

Book review by Ben Marsh, University of Stirling, published in:

French History, 2008 22(1):116-117; doi:10.1093/fh/crn004

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/fh/crn004>

Review of:

Captive Histories: English, French and Native Narratives of the 1704 Deerfield Raid. Edited by Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney. Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press. 2006. xxii + 298 pp. £24.50, hardback. ISBN 1 55849 542 8 and £14.50, paperback. ISBN 1 55849 543 6.

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From the moment that the New England Reverend 'John Williams' published his account in 1707 of his three-year experience in French and Indian captivity, *The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion*, the French-sponsored raid on the small Massachusetts township of Deerfield (in the Connecticut River Valley) assumed a mythic, cultural significance in the hearts and the memories of Anglo-Americans in the north-east. The Puritan captivity narrative was already becoming a popular and distinctive American literary format before 1704. However, the scale of the raid on Deerfield, which claimed over a hundred prisoners, and its situation at the crossroads of political, military, familial and cultural relations between French, English and Indian groups in the contested colonial borderlands, have generated a plethora of reminiscences, commentaries, histories and interpretations over the years. Those outside of the field might best imagine it as a kind of colonial Pearl Harbor—half expected, largely successful and generating a ferocious psychological backlash. Editors Haefeli and Sweeney describe this latest contribution, *Captive Histories*, as 'an outgrowth of the research' (p. xvii) that produced their own seminal and absorbing narrative account of the incident, *Captors and Captives: The 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003).

Captive Histories serves up a juicy selection of raw, primary sources offering insight into the raid on Deerfield, its origins and its aftermath from multiple perspectives. It is a work of rigorous scholarship, whose aim in essence is to purify our understanding of the event and context by detaching it as far as possible from the ethnocentrism of Puritan teleology. Haefeli and Sweeney largely restrict themselves to concise introductions and exhaustive footnoting, leaving the centre ground to their historical subjects. The book is divided into six sections, the first two of which pertain to the raid and its particular context. The remaining four are devoted to the narratives of different peoples: the English, French, Mohawk and Abenaki. The written European sources—the most novel of which are the c. 1740 recollections of Catholic convert Joseph Kellogg and the c. 1712 biographical narrative of Canadian hero Joseph-François de la Fresnière—are supplemented by more complex, layered stories that have emerged out of Abenaki and Mohawk oral traditions.

French colonial historians will find much of interest in these depictions of the diverse communities that were destabilized, and partly sustained, by war on the frontier. Though the collection's coverage of French viewpoints is thin in relation to the raid itself, narratives relating to captives' subsequent experiences offer considerable insight into the sustained efforts by French clergy and pious lay men and women to convert New Englanders to Catholicism. Besides the battle for souls, the sources presented here remind us of the local significance of military and social hierarchies in shaping New France, as well as some of the wider connections. The Deerfield raid, after all, was a disorganized trans-Atlantic ripple whose ultimate origins lay in Louis XIV's precipitate decision to support his grandson's claim to the Spanish throne.

By offering multiple, polyphonic primary sources from French, English, Abenaki and Iroquoian perspectives, *Captive Histories* provides another welcome counterpoint to the dominance of the Anglo-narrative—and will be an especially useful resource for teaching at advanced

undergraduate level. Arguably, the collection also lends some texture to Haefeli and Sweeney's larger story. For all of the impressive breadth and population cross-linkages uncovered in their earlier macrohistorical synthesis, these accounts inevitably foreground the more personal, human experiences of participants, from the Canadian troupes de la marine, to Iroquoian mourning warriors, to John Williams himself and his unedited story of trial and redemption.

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