispossession. His narrative neglects Debo's and Green's work, but otherwise draws on the best secondary accounts. He misses some of their nuances, and most of his citations, including those with quotes from original sources, are footnoted only to secondary works. In addition, O'Brien uses published memoirs and letters, with archival collections of eyewitness letters and journals to provide a sense of immediacy to his story.

To explain his contribution, one might compare his work to a recent version of the history of the conflict with the Creeks and Seminoles, the *Heidlers' Old Hickory's War: Andrew Jackson and the Quest for Empire* (1996). Because

O'Brien gives about equal time to the Creek War and the clashes with the Seminoles, Andrew Jackson does not appear until the sixth chapter. Heidler and Heidler deal more briefly with the Creek war, focusing on Jackson's role, and enter into more detail in dealing with the Seminole conflict. Theirs is an archivally based account that puts the military operations fully in context with the international diplomatic picture and the domestic political background of Jackson's relations with both state and federal officials. They explain, for example, that Spain was negotiating for American purchase of Florida while Jackson fought, and feared losing Florida less than the possibility of U.S. support of revolutionaries throughout their failing American empire.

The Heidlers explore the constitutional issues raised by Jackson's occupation of Spanish towns and execution of British citizens in the course of his war against the Seminoles. O'Brien is somewhat more inclined to find the British trader Robert Ambrister guilty of the interference with which Jackson's court-martial charged him, and summarily concludes that, whatever Jackson's orders, he was doing what President Monroe and Secretary of War Calhoun wanted in encouraging the Spanish to leave Florida to American soldiers and planters.

O'Brien's focus throughout is on his military narrative: who commanded how many persons in each march, siege, and battle; battlefield losses on both sides; and the blood-and-guts stories of the battlefields themselves. He stresses the importance of black Maroons as Seminole allies and independent fighters, and of Allied Creeks, Cherokees, Choctaws, and a few Chickasaws in battles against the hostile Creeks. The reader interested in dramatic armed pursuit and confrontation—in such details as just where and how Sam Houston was wounded at the crucial battle of Horseshoe Bend—will find much satisfaction in O'Brien's story.

In his concluding chapter, he relates the conquest of the Red Sticks and Jackson's unprecedented acquisition of territory by the treaty of 1814 at the end of the war to his further acquisitions from the Southeastern Indians and the final removal of the Southeastern tribes. Unfortunately, the last chapter contains a number of errors. For example, he calls the Creek treaty of 1832, under which the Creeks were allotted, and eventually removed, as the "Treaty of Coweta." It was the Treaty of Washington, and could not have been safely negotiated at Coweta Town. The most serious error lies in the final sentence: "For the Muscogeans, the war ensured the collapse of their civilization" (240). Had the author consulted the work of Angie Debo, Michael Green, or C. Blue Clark, he might have been aware that Creek "civilization" did not collapse, even amid the sorrow and tears of removal—it moved west.

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