

*Journal of American Studies*, 58 (2024), 2. doi:10.1017/S0021875824000227

Daniel Heath Justice and Jean M. O'Brien, eds., *Allotment Stories: Indigenous Land Relations under Settler Siege* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2021, \$28.00). Pp. 322. ISBN 978 1 5179 0876 8.

I sat down to write this review on 15 June 2023 – the day the United States Supreme Court upheld and affirmed the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) in a 7–2 decision in *Haaland v. Brackeen*. It seemed as though Indian Country had been holding its collective breath for weeks as the case progressed, with Indigenous people anxiously awaiting the potential devastation from a decision to systematically dismantle ICWA. Congress passed ICWA in 1978 in an attempt to end the removal of Indigenous children from their families, and it was said to give tribal governments jurisdiction over Indigenous children in custody, foster care, and adoption cases. It was meant to stop the innumerable and incalculable losses that continued to overwhelm Indigenous families and communities.

So much of Indigenous history seems to hinge on loss – the loss of languages, religions, knowledges, families, cultures, children, and lands. In *Allotment Stories*, editors Daniel Heath Justice and Jean M. O'Brien have collected more than two dozen pieces that wrestle with the legacy of the 1887 General Allotment Act. Also known as the Dawes Act after its sponsor, Massachusetts Senator Henry Dawes, the legislation gave the President the authority to break up communally held reservation lands into smaller, individually held allotments. Indigenous landholdings dropped from 138 million acres in 1887 to 48 million acres in 1934. Proponents of allotment and its federal Indian policy partner, assimilation, saw it as a rousing success. In 1901, President Teddy Roosevelt called the Dawes Act “a mighty pulverizing engine” that would “break up the tribal mass.”

Justice and O'Brien have divided the book into four parts interspersed with short interludes. Part I, “Family Narratives of Privatization,” includes six essays that center the authors' families, family histories, and family lands. Sarah Biscarra Dilley combines prose, poetry, artwork, video stills, and images to document her ancestors' deep connection to California lands. Justice turns to what he calls his “two tangled family stories”: he is, on his father's side, a Cherokee Nation citizen, but his mother's ancestors include those “who sought to use dubious claims about Indian identity to lay claim to tribal lands” (21). O'Brien sifts through the notebooks her Grandma Edna used to write down stories of their family's history – “a commentary on the experiences of one family coming to a reservation long after its creation in 1867 in response to the implementation of allotment policy after 1887” (35).

Like O'Brien, Nick Estes examines the power of paper in maintaining family knowledge – and landholdings. Children of allottees were forced to split their parents' allotments, and their children, in turn, would split those smaller sections until the land became unusable. For Sheryl Lightfoot, the implementation of the Land Buy-Back Program in 2012 led some of her relatives to sell back their fractions, while others refused to buy into what they considered to be another government scam aimed at dispossessing Indians. Dispossession is at the heart of Joseph Pierce's piece, driven by his father's adoption out of the Cherokee Nation as a newborn.

Part II, “Racial and Gender Taxonomies,” opens with pieces by Darren O'Toole and Jennifer Adese, who each investigate the ways the Canadian government categorized and dispossessed First Nations and Métis people – and how, as Adese shows, the scrip system benefited those who were not Métis. Similarly, Jameson R. Sweet

scrutinizes how his own mixed-ancestry ancestors navigated landownership and land loss in the Upper Midwest before the Dawes Act. Susan Gray centers the homestead claims of Indigenous women in Michigan, turning especially to the 1836 Treaty of Washington and the 1855 Treaty of Detroit. For Candessa Tehee, language and the nuances of Cherokee linguistics are inextricably connected to the land.

Part III, "Privatization as State Violence," is more global in scope. Christine Taitano DeLisle and Vincente Diaz use modern road building in Guam as a means of exploring both the literal and figurative implications of "modernity." J. Kēhaulani Kauanui stays in the Pacific realm with an interrogation of the politics and privatization of land in Hawai'i, from the 1848 Māhele land division and the Kuleana Act of 1850 to more recent contestations over Mark Zuckerberg's purchase of Kanaka Maoli land. Dione Payne uncovers the legislative dispossession of Maori in New Zealand, and Shiri Pasternak returns to Canada for an examination of forced removal for the privatization of First Nation lands. William Bauer follows suit, surveying the history of allotment, termination, and natural-resource extraction in the US, while Benjamin Hugh Velaise argues that the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act forced (and forces) Alaska Native leaders to choose between profit and tradition.

Part IV, "Resistance and Resurgence," opens with Tero Mustonen and Pauliina Feodoroff's description of land transition in traditional and Indigenous (Sámi) communities in Finland. Kelly S. McDonough puts New Spanish policies in conversation with the subsequent creation of Indigenous land titles (primordial titles), and Argelia Segovia Liga outlines the forced allotment of Indigenous lands in Mexico City. Munir Fakher Eldin centers how Sakhina (a village in the northern district of Palestine) struggled against late Ottoman and British colonial land policies, and Khal Schneider analyzes how Pomo communities in California pooled their resources to buy land parcels in the 1880s. Michael P. Taylor takes three petitions from the allotment era – an 1897 petition protesting the annexation of Hawai'i, a 1926 petition from the National Council of American Indians, and a 1929 petition filed on behalf of the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Alaska Native Sisterhood – to highlight the broad scope of Indigenous resistance to allotment and dispossession. Megan Baker contends that the Choctaw language counteracts attacks on Choctaw nationhood, and Ruby Hansen Murray recalls the 2017 delivery of bison to the Bluestem Ranch, which the Osage Nation had recently purchased from Ted Turner. Finally, Stacy L. Leeds examines the history of allotment against the future of Indigenous nations.

Each essay is strong enough to stand on its own, but the collection itself is a breath-taking array of scholarship. The interludes by Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Marilyn Dumont, and Rauna Kuokkanen showcase the strengths of these scholars individually and collectively. Allotment is most often situated as a uniquely American policy, but this volume shows that allotment – and dispossession – took and continue to take many forms, connecting dispossession in the United States (including Alaska and Hawai'i, not to mention territories like Guam), Canada, Mexico, New Zealand, Finland, and Palestine. These stories and histories may not directly intersect – and they certainly stretch across both time and space – but the parallels among these essays are a testament to the power of Indigenous resistance in the face of destructive and genocidal government policies.

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