

The Indian on horseback is such a stereotypical icon that it is jolting to remember that all American Indians were pedestrians until Spanish horses began dispersing throughout the Great Plains. The heyday of the mounted warrior lasted little more than a century, but this remains the most popular image left after millennia of Indian life.

With the same insight and thoroughness, Calloway narrates the other upheavals of native culture: by French fur traders and priests, by land-hungry English colonists, and by both nations' wars for control over the vast lands and resources of the continent. His account of the eighteenth-century invasion of the Ohio River watershed is the very essence of Indiana history.

Even the remote North Pacific Coast was affected by the international struggle for dominance of the eighteenth-century "global economy," with England, Spain, Russia, and the United States competing for sea otter pelts, territorial control, and the fabled Northwest Passage. The Americans prevailed, to the extent that five years before Lewis and Clark reached the Northwest Coast overland, it was already, in the words of historian Frederick Howay, a "trade suburb of Boston."

Trade was the conduit for the three great imported scourges: disease, liquor, and firearms. Calloway does not venture a total count of those wiped out by the smallpox epidemics but cites specific tribal losses totaling half or more. "Microbes, not men, determined the continent's history," said historian Georges Sioui. Though epidemics are in the past, the pathos and the human toll of liquor among Indians remain today. The proliferation of firearms, evident in every part of the continent and no doubt rued by George Custer at Little Big Horn, presaged one of the world's biggest problems today, the arms trade.

The winter count of Calloway's title refers to the Plains Indians' perennial picture-writing on buffalo hides, which served as memory prompters for their oral histories. This excellent, comprehensive tome makes it apparent that as early as the time of the Lewis and Clark expedition, when the United States as a nation was less than thirty years old, every one of the five hundred Native American nations was already dead or endangered.

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Benjamin Franklin

By Edmund S. Morgan

(New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002. Pp. xi, 339. Illustrations, appendix, notes, index. Clothbound, \$28.00; paperbound, \$16.00.)

The Thames near Chelsea, London, 1725. An athletic young man plunges

into the river's broad deep waters and swims more than two miles down-

stream to Blackfriars. This is the image Edmund Morgan wants us to hold of Benjamin Franklin, in place of the later portraits we know so well when trimness and vigor had lapsed into plump middle age. It is an image that captures Morgan's generous concern for Franklin's personal appeal: the nimble agility (which remained in mind if not in body to the end of his long life), the independence of mind and spirit (swimming was frowned upon as bad for health), the implacable endurance (he was fond of staying in the water for two or three hours), and the intent sociability (as he swam he entertained friends on a boat trip with "many Feats of Activity" [p. 3]). It is an image that also reminds us of the profoundly international quality of this most cosmopolitan of founding fathers. In 1725, Franklin was a young colonist on a brief visit from the North American mainland. After entering public life in his early forties, Franklin would spend more than a third of his career abroad, initially in England and later in France.

In that public life, Franklin was first a Pennsylvanian. He was instrumental in setting up a series of local institutions and schemes that would help Philadelphians help themselves. The list is impressive: a hospital, a debating club known as the Junto, a library, an academy, a means of fire-fighting. He fought for the colony's greater independence from the Penn family. Franklin was, second, a British American. As early as 1754, he had seen the need for the colonies to act collectively within the Empire. While

in London, he sought to reform the union of England and the colonies on the basis of equality. Third, Franklin was an American. Convinced of the folly of British governmental attitudes to the colonies, and unlike his stubborn son William, royal governor of New Jersey, Franklin was one of the earliest statesmen to commit fully to American independence in 1775. As the United States emissary in Paris, he served national interests by shoring up the alliance and seeking loans to continue the war. This was in sharp contrast to some of the other Americans in town—ill-informed, conceited, or obstreperous men like John Adams and the young John Laurens—who did more to undermine Franklin's achievements than to serve their new country. In his few final years in Philadelphia, Franklin's presence was required in the Pennsylvania Assembly, in the American Philosophical Society (an offshoot of the Junto), and in the Constitutional Convention of 1787.

Biographers tend to be sympathetic to their subjects and, even more than most, this is a book told thoroughly from the subject's point of view. (Another recent example is David McCullough's admiring portrait of John Adams, a very different Adams than the one portrayed here.) It is based on the copious and carefully edited Franklin papers which are soon to be published in electronic form. Morgan's aim is to give us "a letter of introduction to a man worth knowing" (p. xi). The result is sanguine and elegiac: here is a man who served his publics—Pennsylvania, the British

mainland colonies, and the United States—with self-knowledge, intelligence, and pragmatism. Perhaps most remarkably, Morgan implies, he did so without ever, quite, seeking after power.

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*The Invention of Party Politics
Federalism, Popular Sovereignty, and Constitutional
Development in Jacksonian Illinois*
By Gerald Leonard

(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002. Pp. x, 328.
Notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00.)

Using Illinois as a case study, Gerald Leonard argues that constitutional concerns—specifically federalism and the sovereignty of the American people—spurred the development of political parties in the 1820s and 1830s. Martin Van Buren and other like-minded men promoted the idea of a permanent “constitutional” party as “the embodiment of the undivided democracy” (p. 5). Although rooted in an Anglo-American antiparty tradition, the “partyists” goal, writes Leonard, was “genuinely revolutionary”: “to establish for the Democratic party, and only the Democratic party, a kind of lawmaking authority at least as important as that of any branch of government” (p. 19). For both anti-partyists and “Van Burenite” advocates of party, the competition that developed between two national political parties by 1840 was an unintended and undesirable consequence of party development.

If, in the first several decades of the republic, political parties were

justified only so long as a dangerous opposition existed, the events of the “Era of Good Feelings” and the 1820s convinced Van Buren otherwise. For Van Buren, men like Alexander Hamilton would always seek to unify an anti-democratic, monied elite and consolidate power at the national level. The collapse of the Federalist party had lulled citizens into thinking that party strife was over, but events like the Adams-Clay “corrupt bargain” in the presidential election of 1824 prompted Van Buren and others to organize the democratic majority against an “aristocratic” minority. Since the people were sovereign and the states were “naturally democratic polities,” then the “written Constitution was a carefully limited grant of power by the democracy to a potentially aristocratic engine” (p. 189). Van Buren’s disciplined party would ensure that legislation, elections, and constitutional interpretation would all be the expression of the people’s will.