Student A

English II

Mrs. Schulte P6

10/30/17

***The Character of Meriwether Lewis***

Every student in the United States was taught the basic details of the famous Lewis and Clark expedition of 1803. What most people don’t know, or what historians are still trying to find out, is who Meriwether Lewis, the leader of the famous expedition, actually was. *The Character of Meriwether Lewis* by Clay Jenkinson provides detailed insight and reasoning to answer the looming question about Lewis’ identity. Jenkinson splits the book into two chronological sections, pre-expedition and post-expedition, in order to genuinely peel back the details of the expedition. Throughout each section of the biography, the actions and character of the great explorer are analyzed, and he explains that Meriwether Lewis doesn’t fit the mold of the common explorer, which is something that historians and American people alike haven’t understood for centuries. *The Character of Meriwether Lewis* reveals the details and sheds light on the mysteries of the most prominent and interesting explorer in American history.

What sets this book apart from other historical biographies is how Jenkinson uses literary analysis to make conclusions about Lewis’ nature. Jenkinson incorporates a wide variety of primary sources, such as the Journals of Lewis and Clark, which creates a more complete and unmitigated picture of the erratic and complex Lewis. Although it is quite lengthy, *The Character of Meriwether Lewis* is readable due to Jenkinson’s use of logical appeal and advances very smoothly, which makes it a great read for history students, perhaps those seeking a better understanding of the time period. The story of the remarkable explorer who “tread upon lands which the foot of civilized man had never trodden” is a must read for historians or anyone interested in the history of the United States.