In six long chapters and a short introduction and conclusion, Cassis details the history of international financial centers since the late eighteenth century. London, Paris, and New York rightfully receive the most notice, but significant attention is also paid to smaller financial capitals, including Amsterdam, Chicago, Frankfurt, Geneva, and Zurich, as well as to Asian upstarts like Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Singapore. Cassis even gives the occasional nod to also-rans like Antwerp, Berlin, Brussels, Hamburg, Philadelphia, and Toronto, and to offshore havens like Luxembourg and the Cayman Islands. Throughout the book, Cassis pays meticulous attention to historical context, wars, depressions, ill-conceived regulations and taxes, and other negative shocks that decimated some centers (Paris and Berlin) while invigorating others (New York and Zurich). He also carefully attends to the effects of positive shocks like telecommunications improvements (telegraph, telephone, and the Internet), both waves of globalization (late nineteenth-century and late twentieth-century), and various episodes of deregulation, including London's famous “Big Bang.”

A narrative in the sense of being chronological and descriptive, the book makes no predictions or big overarching claims. The methodology is one of nuanced historical judgment by an established expert rather than brute number crunching or documentary cherry picking to establish a preconceived hypothesis. The author’s passion for comparative financial history shines through on every page, begging readers to engage the facts rather than to wolf down preconceptions about how to measure the relative importance of international financial centers. To create his rankings, Cassis carefully weighs a number of important characteristics, including the location of central bank headquarters, the role of the domestic currency in international trade, the size of the money and foreign-exchange markets, the sophistication of the sovereign-debt markets as well as the markets for foreign corporate bonds and equities, the number and importance of foreign banks domestically, and domestic banks with branches in foreign countries.

When possible, Cassis examines the number of deals in addition to the dollar (or sterling) value of assets. He also looks for the headquarters of big banks, insurance companies, and asset-management firms, especially internationally active ones, and tracks the number of people employed in the financial-services sector in each city. Finally, he examines the role of the capitals of capital in summoning forth financial innovations like junk bonds, hedge funds, derivatives markets, variable-rate loans, negotiable certificates of deposit, and various Euromarkets. In short, Cassis delicately balances telling quantitative information with qualitative judgments forged by perusing a list of key secondary sources almost twenty pages long.
Unfortunately, due to the book’s unusual backstory—it began life as a history commissioned by a Swiss bank—Cassis wrote the bulk of the text several years ago. Hence, he did not have the opportunity to integrate several important recent contributions, including William Silber, *When Washington Shut Down Wall Street* (Princeton, 2006), which shows, using exchange-rate movements (a type of data that Cassis ignores) that World War I led to New York’s ascendance over London more quickly than Cassis argues. He also missed Wright, *The First Wall Street* (Chicago, 2005), which would have strengthened his thin discussion of the early U.S. financial system.

The book’s genesis also explains the writing, which, though competent, is hardly a paragon of style, much apparently having been lost in translation from the original French. The book also suffers because it is almost entirely devoid of people, of memorable characters doing and saying interesting things. As befitting a scholarly tome, the analysis is kept a safe distance from any inkling of human involvement, though certain key economic constructs, like the “impossible trinity” or monetary system “trilemma,” are curiously underutilized.

But mere quibbles are these. Anyone interested in the historical background of the world’s most important international financial centers will prize this book enormously.

Robert E. Wright
Stern School of Business
New York University

*Leprosy and Empire: A Medical and Cultural History.* By Rod Edmond (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2006) 255 pp. $96.00

Leprosy’s complexity and elusiveness to modern medical and cultural analysis is precisely the problem that Edmond successfully, if narrowly, addresses in this book. His case studies are primarily British but also include the Molokai leper colony in Hawaii. What is missing are French and other imperial experiences with leprosy, or how lepers themselves shaped their identities. Silla’s superb, recent study of leprosy and identity in colonial and postcolonial Mali, which is completely absent from the bibliography, would have helped to provide a better grasp of the impact of this acute disease.\(^1\)

Even today, debates still linger about leprosy’s unknown mode of transmission, its low level of infection, long latency, uncertain onset, and prolonged duration. The bacillus, first isolated in 1873 by Armaeur Hansen, a Norwegian scientist, has unfortunately demonstrated an alarming resistance to dapsone, once hailed as the wonder drug that would eradicate this ancient scourge.

\(^1\) See Eric Silla, “People Are Not the Same”: Leprosy and Identity in Twentieth-Century Mali (Portsmouth, N.H., 1988).
The book’s strengths are its thorough and thoughtful analyses of literary references to leprosy from the Bible through the works of Romantics like William Blake, Samuel Coleridge, and Mary Shelley to twentieth-century observers who spent time inside leper colonies. The list of those who mention leprosy includes such diverse writers as Robert Louis Stevenson, Jack London, Graham Greene, and Paul Theroux. Edmond shows how leprosy has crossed or blurred the boundaries imposed on it, which might explain its past link to diet and food, especially exotic products that are neither fish nor fowl, such as breadfruit, which has the same capacity to cross or blur boundaries. It has also been tied to race—to Africans in the era of slavery, to Jews, and to other “aliens”—without lasting success, and even to sex. In a brilliant section, Edmond draws multiple meanings from leper colonies as an extreme example of “boundary thinking,” making salient comparisons with other ways of isolating “others,” including concentration camps, Native American reservations, lock hospitals, and tuberculosis sanatoriums.

This book will interest those who are concerned with the emergence of international public health. Like bubonic plague and cholera, both of which earned major scientific and diplomatic gatherings during the late nineteenth century, leprosy also received attention, especially at the Berlin conference of 1897 attended by such medical luminaries as Rudolf Virchow, Robert Koch, Gerhard Hansen, and Albert Neisser.

Myron Echenberg
McGill University

Rethinking Revolutions through Ancient Greece. Edited by Simon Goldhill and Robin Osborne (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2006) 319 pp. $106.00

The chapters in this volume address various aspects of Greek history and culture, spanning a period of roughly seven centuries, from the fifth B.C.E. to the fourth C.E. The volume concentrates mainly on the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E., traditionally seen as the classical age of Greek civilization, leaving a gaping hole between the fourth century B.C.E. and the second C.E. The thread that connects the chapters is the focus on phenomena or complexes of phenomena that reveal radical discontinuities within a given field of Greek culture, be it political practice or discourse, iconography, science, or the arts. Osborne’s introduction would seem to indicate that the book offers a discussion of the “Greek miracle” and its functions in modern scholarship and culture, but the contributions contain little more than a few vague gestures in this direction. On the whole, the history of scholarship does not feature prominently in the book. Instead, it provides a series of disparate studies of central aspects of classical and imperial Greece. The close attention to areas and periods in which the most innovative sides of Greek civilization have traditionally
been seen is probably responsible for the absence of chapters on the Hellenistic period.

The scholarly quality of the individual contributions is mostly high. Some of them stake radical claims in a sophisticated way. Danielle Allen observes the transition in Athenian political practice from leadership based on military success to civilian leadership based on political competence and how Athenian politicians were able to make the new style of leadership culturally plausible. Given her sustained engagement with Kuhn’s concept of scientific revolution, this is one of the essays that more directly address concerns shared among students of other periods and cultural contexts.¹ James Davidson’s analysis of the age-class structure in classical Athens, based on a solid grip of the relevant anthropological literature, is a true eye opener about a phenomenon that ancient historians have often approached with inadequate instruments. Carolyn Dewald deftly depicts the emergence of historiography in fifth-century Greece as an aspect of Greek cultural history, analyzing the ways in which Herodotus’ and Thucydides’ prose historical narratives created a space in which to conceptualize human action via a dialogue with the audience. Goldhill’s essay on the “Christian revolution” offers penetrating observations on how radical cultural discontinuities play out on the ground.

Many of these chapters could become highly influential, though collecting them between the covers of this book might not have been the best way to make sure that they reach their key audience, scholars of Greek culture. On the other hand, the methodologies displayed in some of the papers will make of them precious comparative reading for those who reflect about cultural change in other contexts.

Nino Luraghi
Harvard University


The study of war and state formation has traditionally occupied a prominent position in the academic field of ancient history but is generally conducted without the benefit of formal theorizing. In a welcome and long overdue attempt to address this deficit, Eckstein provides a pioneering analysis of the causes of interstate conflict in the Greco-Roman world, and, more specifically, of the motivations behind Roman expansion and the reasons for its success, from the perspective of realist theory. An up-to-date survey of contemporary realist theory introduces historians to the key premises of this study (12–36): that in a system of militarized anarchy, states are driven to increase their power; that they are highly sensitized to potential threats; that they aim, whenever possible,

for preclusive expansion to construct outward-facing systems of security, and in all of these respects trend toward functional similarity; that the prevalence of war is determined by balances of power, and the multipolar state-systems of the ancient Mediterranean increased the likelihood of conflict; and that power-transition crises (caused by sudden shifts in power relations) may trigger system-wide or “hegemonic” warfare.

Eckstein’s principal objective is to stress “the previously unacknowledged role of system-level factors, both in the causation of warfare in the ancient Mediterranean and in the rise of Rome to world power” (35). Realist readings of interstate relations in classical Greece (highlighting the Thucydidean roots of this school of thought) and among the major Hellenic powers set the scene for his revisionist interpretation of Roman expansion (37–117). Eckstein devotes two core chapters to a comprehensive and ultimately devastating attack on traditionally dominant “unit-attribute explanations” of Roman militarism and empire-building that privilege domestic properties of Roman society in accounting for ultimate outcomes in state formation (118–243).

After demonstrating that the anarchic environment of the ancient Mediterranean molded Rome’s main rivals for power (Etruscans, Gauls, Samnites, Tarentum, and Carthage) into comparably warlike and expansionist polities, Eckstein critiques the popular thesis of “exceptional” Roman bellicosity (as a putative cause of Rome’s successful expansion) by surveying foreign parallels to a number of Roman institutional features that are customarily invoked to support that notion. He maintains that from a Realist perspective, such traits are best understood as the almost inevitable products of the profoundly anarchic and intensely competitive environment of the ancient Mediterranean: If the Roman state was indeed a “war machine,” so were its neighbors.¹ Eckstein’s argument underscores the crucial importance of explicit cross-cultural comparison, which to this day remains exceedingly rare among ancient historians. It deals a heavy blow to the blinkered ad hoc reasoning (in itself a by-product of the disciplinary cult of the so-called “Classics”) that has long constricted and intellectually isolated the academic training and research projects of ancient historians.

Eckstein advocates a realist “pull” model according to which Rome’s expansion drew it into ever-larger and previously separate zones of interstate conflict (what world-systems theorists would call “political-military systems”), thereby causing them to merge for the first time in history and creating a pan-Mediterranean unipolar hegemony that eventually developed into a “core-wide” empire (257–316). This convincing demonstration of the underlying causes of war and conflict allows us to focus on the problem of unequal outcomes: Why did Rome succeed on the scale that it did?

¹ The notion that Rome was a Schumpeterian “war machine” in pursuit of essentially “objectless imperialism,” which Eckstein dismisses in passing, is empirically testable and merits more detailed consideration with the help of counterfactuals.
In some respects, Rome was truly unique, the only power ever to unite the entire Mediterranean region and the only European empire west of Russia that rivaled the great empires of the Middle East, India, and China in scale and longevity. Eckstein devotes only a small portion of his work to this vital question, emphasizing the superior military mobilization potential of the Roman state (245–257). However, his allusion to an emergent Roman “nation-state” is misleading. What matters here and remains to be explained is the striking capacity of the Roman state to mobilize and control huge militia armies with only minimal governmental institutions, public services, and levels of political participation beyond the capital proper. The somewhat obscure but all-important bargaining mechanisms that facilitated this process now take center stage, and once again invite a comparative perspective. The record of mass mobilization in the Chinese warring states, sustained by different state-society relations, will be of particular relevance.

By blending text-based historiography and formal theorizing, Eckstein’s admirable book has cleared a path before these important questions: It not only puts our understanding of key elements of ancient history on a more solid footing but also provides a much-needed lesson in how to employ social-science theory to make sense of the distant past; it alerts political scientists of the potential contribution of ancient history. A genuinely interdisciplinary study, it deserves a multidisciplinary audience.

Walter Scheidel
Stanford University

Floods of the Tiber in Ancient Rome. By Gregory S. Aldrete (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007) 338 pp. $60.00

In the most popular of Rome’s foundation legends, the infants Romulus and Remus survived their abandonment to the Tiber because their basket could not be put into the main current of the river while in flood. Thus spared, they were washed ashore at the southwest corner of the Palatine hill where flood waters had formed standing pools, to be found by a she-wolf and, later, a shepherd (Livy 1.4.4–6; Plutarch, Romulus 102). For a trenchant critique of the application of this nineteenth-century concept to ancient Italy, see Henrik Mouritsen, Italian Unification: A Study in Ancient and Modern Historiography (London, 1998).

Charles Tilly’s seminal work on state-society relations is conspicuous by its absence from this book, as are other recent works on the differential competitiveness of (later) states. See, for example, Tilly, Coercion, Capital, and European States, A.D. 990–1992 (Cambridge, Mass., 1992).

It is unfortunate that this rare accomplishment is marred by the strikingly poor quality of the bibliographical references, which teem with mangled names and wrong dates. Page 264, in which four out of five citations are defective, is merely the most egregious example.
3.4). Ancient literary and epigraphical sources that even mention Tiber floods, however, are surprisingly scattered and inconsistent, and primary evidence for the severity, extent, or cost of Tiber's floods is scarcer still. Aldrete deals comprehensively with such ancient citations as exist in Chapter 1, providing a succinct table and a brief discussion of each attested flood in antiquity (15). Though he is unable to estimate the geographical extent of Tiber flooding in antiquity from those sources, he employs the descriptions, drawings, and photographs that he discovers from the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and later periods to project suggestions and conclusions onto earlier times.

For the classicist and ancient historian, such projection from later periods into the past always causes some discomfort and doubt, but—given the importance of the Tiber to the topography of Rome in every age and the river's undeniable tendency to flood the low-lying areas of the city at fairly regular intervals in postclassical times—retrojection in this case seems justifiable. Classicists might well consider how much they can learn from later evidence within the topographical boundaries of an ancient city.

Aldrete makes about as much use of ancient evidence as possible, but some chapters in the book contain scant observation that is contemporary with ancient Rome. Chapter 2 (“Characteristics of Floods”) and Chapter 4 (“Delayed Effects of Floods”) discuss subsequent findings, and sometimes even concentrate on floods beyond the Tiber and outside Italy. In Chapter 3 (“Immediate Effects of Floods”), Aldrete makes telling use of anecdotes, particularly from Vitruvius, Livy, and Tacitus (91–117), before turning inevitably once again to general descriptive information about injuries and drownings (118–123). “No ancient author's description of a flood lists actual numbers of people who drowned” (121).

When Aldrete returns to textual and archaeological evidence from ancient times in his two concluding chapters, 5 and 6 (“Methods of Flood Control” and “Roman Attitudes toward Floods”), the effect is far less speculative and, inevitably, more convincing. Nonetheless, the comparative hydrological and flood-disaster evidence that he uses as comparanda is well and carefully chosen. It ultimately results in a broad canvas of what severe and repeated floods of the Tiber must have meant to generations of ancient Romans. Two questions arise: Why has so little been said about them, and why (apparently) was so little done to control or avoid them?

Although no one can be certain of the exact extent or consequences of any specific Tiber flood during antiquity, Floods of the Tiber in Ancient Rome is a noble attempt to bring interdisciplinary evidence from outside classical sources to bear on a long-standing problem of Roman history and archaeology.

James C. Anderson, Jr.
University of Georgia
European Sexualities, 1400–1800. By Katherine Crawford (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007) 246 pp. $75.00 cloth $25.99 paper

This book is a welcome addition to the current renaissance of historical interest in sexuality. Crawford, the author of Perilous Performances: Gender and Regency in Early Modern France (Cambridge, Mass., 2004), has written a work that is part synthesis of the scholarly literature and part an excavation of stories out of the primary sources.

The book’s intent is to make recent controversies about the history of sexuality accessible to undergraduates. The last several decades of debate about the nature of companionate marriage in the past—the essentialist vs. the social-constructionist views of the history of homosexuality (did they consider themselves gay or not?), the history of masturbation, the role of the Church in the oppression of sexuality, and the nature of women’s historical sexual experience—all find spaces in these pages. In each chapter, the main historical debates, or contributions in the absence of formal debate, are limned, followed by a hefty list of suggestions for further reading. (That the suggestions are all English-language books will only add to the preconception that the only language in the world worth bothering about is English.)

The organization of the book is thematic: A chapter on sexuality and the family incorporates demographic as well as literary evidence; a chapter on religion and sexuality provides an overview comprehensive enough for specialists to appreciate; a clever section discusses “the science of sex”—what in the early modern period was called the “natural philosophy” of such biological matters as when to get pregnant, how to avoid infertility, and whether gender was a distinguishing anatomical feature before the eighteenth century. Chapters on “sex and crime” and “deviancy,” meaning mainly the history of homosexuality, conclude this useful little volume.

A book devoted mainly to debates among historians and summaries of their views could rapidly become tedious, but the extensive quotation from primary sources, mainly in English and French, gives these pages a sparkle. Crawford has read extensively in the literature of the day, and she wears her knowledge in a convincing but unpedantic manner.

No scholar trained within the last twenty years would likely be able to detach him- or herself from the view that sexuality is basically a matter of power relationships, rather than desire, and Crawford does not disappoint readers keen for this perspective: The thesis running through these pages is that sexual relations are yet another scheme that men have devised for brutalizing women. Women in history who responded positively to desire are few in this book, though numerous in the sources. The women whose behavior is described in the memoirs of Brantôme (Pierre de Bourdeille), those of Giovanni Giacomo Casanova, and those of Samuel Pepys simply do not appear in this book, either because Crawford has missed these writers in the impossible task of surveying all of the literature, or because they make sex sound (for women too) as
something that is playful and delightful rather than just a source of oppression.

Two other criticisms: First, Crawford seems relatively incurious about what people actually did in bed. She spends much time writing about “social responses” and “cultural attitudes,” important, to be sure, but tangential to sexuality in the way that a book about the history of railroading that failed to discuss trains would be wide of the mark. Second, things become “gendered” and “layered” far too often. The jargon of neo-deconstructionism does not infiltrate every page, but sentences like the following make me reach for my revolver: “Historians sympathetic to viewing sexuality as a primary cultural formation elaborated on normative and non-normative practices within family, religious, and state structures” (8). This statement will give undergraduates an interesting view of a profession that once prided itself on graceful, literate prose.

Edward Shorter
University of Toronto

Aguecheek’s Beef, Belch’s Hiccup, and Other Gastronomic Interjections: Literature, Culture, and Food Among the Early Moderns. By Robert Appelbaum
(Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2006) 375 pp. $ 32.50

At issue in this book is less what early modern Europeans ate than how they experienced their food and foodways. Foods eaten in a former time and another place were necessarily different, even on the molecular level, from those consumed today. Appelbaum also claims that early moderns felt “their bodies in the experience of eating differently from how we feel them now,” due to ideas, language, and semiotic structures unique to their eras and locales (52). The analysis of food and the food system, which entails a “hermeneutics of everything’ effect,” helps us to gain a purchase on the specificity of early modernity (9). How did early moderns conceptualize and articulate the range of activities, sensations, desires, and beliefs that connect to food?

This engaging, thoughtful study is broadly organized by themes presented as fundamental to the gustatory Zeitgeist. Chapters or subsections explore the dual associations of appetite with life and with death, digestion understood as the essential process and primary metaphor for life, food fantasies that track the transition from a medieval to a Renaissance or early modern outlook, post-lapsarian foods of regret and nostalgia, and the peculiar culinary triangle (communion/cannibalism/early capitalism) that emerged from the close juxtaposition of the Reformation with foreign missions and New World exploration. The study draws on material from several West European cultures, devoting its most extensive analysis to sources from England and France. Quotations from major works in several genres and disciplines (poetry, plays, novels, medical treatises, travel accounts, and cookbooks) are treated both to a
close reading that interrogates for meaning and to interpretive revision in accord with further historical and cultural data.

In William Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, or *What You Will*, Sir Toby Belch’s exclamation, “A plague o’ these pickled herring!” (I.v), excuses an eructation, or hiccup, or fart, or “something,” depending upon edition and century. His indigestion is habitually understood to indicate drunkenness, and Sir Toby himself to embody the carnivalesque. The bodily eruption signals joyous, lively rebellion against the encroaching strictures of *civilité* as well as against death. But Sir Toby, notes the author, is otherwise quite *courtois* even while in his cups, and herring are far more windy than drink. Herring were Lenten fare, poor-man’s food saddled with a bad reputation as unhealthful. They were also a key to the early capitalist economy. Toby is drunk, but he is not a mere drunkard. Rather, the character serves a complex semiotic function. An aristocratic (read: voluntary) eater of herring, he prefigures both the cosmopolite libertine and the ever-more oppressive ills of commodity consumption to come.

The triangulation among print documents from a diverse and expansive canon, the turns, as well as the minutiae, of grand events, and the informed speculation about material aspects of existence, yield rich, satisfying results. The breadth and quality of the inquiry should have the additional virtue of stimulating responses to the author’s questions and methods. Further studies along the present lines that engage more fully with issues of class, gender, and national (or international) characteristics, as shaped through and expressed by food and foodways, would certainly be welcome.

Julia Abramson
University of Oklahoma


The rapid proliferation of new technologies for tracking and controlling the movements of individual bodies, such as biometrics, “smart cards,” and *RFID* chips, is a topic of intense scholarly interest these days. To the extent that this body of work refers to history, Groebner correctly notes, it is primarily a history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that locates the French Revolution as the “vanishing point” in the development of the modern bureaucratic identification of individuals (228).

Groebner pushes this history backward in a comprehensive examination of Europe’s identification practices during the high and late Middle Ages and early modern period. Groebner’s focus is not on “identity,” in any of the myriad meanings of that word in scholarly discourse today, but rather on identification—the material practices of knowing who
people are. The result is a fascinating, erudite, and wide-ranging work that draws on a wealth of primary-source material from Europe in general (but primarily from Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and France).

Rather than chronologically, the book is organized around technologies—portraits and wanted posters, insignias and seals, names, tattoos and other skin marks, identity documents, and so on. In a sense, the modern passport—the photograph, the seals and insignia of the state, the security paper and watermarks, the meager physical description—is assembled throughout the course of the book.

Groebner seeks to correct accounts of premodern identification practices that draw on stereotypes of premodern society as static. Instead, Groebner argues that identification was both necessary and actively practiced in early modern Europe. Groebner also emphasizes what might be called the “positive” origins of identification practices. Identification technologies emerged as much from the desires of individuals to authenticate their identities—whether as emissaries of a prince, as citizens of a state, or even, surprisingly as beggars (51)—as from the desires of states to exercise surveillance over individuals. Thus, identification has always furnished both “access and exclusion,” both “registration” and “negation” (250). This point has contemporary relevance in a world in which individuals have something to fear both from state surveillance and from a lack of state-sanctioned identification artifacts.

Who Are You? is more descriptive than explanatory. It provides a good deal of information about the sequence of developments in identification technology but little about why particular material practices developed when they did. Groebner makes a persuasive case against the conventional attribution of all surveillance practices to individualism and the modern state. But why, given his point, do identification practices develop when they do? Why, for example, did scars become “the legal paradigm of identification” at the end of the Middle Ages (112)?

Groebner decries the supposed tendency of historians to read the appearance of administrative identification measures as “evidence of their own effectiveness” (167), rather than as evidence of the failure of identification. However, he appears to commit a similar fallacy when he correlates “the rise of the con man and the imposter” with the development of identification papers in the seventeenth century, when the correlation is probably with the detection of imposters, not their appearance (219).

The combined efforts of Groebner and the translators have yielded an extremely readable story about a fascinating assortment of identification artifacts. Who Are You? is a beautiful, lavishly illustrated (by current standards) artifact in its own right.

Simon A. Cole
University of California, Irvine

Recent years have seen a proliferation of works showing that Jewish and Christian leaders mobilized figures and images borrowed from each other’s symbolic lexicon to service explicitly polemical arguments. Bale’s The Jew in the Medieval Book is an important contribution to a discussion about the ways in which medieval Christianity constructed the “rhetorical Jew.” Using a variety of sources, both textual and representational, Bale demonstrates that a fictional production of “the Jew” played a significant role in defining Christian values—producing a Christian ideal—in medieval England.

In contrast to Cohen, Kruger, Rubin, and others, who have examined the “rhetorical Jew” in texts that either deal with Jews specifically or engage broader theological issues, Bale focuses on texts in which the Jewish exemplar is incidental to the document as a whole. He traces the changing and multivalent symbolic figure of “the Jew” in medieval British literature through four generic examples that reappear in various forms during the course of the later Middle Ages—a historical exemplum, a miracle story concerning the murder of a Christian boy by Jews, narratives forming the basis for a cult centered around the victim of a ritual murder, and visual representations of Jews as active culprits in the passion of Jesus. Following the textual transmission and transformation of these narratives in their various formulations, Bale shows that the authors and consumers of such antisemitic images and discourse in late medieval England were members of the literary and intellectual elite. This argument destabilizes the widely circulated assumption that antisemitic stereotypes found life among the uneducated “masses” who were guided by ignorance or social and political frustration.

Among the many strengths of this book is the acute attention that Bale pays to every layer of textuality, from the way that words and prose are arranged on the page to the subtle interplay between stock narratives (exempla) or images and the greater text into which medieval authors fit them. Antisemitic images continued to transform and mutate in English culture well into the sixteenth century, 200 years after Jews and Judaism were expelled from English society. Bale shows how caricatures of Jews and Judaism served as highly effective tools for defining and controlling Christian behavior and mores in late medieval England. Jews were used in medieval literature to signal false or misguided Christian devotion or royal weakness, as well as to highlight Jewish deviance and the general malignant effect of Jews and Judaism on Christian society.

Moving between arguments rooted in textual and symbolic criticism and historical contextualization, Bale illustrates that well into the early modern period, Christian culture manipulated available images of the Jew to reinforce both positive and negative representations of Christian traits. In *The Jew in the Medieval Book*, he aptly demonstrates that Christian values and political mores invested symbolic Jews with significant cultural currency, quite apart from the availability of models of Jewish behavior or attitudes.

Nina Caputo
University of Florida

**Hakluyt’s Promise: An Elizabethan’s Obsession for an English America.** By Peter C. Mancall (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2007) 400 pp. $38.00

*Hakluyt’s Promise* is the first full-length biography of Richard Hakluyt since George Bruner Parks, *Richard Hakluyt and the English Voyages* (New York, 1928). Since then, as Mancall points out in a valuable “Note on Method and Sources,” much more has been learned and written about Hakluyt. Informed by much of this literature, this volume—published in the year of Virginia’s quadricentennial—is both important and timely. Mancall argues that by fulfilling his 1568 “promise” to “prosecute that knowledge and kind of literature” that would promote overseas activities, especially cosmography and geography, “by century’s end Hakluyt had solidified his position as the most important promoter of English settlement of North America” (3–4). Hakluyt kept his promise via his varied roles as lecturer in geography at Oxford, scholar and ambassadorial aide in Paris, translator of European political narratives, and author and compiler of tracts and volumes about worldwide travel and discovery. Although Hakluyt himself never traveled beyond Paris, largely owing to his efforts “the idea of colonization [was kept] alive in the face of repeated English disappointments during the sixteenth century” (4).

Throughout the book, Mancall situates Hakluyt’s activities within the context of contemporary events. Thus, plague, earthquakes, Reformation, Parisian curiosities, London’s great stench, fruits of the printing press, and accounts of Elizabethan and European cosmographical knowledge and explorations all make their way into the narrative. This context, which provides useful background to both expert and amateur readers, will surely (and happily) widen the book’s audience. It also helps to give the book a strong interdisciplinary flavor in both content and methodology: Intellectual, cultural, and scientific history are elegantly and admirably woven together throughout the book.

Fittingly, Mancall is at his best when describing the argument and structure of Hakluyt’s key writings and compilations. In these now well-
known works, Hakluyt offered an edifice of evidence that accredited him to advocate for Elizabethan expansion using polymathic historical, geographical, economic, social, political, religious, and legal justifications. Hakluyt’s familiar relationship with Francis Walsingham, Queen Elizabeth’s chief secretary, plus the significant domestic and international distribution of his published works, provided an essential and eclectic audience—both private and public—that ensured continued interest especially in North American settlements. In contrast to the argument of recent writers who see more renaissance humanism than reformed religion in Hakluyt’s ideas, Mancall argues for a deeper religious interpretation of certain writings.

This well-researched, -written, -produced, and -illustrated volume leaves little to criticize. Hakluyt’s emergence as a shadowy figure within it is due more to the mystery and documentary lacunae that surround his life than to any fault of the author. Mentions of Hakluyt’s education, family, and career as an Anglican priest are rare and brief; more biographical details to tie the largely chronological narrative together would have been welcome. Greater engagement with current literature on empire and exploration would make this book more valuable to specialists. Historians today are ambivalent about ascribing much practical importance to expansionist writings at a time when most ventures failed and the English Crown and state had little if any real interest in overseas empire. That Hakluyt was the most prodigious Elizabethan proponent of empire is unquestionable; that the bulk of his work was received by a humanist-educated and exploration-minded audience as anything more than a collection of antiquarian curiosities, however, is debatable.

Ken MacMillan
University of Calgary


This book is a powerful and convincing antidote to any inclination to wax romantic about life, whether private or public, in early modern England. Concentrating primarily on the urban world (London, Manchester, Bath, Oxford, and a few other cities or large towns), and relying largely on journals and diaries, pamphlets and treatises, and town and court records, it elaborates on how and why so much of life was ugly, smelly, dirty, flea-infested, and garbage strewn.

Working from the premise that “the five senses act as the mediators between the outside world and the mind,” Cockayne explores both what we can term the objective conditions of life and a host of contemporary perceptions from different towns and from observers of various classes and perspectives. With a focus on aspects of life that ranged from the less-than-comfortable to those that were deadly and/or grossly of-
fensive, Cockayne presents aspects of existence and social interaction
that she pithily characterizes under the headings of ugly, itchy, mouldy,
oily, grotty, busy, dirty, and gloomy. The reasons for these dystopian
and pervasive conditions are easy to imagine, and there is no shortage of
seventeenth- and eighteenth-century voices to show that people were
aware of the problems at the time, even if solutions were hard to find.

Most people in this world had few (if any) changes of clothing, and
washing what they did have was a laborious and imperfect process. Food
brought into cities, especially in warm weather, spoiled quickly; much
ingenuity was devoted to how to keep it sellable, if not necessarily ed-
ible. Noisome industrial and processing operations accompanied urban
and domestic life; municipal efforts to confine tanneries and slaughter
houses to certain quarters of the town—driven by reasons of comfort
and property values as well as of health—had limited success. With ur-
ban growth came congestion, as well as continuous noise, air pollution,
and the plight of the homeless. Sewage and waste were all too conspicu-
ous, though not so clean and fresh water. Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn
wrote of the need to pay attention when walking; broken pavement
could collect stagnant water and collapse underfoot to create huge
ditches and life-threatening mudholes.

Most contemporary observers and critics were, almost by defi-
nition, from the middle and upper classes—literate women and men de-
scribing scenes that often revolted them, at least on the page. That some
of these observers came from abroad, already armed with Anglophobic
sentiments, made their criticisms even more pointed. Cockayne is cog-
nizant of the class bias of her sources, as well as of the class-related nature
of the evils that could beset urban life, though she might have included
statistics for such quantifiable factors as mortality, wages, the cost of food
and clothing, carrying costs, etc. But her mix of things moral and social
with those physical and biological reveals a world infrequently explored,
and her inclusion of sixty-two black-and-white illustrations show that
the problems therein engaged social critics and commentators at the
time, sometimes satirically and sometimes derisively. William Hogarth’s
genius as an illustrator was not always a kindly one, and Edward Bury’s
observation in 1677 that the sight of a drunken man was “enough to
overset a man’s stomach” might still resonate. Yet, Cockayne’s book
demonstrates that many aspects of the world now lost are not much of a
loss.

Joel T. Rosenthal
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Stony Brook
The Strange Case of the Broad Street Pump: John Snow and the Mystery of Cholera. By Sandra Hempel (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2007) 321 pp. $24.95

Although published by an academic press, The Strange Case of the Broad Street Pump is not a work of scholarship. Written by a health journalist, it is an attempt at “educated” popular history. It features a breathless journalistic style that reads uncomfortably for those who are more accustomed to sober scholarly prose. As the author confides, she wanted a big story “that would combine science with colour and human interest . . . a strong narrative and a clearly defined tale with a beginning, a middle and an end—with twists and turns and cliff-hangers and finally a satisfying conclusion” (283).

Science, color, and human interest may constitute an interdisciplinary approach, and the book does, arguably, combine science, social history, and would-be thriller fiction. The result is an imaginative reconstruction of historical situations, as in “the temperature climbed remorselessly to 98.5, and as the hours dragged by everyone was longing for nightfall” (177). As history, however, it is not satisfactory for professional practitioners, however much it may appeal to fans of mystery fiction. In keeping with the popular genre, the author restricts bibliographical information almost entirely to the obvious secondary sources; any primary sources that the text incorporates go without reference. As a contribution to scholarship, this book has dubious credentials, not helped by its erroneous statement on the second page that three great pandemics of cholera took place in the nineteenth century; the authorities on the subject recognize five, if not six (the last beginning in 1899).¹

Hempel’s narrative begins with a discussion of cholera’s nature, its journey out of India, and its arrival in England in 1831. Then follows a couple of chapters on the life of John Snow, the London practitioner who first made the connection between cholera and contaminated water supplies, and a digression into the “Shameful Affair” of the cholera outbreak in Drouet’s Pauper Asylum for Children, before a return to Snow’s investigations into the causes of the disease. As the story meanders through nineteenth-century disease theories and the shameful neglect of Snow’s work, a sense of déjà vu might intrude. The text has much in common with the unacknowledged-heroic-genius school of biography, which modern biographers, as much as historians, have worked steadily to displace in favor of more balanced, historically sensitive evaluations. A far more rigorous interdisciplinary biographical account is to be found in the magisterial multi-authored volume by Vinten-Johansen et al. in 2003, which manages to combine biography, social history, and the history of science and medicine in an elegantly written and structured analysis that examines both Snow the man and

Meticulous in its reconstruction of Snow’s experimental techniques—for example, in respect of both cholera and inhalation chloroform—the Vinten-Johansen volume, in extreme contrast to Hempel’s, is intensely exciting in its lucid exposition and masterly control over the diverse disciplinary elements that Snow’s life and career involved.

Anne Hardy
University College London

*The English Countryside Between the Wars: Regeneration or Decline?* Edited by Paul Brassley, Jeremy Burchardt, and Lynne Thompson (Woodbridge, U.K., Boydell Press, 2006) 270 pp. $90.00

Is the history of the English countryside in the modern period an economic history—about the declining fortunes of agriculture and “rural industries”—or is it a cultural history—about growing “pastoralism” or “rural nostalgia” in the hearts and minds of a predominantly urban nation? Historians of the English countryside have recently been making an increasingly successful attempt to bring these two problems and their attendant bodies of evidence together, and many of those responsible are represented in this volume.

A number of different, ultimately compatible resolutions are on offer. First, agriculture did not simply “decline”; it modernized. Although this change may mean a declining share of employment, it does not necessarily mean declining profitability. In two essays, Brassley deftly distinguishes between rising and declining sectors. Other contributors document technical, educational, and civic reforms aimed at raising skill levels and rebuilding social cohesion.

Second, town and country interpenetrated. Commuters, white-collar workers (including many more working women) and villagers turned small townsmen proliferated where, just a generation earlier, depopulation threatened. Blacksmiths became auto mechanics. But, equally, planners started to distinguish parts of the country from the city to preserve amenity for consumption by townspeople. Moreover, as Christopher Bailey and David Jeremiah show, some “rural industries” were able to retool themselves as rural “crafts” for urban consumption.

Third, as a consequence, modernized agriculture developed an interest in marketing certain convenient forms of rural preservationism to townsfolk. A reinvigorated agricultural sector, stripped of some of its poorer or less entrepreneurial landlords, was able to sell itself to the post-war Labour government as a public service. Although Clare Griffiths shows how the ideological foundations for this achievement were laid, the chronological limits of this book forbid much consideration of the

triumphant postwar regime; the 1947 Agriculture Act mysteriously haunts several of the chapters. The chief losers in all of these processes were agricultural laborers and craftspeople, though, arguably, these groups had been losing ground since the eighteenth century. Their descendants resurface as day-trippers, barmaids, secretaries, and *garagistes*.

A set of essays from divers hands may not be the best format in which to synthesize these disparate processes. The editors compensate by commissioning a brisk overall perspective from Alun Howkins to stand at the head, but much of the clinching evidence and argument is reserved for their conclusion. Breaking the volume into sections on “society,” “culture,” “politics,” and “economics” rather spoils the interdisciplinary enterprise. Avoidable repetition is a problem: Dartington, village colleges, amateur drama, and village halls are frequently re-introduced (and footnoted) as if for the first time. For some reason, Nicholas Mansfield has been permitted to contribute an essay that is simply a paraphrase of a 2001 book.

Nevertheless, eclecticism has its virtues. However inconclusive, Marion Shaw’s sparkling essay about women rural writers casts beams of light in all directions, as does Jeremiah’s on that ultimate idiosyncrasy, Dartington Hall. The editors might have done well to write their own synthesis. In fact, one of them had done so already—Burchardt, *Paradise Lost: Rural Idyll and Social Change since 1800* (London, 2002)—but the evidence from this volume is that the integration of economics and culture has progressed a good deal further in recent years. A more ambitious synthesis (ideally dating from the agricultural depression through at least the 1960s) would now be in order.

Peter Mandler
Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge

*Ireland’s Great Famine: Interdisciplinary Perspectives.* By Cormac Ó Gráda (Dublin, University College Dublin Press, 2006) 325 pp. $94.95 cloth $47.95 paper

It may come as a surprise to some that prior to the 1980s, the Irish historical profession paid little attention to the Famine of the 1840s—the event in Irish history of which non-Irish readers are most likely to have heard. The sesquicentennial observances in the mid-1990s prompted a blizzard of discourse in disciplines ranging from cultural studies to econometrics. From the latter discipline, the most important contributor is Ó Gráda, who published a masterful synthesis of his famine research of the previous two decades in *Black ’47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine in History, Economy, and Memory* (Princeton, 1999).

The work under review is a collection of a number of articles upon which that synthesis was founded. Topics include pre-Famine standards of living, landlord bankruptcy, disease during the Famine, the utility of
Irish famine scholarship for understanding of present-day famines, and studies of Dublin during the Famine and of the experience of Famine emigrants in New York. “Mass Migration as Disaster Relief” (co-authored with Kevin H. O’Rourke) most clearly illustrates how econometric history of the Famine has developed over the past two decades. In *Why Ireland Starved* (London, 1985), Joel Mokyr (co-author of two of the articles in the book under review) had displayed a dazzling array of hypotheses for Ireland’s plight, alongside ingenious methods for testing them with data aggregated to the level of counties (of which there are thirty-two in Ireland). Disappointingly, however, these methods failed to yield definitive results, over and over again. By turning to data at the level of baronies (327 smaller administrative units), Ó Gráda and O’Rourke are able to produce models that make sense of demographic changes between the 1841 and 1851 censuses. This willingness to go beyond the most accessible data is the key to Ó Gráda’s econometric success. Whether it is coding ten times as many observations of aggregate census data, poring through the records of the Encumbered Estates Court, or drawing a sample from the admissions register of the North Dublin Workhouse, Ó Gráda has been willing to do the historian’s tasks that allow him to take full advantage of his econometric skills.

Ó Gráda’s work, however, goes beyond the disciplines of history and economics. He takes advantage of his fluency in Gaelic to exploit folklore materials that document how the Famine was remembered by later generations. The fact that he can pose the hardnosed questions of the economist and also discern the meaning of bitter, even if inexact, popular recollections makes Ó Gráda’s contributions to the highly charged debates about responsibility for the tragedy especially worthy of attention. He is also at pains to identify ways in which the Irish Famine can shed light on present-day famines as well as to point out problems in applying our understanding of modern famines to those in the past. For Irish historians from the generation of this reviewer, the book also offers a special treat—a revealing history of the government-sponsored centenary history of the Famine that was supposed to appear in 1945 but did not appear until 1956.

David W. Miller
Carnegie Mellon University


Virtually every American over a certain age knows that the Stanford-Binet test provides a numerical assessment of something called “intelligence,” and most can tell you what their “I.Q.” is. Few French men and women have even heard of Alfred Binet, let alone realize that he was the
inventor of the test. By the time of his death in 1911, he himself had largely lost interest in applying it. This irony lies at the heart of John Carson’s remarkable book.

Carson’s project is nothing less than to explain how the world’s two oldest democracies came to grips with the problem of social inequality in polities arising from revolutions that abolished “artificial” social hierarchies and proclaimed equality for all. The French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen laid the groundwork for the solution in 1789: “Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded upon the general good.” The general good required that excellence in all aspects of life be nurtured and that leadership by the most able be allowed to flourish. The idea was that each individual’s talents should not be impeded by any barrier other than the limits of his or her own ability. In short, economic success; academic, scientific, and artistic achievement; political and administrative authority; and social position had to arise from a single standard—merit.

Carson’s principal task, admirably pursued, is to survey the history of ideas, increasingly classified as “scientific,” that underlay the evolution of education’s efforts to clear the pathways of merit and provide equality of opportunity (or not) in France and the United States from the eighteenth century to World War II, the point at which he believes each nation’s standards were thenceforth set. The central question is, What is “intelligence” and how can it be measured? Carson’s main concern—and target—is the American mania for standardized tests, not only of intelligence but of “achievement” as well. France’s educational history operates as a foil for his central story, though he does not make the mistake of viewing it as any sort of democratic model. But since the United States and France were sharply divergent in this context, attention to the French way might be a rewarding pursuit for U.S. policymakers.

American philosophy of mind and psychology had, by the twentieth century, embraced a unitary notion of intelligence (without ever really attempting to explain its constitution) as something that could be measured and assigned a number, whereas the French—despite the later nineteenth-century triumph of positivism and Binet’s pioneering efforts to codify differences in individual intelligence—continued to view intelligence as a multivalent array of capacities. The dominant thread of American psychology viewed intelligence as largely inborn and inheritable, but the French gave greater weight to the possibility of tapping potential talents among the disadvantaged through proper training and encouragement, as their arguments for affirmative action attested. American opponents of affirmative action called upon SAT scores to justify their cause.

Carson shows brilliantly how this outcome was reached, beginning with an overview of Enlightenment philosophy of mind and the dilemma posed by “natural talent” in a new polity based in “natural rights.” Race and gender differences were raised immediately, but at that
point, the only response to Condorcet’s logic of full access to equal opportunity for all was a reversion to essentially theological or “natural” social-role arguments like those of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.\(^1\) In both countries, new educational systems arose from their revolutionary experiences. The French version was highly centralized. It stressed the training of a (male) elite through a system of rigorous competitive examinations, theoretically open to all classes. It culminated in state-sponsored grandes écoles reserved for the best students and teachers. Crucially, a student’s measure of success came in the form of a qualitative assessment by experts. The American system was largely the opposite of the French—decentralized, highly democratic in the lower levels, and largely private and expensive in higher education.

Both systems produced elites that could claim to be Thomas Jefferson’s “aristocracy of talent,” though in reality most came from higher levels of wealth and social status in the first place. In the earlier nineteenth century, the reigning philosophies of mind—Victor Cousin’s eclecticism and American-style Scottish common sense—glorified “character” and justified the middle-class ascendancy. Call it émulation or competition; those who rose to the top deserved it.

The invasion of “natural” science into the field began with an examination of why certain people, especially certain groups, did not measure up and why they needed to remain subservient and/or “protected.” The mania for measurement began with the head; Carson’s treatment of scientific racism on both sides of the Atlantic is excellent, if standard. France and America differed little in methodology, but greatly in purpose. Racial science demonstrated the superiority of Europeans and their right to rule, though the French deemed non-Europeans improvable via “la mission civilisatrice.” In America, racial science simply legitimized inequality.

The high tide of scientism in psychology was reached at the turn of the twentieth century—the point at which Carson’s most original and telling analysis begins. Despite the triumph of positivism during the early Third Republic, which was matched in the United States, French psychology, led by Emile Durkheim, moved away from it, along with the notion that intelligence was quantifiable. At this very moment, Binet discovered a test that could supposedly measure intelligence scientifically, but it drew little attention from his colleagues. America, however, embraced it. Lewis Terman created the Stanford–Binet scale, and in 1916, convinced the U.S. military to administer the test to 2 million recruits. In the 1920s and 1930s, I.Q. took the nation by storm with the inevitable results—schools “tracking” their students, parents wringing their hands, industrial psychologists making personnel decisions, and psychology becoming all the rage. Academic testing, well beyond the Stanford–Binet test, turned into a big business, and test scores provided the criteria for everything from academic admission to school funding.

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\(^1\) On this issue, see Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford, 1988), 96–98.
Meanwhile, in France, experts still read written exams, and the grandes écoles winnowed the elite.

Carson tells this story with clarity and insight, though he might have broadened his canvas. In explaining why this great divergence remains, he rightly emphasizes the efficacy and the institutional power of French education and the cultural reaction against positivism after 1900 that the mechanical idiocy of World War I confirmed. The situation was different in the United States. White males felt besieged by the jumble of races and ethnicities knocking at the door of opportunity. What better way to restore their confidence than to institutionalize a culture-bound test deemed “objective” on which they would score higher? Although the tests have been refined, their consequences preserve inequality. Heavy reliance on measurable criteria has ramifications far beyond education, however, affecting the economy, government policy, ecological debate, notions of cultural worth, perceptions of urban life, and so on. Unlike the United States, Europe has largely eschewed rampant quantification as a means of social control, with positive results for the health of its societies.

Carson would have been well served to ruminate more deeply on the larger causes of this difference. Nonetheless, his study is comparative history at its best and its message fundamental. Quantitative versus qualitative assessment of merit in education lies at the very heart of current national debates; the political choices made will profoundly affect our future.

Christopher H. Johnson
Wayne State University

Blessed Motherhood, Bitter Fruit: Nelly Roussel and the Politics of Female Pain in Third Republic France. By Elinor Accampo (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006) 336 pp. $50.00

Accampo’s biography of Roussel, an unorthodox feminist of the French Third Republic, is first-rate. Roussel has international significance as the first feminist to make birth control an issue and arguably the only one since her era to attempt integrating the issue with feminism rather than positioning it as a matter of public health or pragmatic family economics. Roussel’s campaign was not simply to spread the word about birth control in a nation that already had a notoriously low birth rate and a powerful pronatalist movement accustomed to invoking patriotism for public support. Accampo keenly analyzes the deeper moral positions that made Roussel a controversial figure even among progressive reformers.

Roussel’s campaign was partly defensive, aimed at countering the pronatalist propaganda encouraging women to have large families. Her

proposals were often troubling because they challenged fundamental, Catholic assumptions about the natural ordering of the world—including the connection of women’s sexual intercourse to reproduction and of reproduction to the pain of childbirth. Moreover, for Republicans having children was a patriotic duty; the pain of childbirth was what women owed to *la patrie*. Feminists, too, were often shocked by Roussel’s emphasis on women’s control over their bodies. They founded their demands for women’s rights on motherhood, which they viewed as thoroughly compatible with the most perfect execution of wifely duties, not on sexual freedom. Hence, Roussel’s insistence on individualism for women was an unwelcome message.

This biography is a notable success from a political perspective. Accampo gives considerable attention to the reception of Roussel’s ideas by the public. Roussel was a popular lecturer as well as an author of plays and pamphlets. She had the courage to tour the provinces and to bring her message even to working women in the small towns of France. She was usually the first female lecturer whom these women had ever seen, let alone the first feminist. Skilled at communicating her passion about “the eternally sacrificed woman,” she often aroused sympathy among them for her controversial ideas. But when she was attacked in the press for these convictions, her seemingly natural allies on the left in the war against tradition rarely came to her defense.

Accampo is able to draw upon Roussel’s personal life to deepen the meaning of her public activism. Roussel’s radical approach to motherhood emerged from the disillusionment that she suffered during her first pregnancy. Ironically, she had two more children, neither of them much-wanted, despite her public stance on a woman’s right to control her own body. Henry Godet, her progressive husband—a sculptor—was supportive of her ideas but wary of the enmity that they would attract.

Accampo concludes the book with a worthy analysis of Roussel’s place in the French culture of maternity as well as in the international birth-control movement. This discussion drives home the primordial orthodoxies that Roussel hoped to dispel by invoking reason and human rights.

Lenard R. Berlanstein
University of Virginia


Since its emergence in the early 1960s, the history of the family has developed into both a concrete object of study and a flexible instrument for exploring social, economic, cultural, and political change. Casey takes up both these approaches in his new study of the Andalusian city of
Granada. Casey offers new insight into the shifting dynamics of power and prestige in early modern Spain through an examination of the strategies and solidarities that bound together the Granadino family and an exploration of its relationships with the local and national communities.

The last outpost of Iberian Islam, Granada underwent a thorough transformation during the decades after its conquest by Catholic Castile in 1492. Casey’s examination of the changes within and around the Granadino family focuses not on the decades of greatest flux but on the long seventeenth century, a period in which Granada’s new institutions and immigrant populations consolidated their place within local society. The title is slightly misleading—“citizens” refers not to Granada’s vecinos, or community members, but to its ciudadanos, its governing elites and community leaders. Thus, while Casey occasionally explores the structures and values that informed the family life of humbler Granadinos, these discussions tend to be centered upon their relations with their more powerful neighbors.

In twelve chapters chronicling Granada’s leading families’ economic activities, inheritance and marriage practices, domestic spaces, education, kinship, and charity, Casey explores early modern Granada’s culture of honor, its formal institutions and informal interpersonal networks, and the relationship between public and private and society and self. Seventeenth-century Granada offers a particularly interesting venue for examining such thorny questions, since, as a city of immigrants, its elite was “mobile” and flexible enough to integrate newcomers (120). What bonded together this new, heterogeneous elite, he finds, was memory and the cult of lineage and ancestry, which tended to overshadow nuclear families and personal identities. Casey’s conclusions have implications for thinking about the early modern self, although he might have developed this line further. He also finds that, even as local patricians increasingly looked to the Crown as a source of honor, power for individual Granadinos and for their families within Granada and at court was still closely tied to their standing within the local, civic community and to the informal bonds of personal obligation in patronage, friendship, and kinship that informed the workings of formal governing institutions. Even though a common culture of honor and chivalry helped to bond Granada’s local elites to their fellows in Madrid, even in an age of absolutism the values and loyalties of the small-scale community prevailed.

Much of Casey’s reconstruction of the values of Granada’s oligarchs rests upon prosopographies of some of the city’s leading kin groups. Painstakingly pieced together from documents in the secular and ecclesiastical archives of Granada and Madrid (and accompanied by eight detailed genealogical charts), these family histories reveal much about the activities and attitudes of elite Granadinos. Casey contextualizes individual examples from the archives within an extensive secondary literature, and he weaves literary and artistic sources into the thick array of wills and lawsuits, contracts, and petitions. The effects are sometimes impres-
visionistic rather than empirical, but the overall result is a rich and sympathetic portrait of a provincial elite in an age of change composed in a fluid and readable style.

A. Katie Harris
University of California, Davis


This ambitious book, the product of almost twenty years of labor, aspires to be a “total history” of a single city during World War I. By “total history,” the author, following Lamprecht, means the past in all of its dimensions—“political, economic, social, [and] cultural” (2). Apart from the immense work of gathering the data (from the admirably complete local archives, the private writings of about twenty-four contemporaries, newspaper accounts, eight oral interviews, and a survey of the inhabitants of 1,740 addresses throughout the war), Chickering identified the major conceptual problem as “aesthetic”—how to devise “an organizational framework that is at once coherent and capacious enough to accommodate, in principle at least, the entire spectacle” (4). The resulting book is therefore not primarily an analysis of civilian life in war so much as a broad, fascinating, and gracefully written description of how Freiburg’s citizens interpreted, adapted to, and tried to manage the impact of war, and how their civil society disintegrated under its weight.

Nonetheless, analysis is built into the study, and it comes from three sources. The first is the material impact of modern industrial warfare. Chickering provides a thorough account of the financial, economic, demographic, and minutely material ravages of war, including the relentless requisitions which by 1918 had commandeered even “postage stamps, newspapers, books, corks, cigarette stubs, bottles, electric-light bulbs, oil, and celluloid” (193). He rightly understands that systematic deprivation was the greatest effect of the war on civilians and the basis of their ultimate sociopolitical response to it. But understanding both the distribution of hardship and its political consequences demands a second level of analysis, which Chickering, following Rohe, finds in “milieus” (33 n. 69). Milieus define social collectivities as they form in the life world. Freiburg had three—a Roman Catholic, a Socialist, and a (largely male, Protestant, educated bourgeois) “Liberal” one (33, 45–46). These milieus mediated the experience of war and provided the basis for (conflicting) interpretations of it.


But because the war’s stresses cut across the traditional milieus, Chickering must supplement them with two other determining rubrics, gender and age. Women and pre- and post-draft age males experienced a different war and were mobilized (or forgotten) in different ways. The third level of analysis is a modern, cultural one that focuses on shifting contemporary narratives of the war, or interpretive frameworks within which people justified events, tried to understand their predicament, or found blame. The axis of sacrifice and entitlement, in particular, ordered people’s lives. The city’s inability to uphold the social bargain at the basis of this interpretation of equity and morality led to its utter loss of authority and to the revolution of 1918.

Chickering’s study of Freiburg does not revise the conclusions of recent social research, but its thoroughness and insight provide a much more exact understanding of how war actually works on the homefront: requisition, distribution, censorship, taxation, charity, etc. A chapter about the assault on sensory experience (smells, taste, color, and the sense of time and distance) is new and fascinating, as is Chickering’s account of the disintegration of organizational life. One can literally feel the war tear Freiburg apart.

Isabel V. Hull
Cornell University

Conflict and Stability in the German Democratic Republic. By Andrew I. Port (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007) 303 pp. $75

In this exemplary case study, Port skillfully exploits the rich trove of archival materials deposited by the extinct German Democratic Republic (GDR). His focus is on the Ulbricht era (1949–1971), which stretches from the establishment of the Communist regime in the Soviet Occupation Zone through the exhaustion of the Party’s “scientific-technical revolution.” This was a time of upheaval, including the introduction of Stalinism, the rebellion of June 1953, mass flight halted only with the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961, agricultural collectivization, and the introduction of new economic steering mechanisms in the 1960s. Yet this study is more concerned with the factors that helped to stabilize socialist dictatorship rather than with conflict. Port explains, “An understanding of stability in that world [the Soviet bloc] provides an indirect answer to perhaps the major question of the postwar period: Why did the Cold War last as long as it did? (12)”

Why did the GDR—in retrospect often regarded as an inevitable failure—endure for four decades? The principal, and inescapable, reason for the endurance of the GDR was the regime’s dependence upon the Soviet Union, which came to its rescue during the popular rebellion of 1953. It is easy to understand why ordinary East Germans would resent and oppose the imposition of Soviet-style socialism but it is much more
difficult to understand why and to what extent they eventually complied with it. In treating these issues, this book illustrates the virtues of analyzing a locality over the span of decades. Port’s arguments are developed through analysis of a single administrative territory (Kreis), centered on the town of Saalfeld (population in 1950 circa 27,000) located near the West German border in southern Thuringia. The region contained an urban core, an industrial zone, and agricultural areas. It had several important industries, including steel and optics, and in the postwar period uranium mining was conducted by the Soviet-controlled Wismut enterprise.

Although a single administrative unit cannot be taken as representative of the whole, Saalfeld is diverse enough to provide observation of several facets of East German politics and society. Port made extensive use of archival holdings, supplemented by oral histories, in a study that ranges from the regional level to the grassroots, from officialdom to the shop-floor and farm field. He uncovers horizontal relations among East Germans as well as the relationship of East Europeans with the Soviet authority. The Saalfeld area was the site of the GDR’s first large-scale labor unrest—as much local rebellion as strike—which the Wismut miners began in 1951. Port convincingly argues that these events prefigured the country-wide rebellion of 1953, which had many of the same features. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of East Germans fled the country year after year. The ultimate effects of these twin forces of popular discontent, Port shows, compelled officials to moderate the worst excesses of the regime and apply pressure to improve living standards. But measures meant to stabilize the GDR increasingly weakened the regime’s control over the grassroots and crippled the implementation of Ulbricht’s grand economic reforms. Port finds that although the rulers of the GDR were able to achieve a tenuous stability, they never really won the spontaneous, universal compliance that is indicative of a regime regarded as legitimate.

Case studies are essential for bringing to light empirical details that allow us to evaluate and revise general arguments and modify prevailing interpretations. One of the most compelling things about this book is that it casts grave doubt on many of the most influential assessments of the GDR. In a host of areas—its supposed uncontested authority and totalitarian control, its putative commitment to sexual equality and women’s rights, its relative economic sophistication, and its vaunted achievements in providing welfare and leveling social distinctions—the historical evidence reveals an enormous gap between the regime’s pretensions and its actual achievements.

How much can the case of Saalfeld, or, for that matter, East Germany, contribute to answering Port’s enormous question about the duration of Soviet-type socialism? Without some sense of how portable the insights drawn from this study are to the broader Soviet bloc, the answer is not much. Fortunately, Port addresses the problem by relating his work to existing studies, through judicious comparison, and by evaluat-
ing his evidence in the light of general theories of politics and society in
Soviet-type regimes. Port’s social history of Saalfeld might fall short of
answering the enormous question that he poses, but it adds much to our
understanding of how socialism worked—and did not work—in every-
day practice.

Steven Pfaff
University of Washington

Bearing the Heavens: Tycho Brahe and the Astronomical Community of the
Late Sixteenth Century. By Adam Mosley (New York, Cambridge Uni-
versity Press, 2007) 354 pp. $105.00

The Danish nobleman Tycho Brahe (1546–1601) practiced a unique
combination of feudalism and science on the small island of Hven,
which the King of Denmark assigned to him, together with an appropri-
ate income, to build an observatory, perfect astronomy, cast horoscopes,
reflect glory on the monarchy, and teach doctors astrology. Tycho had
two fiefs on Hven. One was the island and its inhabitants, who owed
him the labor with which he built a palace observatory (Uraniborg) with
guest rooms, a library, and an alchemical laboratory; another observatory
(Stjerneborg) stocked with instruments unusually large and accurate
for their time; and outbuildings, orchards, fish ponds, and vegetable
gardens. Uraniborg stood at the centre of a formal square garden pat-
trolled by large dogs and enclosed by massive walls. Hven’s second fief
was the bounteous information produced by the instruments and their
attendants—Tycho’s students and visitors—who found it the more
difficult to leave the island the higher their mathematical skills and the
lower their social status. Tycho guarded his measurements as carefully as
he did his palace until he published them from his own press, also lo-
cated on Hven.

All historians of science know that Tycho lost half his nose in a
duel; that he invented a planetary system in which the sun, carrying the
planets, circles around an immobile earth; that he exploded the rigid
solid heavens of late scholasticism by showing that comets moved freely
through the spaces that the solids were supposed to occupy; that he
fought continually over his priority as a world builder; that his unprece-
dented program of sustained regular measurement of celestial coordi-
nates made a hoard that could revolutionize astronomy; and that his last
mathematical assistant, Johannes Kepler, whom he engaged at Prague af-
after a new Danish king had expelled him from Hven, made the revolu-
tion.

Mosley’s Bearing the Heavens is a late entry in a professional historical
literature that goes back to, and depends upon, Tycho’s work and corre-
spondence published more than seventy-five years ago.¹ Some notable

¹ J. L. E. Dryer et al. (eds.), Tychonis Brahe Dani Opera Omnia (Copenhagen 1913–1929),
15v.
recent exploitations of this and cognate material—by Thoren, Christianson, and Gingerich and Westman—have recounted Tycho’s life and work, the doings on Hven, and the travels of sixteenth-century astronomers in detail. They have left Mosley with slim pickings, mainly in the correspondence, for what his publisher’s blurb describes as a “ground-breaking” book. He appears to have the tools for deep excavation in the Tychonic mines—the languages, the sciences, energy, resourcefulness, and patience—but, despite his several claims to have found the mother lode that his predecessors missed, his prodigious digging has uncovered no new seams and not many nuggets. Among the by-products of Mosley’s systematic industry are lists of the owners of Tycho’s books during his lifetime, an extensive bibliography, and an index of Tycho’s correspondents.

Mosley devotes much of his book to the Epistolae astronomicae, a collection of letters put together, annotated, and published by Tycho in 1596 as the first volume of a series that he did not continue. The reasons for this publication, as Mosley reconstructs them, were to distribute (and advertise) information about the stars and about Hven, and to curry favor with the son of Landgrave Wilhelm IV of Hesse-Kassel, whose correspondence figures prominently in Tycho’s book. Mosley squeezes the Epistolae for information about instruments, gifts, world systems, travel, books, and letters. He is able to affirm, what only people bamboozled by recent histories of the book would doubt, that correspondence and books were important to the advancement of science. In his most useful and original chapter, which discusses Tycho’s celestial spheres and their manufacture in the Netherlands, Mosley enlarges on the theme of travel undertaken to see, sell, deliver, or copy books and instruments.

One promising direction in which Mosley heads but does not travel far is indicated by his title, Bearing the Heavens. It refers to Atlas, thought to have been a king as well as a strong and patient man. Mosley applies this theme to Tycho and William Lassell (both king-like astronomers), traces Atlas images, and remarks on the importance to the development of astronomy of men able to cultivate patrons through the medium of a shared classical education. The theme could be taken further, with appeals to histories of art, material culture, myth, and science, to include the authentication and exploitation of the Farnese atlas and globe, and the intricate symbolism of Galileo’s “gift” of the moons of Jupiter to the Medici. The outcome might be conclusions more interesting, although less secure, than “Books required for the practice of astronomy had to be obtained before they could be read” (169).

J. L. Heilbron
Worcester College, Oxford


The corpse of the suicide provides the corpus of this complex book. Morrissey dissects the act of self-destruction in Russia from the eighteenth through the early twentieth century with finesse. Surveying and probing changing meanings of the suicidal act (as implied by those who committed suicide and as understood by survivors) over time, she brings to her penetrating study religious and theological texts, legal and statistical analyses, medical and scientific therapies and theories, sociological studies, ethnographic-anthropological observations, and artistic representations, as well as literary texts and suicide notes. Based largely on archival materials and printed primary sources, the book displays a firm command of recent scholarship about related studies treating Russia and Europe.

Although, as the author reminds us, contemporaries generally view suicide as a result of mental illness, thus denying reflexivity and gesture to those who succumb to it, the Russian state and Orthodox Church historically ascribed intentionality, agency, or volition to them. Thus, Petrine Russia criminalized the deed, or even the attempt. The Church denied comforting last rites and condemned the body of the usurper of God’s prerogative to nonconsecrated ground; some peasants went one step further to desecrate their unhallowed graves lest the damned souls unleash calamities upon the community. The priest, doctor, and ruler contested jurisdiction over, and disposition of, the body as well as interpreting the (in)significance of the deed. At times, however, because their claims and interests merged, especially between priests and doctors, the author insists that this study is not simply about a displacement of traditional religious views by secularization. Over time, both Church and State softened their outright condemnations; aided by science, they found nuanced extenuating circumstances, such as the drunk who while sober had not intended his death. The fact that other people instigated or abetted some suicides also cast doubt on the culpability of the deceased. Morrissey discusses the blurring between suicide and martyrdom and the politicization of the act, as in the seventeenth century when Old Believers (schismatics) immolated themselves rather than conform to Orthodoxy or the jurisdiction of the (evil) state.

The author examines the reading of suicide as variously the salvaging of honor, as the product of sentimentality or boredom, and as a public act of self-expression, including the creation of death as an art form. These new phenomena ascribed to Westernization aroused public debate and gave impetus to regulations intended to protect the well-ordered patriarchal society and state. Declaring suicide to be the disease of the century in 1896, the psychiatrist Ivan A. Sikorskii sets up the motif that lies at the heart of Morrissey’s argument, “Modernity—its politics, its inventive traditions, its (dis)enchantments—was inscribed upon the body of the suicide” (a year later, Sikorskii declared alcoholism to be the
Thus, oppressed women committed suicide not out of despair but to exercise self-affirmation. Secondary school youths dropped out of life rather than endure the tyranny of the family, or more often the teacher, and the educational system (a proxy for the tyrannical state). Mass politics induced the reinvention of quasireligious self-effacement as a mode of redemption whether in prison, in exile, or in revolutionary protest against autocratic power. Terrorists justified assassinations by claiming they would in turn sacrifice their own valuable principled life for a higher cause. Others, unsurprisingly, ascribed madness or degeneration to the same deeds.

That contemporary Russia has the second highest rate of suicide in the world and that terrorists are currently fashioning themselves into instant suicide martyrs give this insightful study a chilling, if perhaps inadvertent, relevance.

Patricia Herlihy
Emmanuel College

*The Rise and Fall of Communism in Russia.* By Robert V. Daniels (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2007) 481 pp. $50.00

This large volume consists of articles written by Daniels between 1953 and 2002. All of it, including the introduction, has been printed before. Although the chapters cover a large variety of topics, from Marxist theory to Soviet politics, they form a consistent whole that could be read as a history of the Soviet Union from its establishment to its disintegration. They all exhibit the author’s erudition, common sense, and originality. Daniels well-articulated view of history, which crops up again and again in this volume, lends a certain unity to the book. As a liberal and a moderate, he never simply denounced Vladimir Lenin’s generation of revolutionaries as power-hungry, bloodthirsty monsters (à la Pipes) or attributed suffering in the Soviet Union to Marxist theory (à la Malia). Since he recognizes contingency, he does not share the conservative belief that Lenin was inherent in Marxism and Joseph Stalin inherent in Leninism. Yet, unlike a younger generation of scholars, he has had no hesitation employing the concept of totalitarianism to describe at least some periods of Soviet history. He stresses that Soviet history was not an undifferentiated unit; different eras differed from one another greatly. By the same token, he refuses to view the “Soviet experiment” as a “failure,” because, for him, the Revolution evolved quickly into something unforeseen.

Nor is he willing to reduce the entire history of the Soviet Union to a series of failures, since during the course of seven decades, Russian so-

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ciety was forced to reckon with the complexities of modernity, even if at an extremely high cost. Daniels repeatedly emphasizes that even though the Soviet Union industrialized, it remained “Russian,” in every respect. History does not begin every year anew; concerns, issues, and behavior patterns reappear, even if sometimes in a different form under different circumstances. Although Daniels is well acquainted with Marxist theory, he does not give it much explanatory force in describing the behavior of Soviet leaders. He appears to argue (correctly) that politicians act first and find ideological justifications for their actions later.

Daniels continues to use concepts and approaches that were current in the 1950s but fell into disuse, such as Brinton’s generalizations about revolutions (slightly revised by Daniels) and modernization theory as used by Black. According to this view, “the Soviet experiment” was simply a way to industrialize the country and create a more or less educated and urbanized middle class.

Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation. By Lorri Glover (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007) 250 pp. $50.00

The sons in Glover’s trim, readable, and well-researched study of the United States South between the founding of the nation to the early fissures in national unity that had appeared by the 1820s, are the well-to-do young men of the propertied classes. Most of them had ties to planting and therefore to slave owning. Many of them were among the best-educated, wealthiest American men who wrote copiously about their ambitions, and about the fears that dogged them. Glover’s portrait of these men (her study revolves around 200 collections of archived family papers) follows the arc of their growing up from young boys to young husbands, save for the final chapter, which sketches aspects of slavery and slave mastery. Throughout their early lives, Glover shows, men were shaped by, and learned to use, the imperatives of manhood in this time and place—acting decisively, burnishing reputation, mastering self in order to lead others, and wielding coercive power when persuasion failed. In general, the young men in these pages were not raised to be reflective to the point of self-doubt; in the main, they took what they wanted and called it good.

Glover aims to place the story of these southern sons into the established narrative of national unity in 1787 that eventually gave way to the North–South sectional wariness that followed after the first territorial and moral misgivings over slavery. She is especially convincing in the first and last chapters, suggesting that the southern elite began embracing

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their difference from their northern counterparts immediately after the Revolution. However, change and continuity in these young men’s formative years become murky in the middle chapters: A generation came of age, yet it is not clear what changed and what remained in men’s family relations and modes of manliness. Nor, ultimately, is it clear just what a historical view of young men adds to, or alters in, the familiar nation-to-section narrative.

Familiar, too, are the values that drove these men and their families; the book would make an excellent introductory text showing how a distinctive southern moral “type” emerged in American culture by the 1820s—willful, showy, charming, and languid. Aside from this virtue, however, and aside from its careful and deep archival research, this study does not venture into new conceptualizations of manhood, self, and culture. Nor does it make much use of interdisciplinary perspectives that might have given the study more depth. Although a study of self and culture, the book relies on a sometimes wooden sense of cultural expression in which men seem largely pushed along by “requirements for earning manhood” rather than inhabiting a world where manhood was malleable, often perplexing, and open to second guesses (182). Some attention to the growing literature on agency or on self and identity, for example, might have served to deepen our sense of a lived-in culture that fed not one but many narratives, with some alternatives cast aside as men seized their best chance.¹

Steven M. Stowe
Indiana University, Bloomington

Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands. By Juliana Barr (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2007) 416 pp. $59.95 cloth $19.95 paper

This book is a superbly crafted contribution to the growing literature that places Native Americans at the center of the struggle for control of eighteenth-century North America. Barr’s clear chronological and spatial framework renders the complex history of Spanish-Indian relations in Texas meaningful for borderlands specialists and those new to the field. She examines, in turn, Spaniards’ contacts with the Caddos of East Texas during the 1680s, the establishment of settlements and missions in the San Antonio region, and Spaniards’ shifting diplomatic and political ties with Comanches, Wichitas, and Apaches during the late eighteenth century.

Barr writes that in each of these historical contexts, contrary to prevailing historiographical wisdom, the Spaniards, not the Native Americans, “had to accommodate, resist, and persevere” (7); Native Americans “dictated the terms of contact, diplomacy, alliance, and enmity” (8). Native Americans brought gendered understandings and practices to all of these relationships. Although indigenous notions of male honor and battlefield valor meshed at least superficially with Spanish values, other concepts did not. For Native Americans, the presence of women and children in a traveling party indicated its peaceful intentions, and women, marriage, and kinship were central to alliances forged among groups. Spanish soldiers, missionaries, traders, and settlers in Texas grasped Native gender codes imperfectly and belatedly, if ever. Only to the extent that they were able to meet indigenous expectations in these and other crucial areas were they able to maintain a presence in Texas. These accommodations often ran counter to directives issued from Mexico City.

Barr’s interdisciplinary methodology is broad and effective: She gives her sources a close and critical reading and draws liberally on the insights and findings of archaeology, anthropology, and ethnography, though Latin Americanists might fault her for relying exclusively on sources located in United States repositories. Although she makes extensive use of microfilm copies of major collections from Spanish and Mexican archives, she first looks at English translations of these sources when available. She does, however, consult the Spanish originals whenever a question of interpretation arises, and her work bears careful reading by scholars working from transnational perspectives. Elsewhere, Barr has argued that when viewed from the perspective of eighteenth-century Mexico City—or that of many Latin Americanists of our own time—the borderlands regions were peripheral, but, in fact, “Texas was a core of native political economies, a core within which Spaniards were often the subjects or potential subjects of native institutions of social control.”¹ In Peace Came in the Form of a Woman, she meticulously and convincingly shows why and how this was so.

In sum, this finely conceptualized and beautifully executed book easily ranks on a short list of essential reading for scholars of Native American history, alongside such pathbreaking works as Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republic in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815 (New York, 1991), and James Brooks, Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands (Chapel Hill, 2002).

Cheryl E. Martin
University of Texas, El Paso

If We Must Die: Shipboard Insurrections in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade. By Eric Robert Taylor (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 2006) 288 pp. $45.00

The theme of black resistance has been central to the historiography of American slavery since the 1970s. Based on information pertaining to 493 instances of revolt (mainly from the English, French, and North American slave trades), Taylor’s new book is the first monograph-length study to shift the analytical focus of such work from American plantations to the oceanic and riverine slave trades that peopled them.

The author has at his disposal details concerning around 100 more cases of slave-ship insurrection than other recent studies of shipboard rebellions, and the book uses the data to provide a view of how slave-ship rebellions most often unfolded as well as to explain the operational details behind why the rebellions transpired as they did. The book follows pioneering quantitative studies of shipboard rebellion spurred by the initial publication of The Transatlantic Slave Trade Database (tastd). Taylor summarizes and augments key findings in that work concerning the importance of women in shipboard revolts, the costs of shipboard rebellion in the business of slave trading, and the influence that the regional origins of a ship’s slaves had on the propensity for the outbreak of revolt. The book also fruitfully queries some of the initial conclusions of the first studies to be based on the tastd. Taylor, for instance, argues that African rebels plotting violence on slave ships probably did execute their plans with an eye on how time of day might affect their chances (98–101).

For the most part, however, Taylor’s exertions are in the qualitative sphere, not the quantitative one. In the realm of historical narrative, one of the book’s achievements is its systematic presentation of the small details involved in the unfolding of a slave revolt at sea. Historiographically, the book’s intervention concerns the literature on slave resistance, whereas recent work has stressed slaveholders’ success in containing, mostly though overwhelming force, their chattel’s greatest ambitions (indeed, the analytical efficacy and precision of the very term resistance is more and more questioned in modern slavery studies).

1 David Eltis et al. (eds.), The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Database on CD-ROM (New York, 1999). A revised edition is soon to be available online at the following URL: http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces.
3 William Dusinberre, Them Dark Days: Slavery in the American Rice Swamps (New York, 1996), 123; Trevor G. Burnard, Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World (Chapel Hill, 2004), 212–213. Dusinberre thinks “dissidence” a better handle for the kinds of actions often described as slave resistance. Burnard suggests that “opposition” better attends to the imbalance of power that, for the most part, defined master-slave relations.
In response, Taylor argues, “The remarkable level of success that shipboard rebels attained challenges the notion that African and African American slave resistance was ineffective” (4). At one level, this is a terribly difficult point to make. The chances of rebelling slaves achieving ultimate success (their freedom) probably never surpassed their chances of their being killed in the midst of their uprising (115–116, 137). Taylor, however, proposes to define success as enslaved Africans “forcibly taking command of the slaver, even if only for a brief period” (122). Moreover, he argues that judging the ultimate success of shipboard rebellions requires accounting for the ways in which the insurrections reverberated across the Atlantic world—the cost that they imposed on slavers, the energy they injected into Atlantic abolitionist movements, and the example they provided in American slave quarters when recounted long after the fact.

The rationale behind Taylor’s definition of what a successful shipboard revolt entailed will and should inspire debate. So too will his suggestions concerning the possible continuing impact of shipboard rebellion within American slave communities (especially given slave owners’ apparent adeptness at containing the explosion of outright revolt). The impact of shipboard rebellion on the business of slaving and on the ultimate success of Atlantic movements for abolition is a compelling point. Another point is abundantly clear throughout If We Must Die: At the heart of Atlantic slavery, the relationship between captive and captor was in many regards a war, and the slave ship was a critical and early site where that war was waged.

Alexander X. Byrd
Rice University


For mainstream (read white) consciousness, both slavery in Revolutionary America and the Revolution’s part in destroying slavery remain side-shows. Gellman’s *Emancipating New York* ought to help change that level of awareness. Going beyond studies of New York slavery by White, Hodges, Foote, and Lepore, Gellman deals with the complexity, hesitation, contradictions, and great importance of slavery’s destruction in its great northern bastion.

Gellman makes four big points about how slavery died in New

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4 See also Behrendt et al., “Costs of Coercion,” 464.
York. First, it generated intense debate, sorting out slavery’s friends and enemies. That alignment cut across all others. Favoring or opposing independence, a democratic republic, or strong government had nothing to do with a person’s stance on slavery.

Second, New York slavery died slowly. When the state finally began gradual abolition in 1799, slavery was long-dead in Vermont and in Massachusetts. Slow abolition was underway in the rest of New England, and it was nearly done in Pennsylvania. Only New Jersey lagged further behind. Third, black New Yorkers took a major role in destroying slavery, though they often clashed with their white allies, most especially on the former slaves’ place in the Republic.

Gellman’s fourth point is his most original contribution, melding and freshening two older discussions about the revolution. One of them opened the political language of the era, treating American republicanism as both ideology and practice. Slavery figured in that language abstractly, but actual enslavement seemed peripheral, at least in historians’ reconstructions. The other historians’ discussion probed the experiences of all sorts of people, including slaves, as they remade their world and often themselves.

Gellman shows that the discourse of republican politics and the discourse and practice of abolition cannot be separated. When gradual abolition finally began in 1799, the problem ceased to be whether slavery in New York should end; the new problem was to determine what to do with the people in the state who had been slaves. Forcing them into exile was out of the question, even though racism abounded in white New York, and even anti-slavery politicians often favored it. But while the South hungered for more slaves to grow cotton, the real issues were the extent to which black New Yorkers could participate in the polity as citizens, and how the polity could protect them against would-be enslavers.

As Gellman shows, slavery ran through New York State’s early republican history. When it finally ended, on July 4, 1827, the state-level discussion fed almost directly into abolitionism of another sort. Adopted New Yorker Alexander Hamilton opposed slavery as part of fostering American nationalism. Adopted New Yorker Frederick Douglass believed in Hamilton’s project, despite his famous question of 1852, “What to the Slave is Your Fourth of July?” To him, as to many at the time, ending slavery nationwide, immediately, and with full equality was the only way for that project to become complete.

Gellman tells a story that links those two individuals and the questions that they posed in a web that comprised the words and the actions of many others. His prose is both sophisticated and accessible. He may well have written one of those rare first monographs that can attract readers inside and outside the academic world. Both his book and its subject deserve no less.

Edward Countryman
Southern Methodist University
Slavery and the Commerce Power: How the Struggle Against the Interstate Slave Trade Led to the Civil War. By David L. Lightner (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2006) 240 pp. $45.00

In this important new study, Lightner looks at the decades-long debate and legal battle concerning federal regulation of the interstate slave trade within the United States. According to Lightner, “This is the story of a constitutional loophole and of a law that never was” (ix). At issue was the question of whether or not the U.S. Constitution granted to Congress the right to regulate, and even prohibit, the interstate traffic in enslaved human commodities. Many of the northerners opposed to slavery believed that Congress did have this power, and they also thought that such a prohibition would bring about the downfall of the entire southern slave system. Although such an act was never passed by Congress, Lightner argues “that southern anxiety over the threat to the interstate slave trade was an important element in precipitating the secession crisis and the Civil War” (xi).

The strongest element of this work is Lightner’s extensive primary research into, and discussion of, the various constitutional interpretations and legal arguments offered by both opponents and proponents of slavery. Especially noteworthy is his examination of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 and the original intent of the framers regarding this issue. Unfortunately, little was said at the time because of the founders’ inability to foresee the rise of this traffic, which did not fully develop until after the closing of the African slave trade in 1808. Lightner argues that the framers did not intend to grant Congress the right to abolish the interstate slave trade, though they inadvertently did. The full implications of this “loophole” did not appear until the Missouri Crisis of 1819/20. From that point onward, it became a primary focus of the emerging anti-slavery movement in the North, and, by the tumultuous 1850s, it dominated the fears of southern slave owners.

Lightner successfully employs legal theory, but his overall argument could have benefited from additional research in other disciplines. He effectively explores the role that Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel Uncle Tom’s Cabin (Boston, 1852) played in developing anti-slavery sentiment in the North, but he does not fully examine the role that literature in the South played in the defense of slavery, or the role that the slave trade played in the southern economy. The interstate slave trade helped to raise the economic value of slaves throughout the region, making slave property the most valuable form of capital investment in the South.

Many of the points in this book have already appeared in Lightner’s numerous published articles, although they are especially effective when discussed together in a coherent argument. Most important, this work is a valuable contribution to our growing understanding of how the domestic slave trade influenced secession and the Civil War.

Steven Deyle
University of Houston

The Missouri Compromise and Its Aftermath seems certain to become essential reading on the era of good feelings and the origins of the second-party system. Forbes places slavery at the center not only of the Missouri Crisis but also of the political transformation of antebellum America. He thereby challenges accounts, whether national myths or recent histories, that submerge slavery beneath issues of personality, politics, and economics. He shows that the positions taken and the arguments advanced during the Missouri crisis, particularly by opponents of congressional efforts to restrict slavery, laid the foundations for the political, intellectual, and institutional structures of the next three decades. He sees the Missouri Crisis as “our most valuable text” for “understanding the meaning of slavery in America” (2).

The Missouri Compromise and Its Aftermath is an extremely rich and complex work. Most of the book covers the fifteen years from the accession of James Monroe to the presidency in 1817 to the conclusion of the Nullification Crisis in 1833. The two central, national figures in this account are Monroe and Martin Van Buren. The former is presented as unfairly maligned by historians, and the latter as unduly championed. But Forbes’ focus is not simply on the national level; instead, it constantly shifts in intriguing ways. At times, he details the backroom machinations of politicians in Albany, Charleston, Philadelphia, Richmond, or Washington or examines the complex positions of pamphleteers, orators, and organizers in both North and South. At other times, he discusses the consequences and implications of these acts and works in the broadest imaginable terms, reaching to the foundations of our understanding of the antebellum era.

This book is not without problems. There are surprising absences in the secondary source reading. Given that the era of good feelings has not been an especially dynamic historical field in recent years, the failure to address, or at least acknowledge, significant books and articles is unsettling. At times, moreover, the primary sources are stretched nearly to the breaking point to make his case. Although Forbes is generally careful to use such language as “presumably” or “conceivably” (65, 72), in some sections, the stretching is frequent and integral, particularly for his rehabilitation of Monroe. But the larger problems are in the gap between the micro- and macro-level analysis. Forbes’ choices about what issues or events deserve close scrutiny are not always well explained. He provides detailed accounts of Virginia in one chapter, Pennsylvania in another, and South Carolina in a third, but he does not always explain why these states are privileged above others. The attempt to connect the particular to the general is one of the most interesting methodological components of this book, but it is not always successful.

As important and intriguing as this book is, it is not really interdisci-
plinary. Though often focused on politics, Forbes does not approach the material as a political scientist or theorist. Though often attuned to language, he does not rely upon the analysis or the jargon of literary critics. Instead, he pulls together a variety of approaches from the discipline of history—political, intellectual, social, and cultural—into a generally unified and certainly effective whole.

James E. Lewis, Jr.
Kalamazoo College

*The Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century.* By Clay McShane and Joel A. Tarr (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007) 242 pp. $50.00

According to McShane and Tarr, the horse shaped the nineteenth-century American city. By increasing the speed of urban transportation, these “living machines” facilitated land-use specialization, including the expansion of suburbs and the development of parks. The urban economy also depended on horses; their muscle sustained commerce, powered engines, and provided the energy for earth-moving machinery. These beasts of burden, literally, did the heavy lifting in the city, hauling, pulling, and carrying people, goods, and even snow. During epizootics, urban commerce slowed to a crawl; commuters struggled to reach their destinations; food rotted in railyards and on docks; and firefighting was hamstrung. Yet, despite their central role in daily life during the nineteenth century, the urban horse has received little attention from historians, until now. In *The Horse in the City,* McShane and Tarr fill this lacuna in the scholarly literature with an engaging analysis.

The authors define the topic expansively. In wide-ranging chapters, they recreate the urban world that the horse forged and that developed around the horse. Thus, portions of the book deal with the effects of the horse more than the animal itself, such as the growth of a workforce that catered to horses, improvements in hay production, and the professionalization of veterinary medicine.

As a consequence of this integrated framework, McShane and Tarr emphasize feedback loops and economic linkages. The increasing dependence on urban horse power, for example, reduced travel time and therefore spurred land-use specialization, which, in turn, reinforced demand for horses and necessitated larger stables and more hostlers, teamsters, hacks, blacksmiths, and harness makers. In response, wealthier residents moved further from working-class neighborhoods and downtown, ill-smelling stables, thereby heightening dependence on horse-based transportation and accelerating social and spatial sorting. The economic impact of the urban horse also extended beyond the city itself, as hinterland farmers responded to the growing needs of the animals by devoting
more land to hay and oats production. Horse manure became an important fertilizer. Suggesting both the cultural and the economic effects of this reciprocal relationship, hinterland farmers termed Manhattan a “veritable manure factory” (132).

McShane and Tarr conclude that most nineteenth-century city dwellers viewed horses in utilitarian terms; they treated the animals as machines and replaced them when they became less productive. Since old, sick, and weak horses held more value dead than alive, owners routinely destroyed horses that showed signs of lameness or heat stroke and dispatched their carcasses to rendering plants. Ironically, anti-cruelty reformers played an integral role in this process, assuming responsibility for euthanizing injured animals.

McShane and Tarr draw from an impressive array of sources, ranging from trade journals to novels. Perhaps because The Horse in the City is written more as a collection of inter-connected essays than a traditional monograph, it contains some repetition—a few anecdotes, for instance, are retold in multiple chapters. But this is a minor shortcoming in an otherwise valuable contribution not only to urban history but also to nineteenth-century economic, business, environmental, and social history.

Jeffrey S. Adler
University of Florida

*After the Gold Rush: Tarnished Dreams in the Sacramento Valley.* By David Vaught (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007) 310 pp. $55.00

*After the Gold Rush* examines the lives of men who did not amass a pocket full of rocks during the Gold Rush—George Washington Pierce, Champion I. Hutchinson, Jerome C. Davis, and William Montgomery—who stayed in northern California and clung to the spirit of ’49. “Yankee farmhands too ashamed to return home; their employer, an entrepreneur/politician/farmer/fugitive . . .; an adventurous Ohioan looking . . . to make his mark . . .; and a long-struggling family of squatters,” all saw the Gold Rush as the defining moment in their lives, and based their future, and the future of the lower Sacramento Valley on their dreams and gambles (25–26). Vaught follows two generations of men and their families who, determined to succeed in Putah Valley, California, risked the farm, over and over again. Their determination to succeed on the land, their commitment to the market and to community life, and their loyalty to capitalism and community values allowed the following generations to develop the area into an agricultural contender and an educational center. “If just one of the golden dreams came true,
then all the broken dreams would be worth it,” writes Vaught in a summary of the hardships of these Californians (228).

Vaught draws from a variety of disciplines and interests as he follows the failed argonauts in their transition from mining and land speculation to farming and ranching and from planting wheat to growing fruits and nuts. His most notable contribution is his analysis of the ways in which the environment affected the lives of Putah settlers. He provides a layout of the land, a description of the ecosystem, and the effects of irrigation. He notes that creeks shaped the lives of these Californians as much as, and perhaps even more than, any other factor. Vaught also provides a detailed inquiry of the legalities involved in land-claim controversies caused by squatters, incorrect land surveys, prolonged court cases, and political maneuvering. The economic history of Putah Valley is told through the impact of farm credit, railroad prices, falling market prices, and the growth of capitalism.

Vaught gives a nod to social history in his discussion of community life—family relations, women’s contributions to the family and society, and celebrations of national events—but he uses this material mainly to introduce his economic concerns. Scholars looking for a full social history of the lower Sacramento Valley will be left wanting. But Vaught uses a wide variety of sources—including newspapers, court records, censuses, land-grant records, deed books, agricultural reports, and county records, as well as quotations from personal diaries and interviews with descendants—to provide a comprehensive economic and legal narrative.

Overall, Vaught’s book follows in the tradition of such California Gold Rush monographs as Susan Johnson, Roaring Camp (New York, 2000); Peter Blodgett, Land of Golden Dreams (San Marino, 1994); and Malcolm Rorhbough, Days of Gold (Berkeley, 1997). It highlights the idea of faded glory that motivated men to take big risks, always hoping that their golden dreams would one day come true. After the Gold Rush is an agricultural history that weaves together an unpredictable creek, a fluctuating market, and the perseverance of the American Dream.

Melody M. Miyamoto
Coe College


This book joins a small but steadily growing body of scholarship that investigates how Chinese immigration to the United States from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century created a situation in which the American legal structures became increasingly rigid in order to exclude as many aspiring Chinese immigrants as possible, and in turn,
how the Chinese responded by developing strategies to circumvent these restrictions. As Lau chronicles throughout her study, Chinese resistance to these hostile laws led to both an increasing anti-Chinese sentiment among immigration administrators and the alienation of Chinese Americans from American society.

Lau frames her analysis around the assertion, “It was through the relationship created within the interaction between the Chinese and the INS that the manner and organization of Chinese family and community were constructed” (4). She bases her study on a number of secondary sources, landmark legal cases involving citizenship and immigration, a sample of immigration files housed in the National Archives and Records Administration at various federal repositories (especially from San Bruno, Calif.), and a small number of interviews with people who endured the hardships that the exclusion laws caused. Appropriately, she devotes considerable space to the creation of the “paper son” system whereby Chinese immigrants took advantage of the law granting citizenship and immigration rights to the children of American citizens, regardless of their nativity. Chinese immigrants and their compatriots in China created a system to produce fictive kin and a “paper trail” that enabled immigrants to enter the country as offspring of a sponsoring “paper father.” Utilizing her sources effectively, Lau outlines the process of inventing these “paper families” and the consequences that many such families later faced when they could not reveal their real names or even their real family members.

At times, however, this book can be frustrating to use; some of the faults may lie with the publisher rather than the author. In a number of cases, Lau makes an assertion without any documentation to substantiate her claim—for example, “It is estimated that nearly 25 percent of Chinese in the United States in 1950 had illegally entered using this subterfuge [the ‘paper son’ system]” (5). Moreover, the endnotes do not provide full citations, requiring a check of both notes and bibliography to determine the full bibliographical information of sources cited.

Despite these shortcomings and the book’s covering of ground already well-traversed by a number of other historians of Chinese America, this slim volume offers a cogent summary of the impact that Chinese immigration had on the development of the American immigration apparatus and of the ways in which Chinese immigrants coped with these and other restrictions on their American lives.¹

K. Scott Wong
Williams College

¹ For earlier histories that effectively cover similar ground, see Lucy Salyer, Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law (Chapel Hill, 1995); Erika Lee, At America’s Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882–1943 (North Carolina, 2003).
Her Best Shot: Women and Guns in America. By Laura Browder (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2006) 287 pp. $25.00

This fascinating, compact book tells “a long, complicated American story” about women, gender, and gun culture in the United States (x). Lucidly written and clearly argued, Her Best Shot draws from a wide range of print sources, including fiction, memoirs, newspaper and magazine articles, and advertisements. Its topic—women and guns in American history, from the Civil War era to the present—makes the author’s episodic approach entirely defensible, if not necessary. Rather than attempting a comprehensive portrait of women soldiers, armed women, or even gun-carrying female celebrities, Browder focuses on a few paradigmatic cases to examine the influence of guns on images of women as well as on debates about citizenship, gender stereotypes, and female capacity. Her subtle arguments focus on the ways in which guns have helped to define women’s relationship to the state, and how armed women have often embraced female stereotypes even as they challenged expectations in breaking down the link between violence and masculinity.

Her Best Shot is organized chronologically with a primary theme in each chapter. It begins with the Civil War and female soldiering, turns to the late nineteenth century and the women of the wild west, and follows with a study of female criminality during the interwar years. Then it shifts to assess the role of guns in overt political action, studying the culture of arms in the radical politics of the 1960s and 1970s and in the militia and white supremacist movements of the late twentieth century. The last substantive chapter is a brief analysis of recently published women’s gun magazines.

Browder’s case studies explore many memorable figures, real and fictional: the idealized Prairie Madonna; war hero Deborah Sampson Gannett; criminals Celia Cooney (the “bob-haired bandit” of 1924 New York), Bonnie Parker, and Ma Barker; and militia movement icons Vicki Weaver and Carolyn Chute. Through both close textual readings and attention to broader cultural contexts, Browder analyzes the memoirs of Confederate spy Belle Boyd and Union secret agent Pauline Cushman, the images of the dissolute Calamity Jane and the ladylike Annie Oakley, the mass marketing of firearms, and the goals of the National Rifle Association’s consumer outreach. Browder also adds new figures to our pantheon of armed American women. She discusses the prowess of Elizabeth Servaty “Plinky” Topperwein, a record-setting sharpshooter who toured on behalf of the Winchester Repeating Arms Company for nearly four decades with her husband, and of the casual racism of big-game hunter and filmmaker Osa (Leighty) Johnson.

Her Best Shot fits into the American studies tradition of Gibson and Slotkin by illuminating a culture of violence through the study of popular culture, media representations, and political spectacle.¹ Browder’s

¹ See, for example, James William Gibson, Warrior Dreams: Violence and Manhood in Post-
previous books relied on interdisciplinary methods to assess ethnic and racial impersonation and radical culture in America during the 1930s; predictably, this book is especially insightful about radical politics, feminism, and gun culture. Browder traces the gun-laden journeys of Weatherwoman Susan Stern, Patty Hearst—kidnapping victim turned bank robber—and Black Panther Elaine Brown. Browder is also attentive to the role of armed women as symbols of both female capacity and sexual danger. As befits a subject that embraces multiple contradictions, Browder’s conclusion leaves unanswered the question that she poses herself—“Is the armed woman a powerful force or a seductive fantasy?” (13)—in favor of a nuanced look at racial politics and spectacle, violence and sexuality, and arms and revolution in the gun cultures of American womanhood.

Elizabeth L. Hillman
Rutgers School of Law, Camden


At a time when most scientific thinkers depended on deduction from universally observable forces and theoretical speculation without experience, Alexander von Humboldt looked outward, regarding the earth as his laboratory. Europeans had done so before. Linnaeus addressed the learned men of Uppsala in 1741 on the benefits of traveling in one’s own country. He exhorted his audience to walk with fresh eyes through their native landscape, “through its fields and roads; a kind of traveling, I confess, hitherto little used, and which is looked upon as fit only for amusement.”

Linnaeus invented travel for botanical classification, but Humboldt invented the scientist as explorer.

Sachs presents a narrative of Humboldt’s ideas and his adventures but mostly of his influence on a handful of key American disciples—Jeremiah N. Reynolds, John Muir, Clarence King, and George Wallace Melville. The essence of what Sachs calls the “Humboldt current” is a scientifically informed yet deeply romantic critique of industrialism, developed and enforced by travel and careful observation. Sachs calls Humboldt an ecological thinker because he refused to see the earth as a jumble of disconnected places and phenomena but as a single coherent system, comprised of the same elements, the same forces, the same life forms in different contexts and configurations.

A distinctly Germanic vision is at work in Humboldt’s career; Sachs avoids it in favor of other subjects. Humboldt exhibited patterns of thought that connect him to Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, the leading philosophical thinker of his time. The search for a transcending spirit in all things, a commitment to freedom of both mind and body and a belief that behind the complexity of reality lies a deeper simplicity run throughout the writings of the German intellectuals—including the political economist Friedrich List and the chemist Justus von Liebig—who learned to think deeply from Hegel. Environmental historians have spent decades parsing the works of English poets and painters but have given little attention to German environmental thought.

Did Humboldt influence American environmentalism? Did he put down some of its first roots? Sachs makes the case that Humboldt’s sense of unity between humans and their environments (infused with racial tolerance, in opposition to the less admirable geographical determinists whom he also influenced), and a belief in the power of grand synthesis represent a lost founding. Professional science, emphasizing controlled experiment and embodied by specific disciplines, nullified Humboldt’s roaming poetics. Arguing for Humboldt’s direct influence on twentieth-century activists does not yield much of a reward. Sachs does better when he embraces wandering as an archaic act that binds people to land by erasing lines of property and law.

Sachs’ book has guts and spirit. It assembles personalities and ideas, and proposes to change how historians understand Humboldt and his influence by orienting his discussion toward the development of environmentalist thought. He succeeds in presenting the lives that Humboldt touched, the length of his shadow, and the ways in which people in the Western world began to imagine earth in the modern era.

Steven Stoll
Rutgers University


Maine taught us that law moved from status to contract: A general law of contract replaced the specific rules regulating the relations of employers and workers (“masters” and “servants,” in the traditional language), parents and children, and the like.¹ By the late nineteenth century, the legal relations between contracting parties were regulated by the choices that they made and not by a pre-established set of rules dealing with everyone in the category into which the parties fit.

Kreitner observes that “contract” is no less protean than “status.”

The late nineteenth-century formalists who accepted Maine’s insight contended that contract law depended on the parties’ “will.” The legal realists then showed that a contract law predicated on enforcing the parties’ will was no less regulatory than the status-based law that it replaced. The realists focused on legal doctrines such as capacity to contract. To enforce a party’s “will,” the law had first to establish that the person had a will sufficiently free to count, and identifying the contours of capacity to contract was a regulatory exercise.

Kreitner pursues the realist enterprise into new domains, looking for the boundaries of contract itself. Three categories of apparent agreement posed problems for early twentieth-century legal theory: promises to give someone a gift or bequest (“gratuitous promises”), agreements to transfer property if some random event occurred (wagers), and incomplete contracts leaving important terms unspecified. Gratuitous promises were a problem because contract was the domain of exchange, but gifts did not involve exchanges. Wagers were a problem because of a residual moralism in contract law, but they were hard to distinguish from insurance contracts and, even more, futures contracts in commodity markets. Incomplete contracts were a problem because, by definition, the parties had no “will” with respect to the omitted terms.

Kreitner examines the first two problems through a detailed examination of early twentieth-century cases. His treatment of the third problem shifts gears, looking at late twentieth-century controversies in legal theory concerning the treatment of incomplete contracts. His theme, stated early and repeated with respect to each of the topics, is that contract theory constructed the individual whose will it then enforced. That individual was “a calculating individual subject, whose actions would be open to objective economic analysis” (17; see also 91, 219, 233). Gratuitous promises would be enforced when judges could understand the promises as something a calculating individual might make; futures contracts were enforceable because they resulted from calculation; incomplete contracts would be completed with reference to economic rationality.

Kreitner’s argument is provocative and might even be correct. But, as he acknowledges, the evidence supporting it is highly inferential, as may be inevitable in efforts like his to link doctrinal legal and intellectual history. Judges do not generally talk about calculating individuals, and on the rare occasion when they do, we cannot know whether they are merely evincing an idiosyncratic view or a deep statement about law. Kreitner’s view about the content of modern contract theory is intriguing, but readers should take his suggestions as provocations for further thinking, not as firmly established conclusions.

Mark Tushnet
Harvard Law School
The central argument of this book is that “from 1890 to the 1930s nostal-
gtic idealizations of motherhood, the family, and home were used to
construct and legitimate political agendas and social policies concerning
reproduction” (3). Although the United States did not pass laws or enact
public policies to encourage childbearing in the early twentieth century,
as did other Western nations, the author finds expressions of American
pronatalism (that is, attitudes encouraging childbearing) in national cam-
paigns for land reclamation, conservation, country life, and eugenics.
She claims that the ideological and cultural roots of pronatalism can be
located during the five decades covered by this book, in spite of the fact
that the fertility rate for white women in the United States decreased
from 3.87 births per woman in 1890 to 2.10 births per woman in 1940.1
She chooses not to relate this data to her thesis: “I am not concerned
with the demographic success of any of these pronatalist efforts, but with
how nostalgic ideals were deployed in early twentieth-century
pronatalism” (15).

After unleashing ideas about childbearing from actual reproductive
practices, Lovett confines her analysis to the ideologies of five represen-
tative historical figures. She detects pronatalist tendencies in the social
agendas of the Populist Mary Elizabeth Lease, who championed the
ideal of the rural farm family; George Maxwell, who promoted irriga-
tion of the arid west to encourage building homes on the land; econo-
mist and sociologist Edward A. Ross, who coined the term “race sui-
cide” to describe the differential birth rates between native whites and
other ethnic groups in America; Theodore Roosevelt, whose interest in
the conservation and country-life movements was spurred in part by his
concern about race suicide; and Florence Sherborn, a doctor who popu-
larized eugenics via “Fitter Families” contests at state fairs. In the words
and actions of these individuals, Lovett finds pronatalism linked with the
scientific racism of positive eugenics (encouraging those of “good stock”
to have several children) and with romantic notions of the agrarian fam-
ily.

Presumably, all historians will be familiar with Roosevelt. The
other figures might be known only to those working in certain sub-
disciplines; scholars of Populism, for example, will be acquainted with
Lease, while environmental historians will recognize Maxwell. Lovett
unites these diverse contemporaries (born within sixteen years of one
another, from 1853 to 1869) and, by extension, the different scholars
who study them. She finds the common theme of pronatalism within
their disparate visions of how best to shape American society. Thus, al-

1 Linda Gordon, Woman’s Body, Woman’s Right: Birth Control in America (New York, 1990), 48.
though some of her stories have been told before—the history of eugenics, for example, is well-trodden ground—she brings together different aspects of, and approaches to, the Populist, Progressive, and Great Depression eras in her search for what she calls “the deep roots” of the pronatalism that bloomed in the years following World War II (171).

This book touches on several different fields of American historical scholarship—women’s history, history of children and the family, rural history, environmental history, labor history, history of science, and history of the West. Its method, however, is solidly grounded in the history of ideas—tracing the course of a particular idea within the currents of contemporary thought. Its central theme will mainly be of interest to those engaged in the study of reproduction. It will remain for other scholars to integrate Lovett’s intellectual history of American pronatalism in the early twentieth century with the demographic and social realities of reproduction during that era.

Elizabeth Siegel Watkins
University of California, San Francisco


As many car owners know, buying and maintaining a motor vehicle does not always inspire satisfaction with the automobile industry. In a story full of broken axles and lawsuits, Clarke demonstrates that from the beginning, the automobile market was full of unhappiness and distrust.

This study offers an impressive blend of business and legal history. Drawing on original research in two-dozen archives, as well as trade journals and published court cases, Clarke documents interactions among dozens of consumers, dealers, manufacturers, insurers, and government agencies. She also engages with a vast secondary literature, including the work of economic and legal theorists and historians.

In the book’s opening chapters, Clarke offers a fascinating account of early car-buyers’ troubles with their machines. Willing to pay high prices and endure considerable annoyance and risk, these relatively wealthy consumers helped to launch the new industry. But even these intrepid early adopters complained of defects; occasionally, they took carmakers to court. Manufacturers’ interest in avoiding legal liability, Clarke argues, led them to adopt a particular form of business organization—the franchise sales contract. On this point, Clarke does an exemplary job of suggesting how consumer behavior and the legal environment can affect business structures.

The book’s central section—four chapters about the interwar period—starts by continuing the story of the industry’s response to complaints about product quality and safety, which came increasingly from
insurers and government regulators in addition to consumers. Automakers started to build large industrial research and testing facilities, which allowed them to provide better vehicles, but they also launched public relations and advertising campaigns that exaggerated the safety of their cars. The second half of this section, which includes original chapters on product styling and manufacturer-dealer relations, adds to our knowledge of the industry during this period, but it begins to deviate from the earlier focus on product reliability and safety. This unexpected departure continues in the final section of the book, which consists of a short chapter on marketing and consumer credit in the Cold War era.

Although Clarke is a thoughtful and original scholar, Trust and Power amounts to something less than the sum of its parts. The survey of the auto industry is broad and multidimensional, but it lacks a compelling central narrative or argument. Clarke certainly succeeds in showing that the automobile market was shaped by the interactions of business firms, consumers, and the state, which were often ridden with conflict and distrust. The book implies that auto manufacturers have long acted irresponsibly, abusing their great economic power by passing costs to dealers and consumers, evading responsibility for product safety, and failing to offer small, inexpensive cars. But few of the book’s claims about costs, profits, and the dysfunction of the automobile market are supported by quantitative or comparative evidence. Perhaps future studies will provide it. In the meantime, anyone interested in the early years of the automobile industry or creative scholarship in business history will profit from reading this book.

Mark R. Wilson
University of North Carolina, Charlotte


Sutton’s book is a welcome addition to the growing body of scholarship about American Pentecostalism. His thesis—that McPherson turned Pentecostalism into the evangelical engine that would transform twentieth-century America—is debatable. But his methodology, integrating religious studies with urban and performance studies, yields new insights into both McPherson’s popularity and her mixed success. Unlike previous biographers, Sutton quickly recaps McPherson’s early years and focuses on her ministry at Angelus Temple. As a result, Los Angeles is central to the story; its impact on McPherson is no less significant than hers on the city. This new perspective, rooting McPherson in a particular place and time, contextualizes her strengths and weaknesses in ways that make them vivid and the details of her life seem very real.

Sutton’s “Sister Aimee” is a creature of Los Angeles politics and
Hollywood privilege (her clothes, jewels, and mansion were equal to those of any successful film star). She was as skilled at manipulating the city’s power structure as she was in transforming herself into one of the era’s most sexualized females. McPherson worked the system—seeing how far she could push others and herself (in this context, her breakdowns, mysterious disappearances, and addictions are understandable). Other authors have noted McPherson’s expertise in combining popular entertainment, cutting-edge technology, and public-relations savvy. Sutton shows how these elements were central to an ambitious woman’s mission both to serve God and to feed her own relentless ego.

Sutton capably renders Los Angeles in the 1920s and 1930s. He is also adept at conjuring McPherson’s multiple roles as minister, media personality, and power mogul. But he is less successful explaining the gender dynamics at the heart of her ministry. Sutton does not seem clear on how and why McPherson exploited and was exploited by her sexuality, and he reads a lot into small details (such as her hairstyles). McPherson’s sexuality and concomitant popularity may have scared the city fathers into persecuting her without cause, but Sutton does not mount a credible case for their harassment. Even less convincing is his contention that McPherson served as architect for the resurrection of Christian America. Despite her media savvy, positive message, and appropriation of popular culture, McPherson did not singlehandedly drag old-time religion into the American mainstream. Sutton overlooks others’ contributions (from Paul Rader’s to Billy Graham’s) as well as McPherson’s liabilities (her flamboyant style did not appeal to everyone).

Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America is a fascinating biography of one of the twentieth century’s great evangelists. Its straightforward style and compelling story make it a good read, but, most important, it is an excellent case study of the intersection of urbanization, popular culture, and religion. Few researchers have delved so deeply into the City of Angels. Sutton’s book is a strong beginning.

Diane Winston
University of Southern California

Workers and the Wild: Conservation, Consumerism, and Labor in Oregon, 1910–30. By Lawrence M. Lipin (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2007) 224 pp. $60.00 cloth $25.00 paper

Too often, the relation between working people and the environment is reduced to a simple and static “jobs-versus-environment” dichotomy. This book demonstrates the complexity of this relationship and its inherent dynamism. Lipin is not the first to situate ordinary people within the conservation story, but he is the first to focus on urban workers and their reaction to natural resources and landscapes. His fusion of labor and environmental history has a number of important implications.
Lipin laces three topics into the Oregon conservation story—the fate of the labor movement, the rise of outdoor recreation, and the spread of consumer consciousness. He begins by describing a pre-World War I labor theory of value that united urban workers, farmers, and commercial fishers and defined nature’s place in the workers’ vision of progress. This producer ideology was steeped in the Populist campaigns orchestrated by single-tax proponent William S. U’Ren, who vilified monopolists for tying up natural resources and dashing the ordinary citizen’s dream of a small farm or house lot. Implicit in this producers’ republic was an understanding that resources would be shared widely and made as productive as possible—a standard Progressive ideal but hardly compatible with the Progressives’ cozy relation to big landowners.

The 1920s brought campaigns for fish conservation and scenic highways along the coast and up the Columbia River Gorge. Opposing these projects, farmers and workers sided with commercial fishermen against elite anglers and denounced highway plans because they had no potential for expanding agriculture. This opposition changed, however, when Henry Ford designed an automobile for the masses, which put these recreational resources at the disposal of the working family. Faced with a more conservative political climate, the labor movement softened its rhetoric, adopted the language of leisure and mass consumption, and became more receptive to conservation goals. The shift was by no means clear, but it had important implications for the conservation and labor movements.

From a labor-history point of view, Lipin shows that consuming nature had a mixed effect on working-class consciousness. Auto tourism privatized working-class leisure but at the same time liberated workers—for a time—from their bosses. For environmental historians, Lipin achieves a great deal by placing workers at the center of Oregon’s conservation history. He challenges the neat dichotomy between conservation as a concern for efficient production and environmentalism as an aspect of American consumer culture. His perspective on ordinary fishermen and upper-class sportsmen, identified earlier by historians like Jacoby, is equally important. He advances this discussion by linking battles about fish and game to broader ones about timber, water power, and irrigation, and by weaving urban class and ethnic divisions into the mix.

Thus does another twist enter the conservation story: Workers in automobiles increased pressures on fish and game resources and touched off a movement to restrict road building in pristine forests. These initiatives were driven in part by middle-class reformers’ contempt for working-class forms of leisure, a pattern identified long ago by Rosensweig in his study of park-building in Worcester, Massachusetts.

2 Roy Rosensweig, Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870–1920 (New York, 1983).
degree of irony that an influx of workers into the countryside would stimulate the movement to establish wilderness” (11).

This book ends with a vague sense of inconclusiveness. Admittedly, the worker’s engagement with nature was—and is—complex. But the narrative’s end seems more ragged than necessary, and battles over fish, game, timber, dams, wilderness, income-tax reform, fish-stocking, predator-control, and the Ku Klux Klan are not always clearly grounded in the author’s main argument, further clouding the worker’s trajectory regarding conservation. Nonetheless, to his credit, Lipin provides an invaluable foundation for discussing the troubled relationship between organized labor and the environment, and he clearly has much to say about how this relationship has changed over time. In this sense, he contributes something of great value to our understanding of labor history, environmental history, and the history of Oregon.

Richard W. Judd
University of Maine


Freyer published an earlier book on antitrust in Great Britain and America, Regulating Big Business: Antitrust in Great Britain and America, 1880–1990 (New York, 1992), but the present volume has a far broader geographical reach and a different time span. This refreshing book, written by a learned scholar, represents interdisciplinary history at its best. Based on archival sources, plus interviews with key policymakers, it covers economic, business, legal, and intellectual history and features new materials that neatly mesh the ramifications of an international trade storyline with antitrust-policy creation. Freyer identifies three phases of antitrust history: (1) 1930 to 1945, (2) 1945 to the early 1970s, and (3) the mid-1970s to 2004.

Phase 1 of Freyer’s narrative really begins in 1937/38, when the United States resumed a vigorous antitrust stance while governments in Europe, Australia, and Japan held vastly different attitudes toward competition. Freyer focuses initially on the U.S. experience, showing how World War II differed from World War I in its impact on American policymaking.1 Freyer reveals the complexities and changes in U.S. policies in comparison and contrast with those of other nations.

For phases 2 and 3, Freyer starts by elaborating on the U.S. case and then extends his discussion to other countries. He maps U.S. policies inherited from the cultural and institutional framework of the New Deal. Antitrust was designed to open opportunities and preserve accountability not only at home but also abroad. Freyer deftly reviews the interna-

1 Freyer would have found valuable support for his arguments in Wilkins, The History of Foreign Investment in the United States, 1914–1945 (Cambridge, Mass., 2004).
tionalization of antitrust and the heated controversies surrounding it. He outlines the varieties of approaches within the U.S. government in the immediate aftermath of the war, as well as during the 1950s and 1960s. For the subsequent decades, he covers the Hart-Scott-Rodino Act, the views of Robert Bork, and the implementation of antitrust under succeeding U.S. administrations. Quoting a story in the Tuscaloosa News (a rare case of a fragile source), he writes that the proportion of U.S. Justice Department cases involving multinational enterprises was 5 percent in 1993 and 29 percent in 1997. Freyer believes that by the 1990s, the anticompetitive practices of international businesses were an unintended consequence of the open world economy.

Freyer’s scrutiny of Japan, in phases 2 and 3, begins with a reinterpretation of the Antimonopoly Act of 1947, arguing convincingly for a more important Japanese role in its drafting (it was not simply a U.S. imposition). The Antimonopoly Act was amended in 1949, 1953, and 1958, in each case relaxing its strictures. Not until the start of the U.S.-Japanese Structural Impediments Initiative (sii) after 1989 and the collapse of the Japanese bubble economy in the 1990s did the Antimonopoly Act and antitrust policy gain fresh support within Japan.

In the postwar years, countries in Europe adopted an antitrust program more rapidly than Japan did. As they had in Japan, U.S. advisors during the Occupation offered ideas about curtailing cartels and monopolies. Freyer documents the debates among West Germans, emphasizing the role of anti-Nazis, especially Ludwig Erhard and the Ordo liberals (prenear lawyers and economists who favored antitrust ideas despite Nazi persecution). In time, Erhard’s advocacy of a social–market economy served to transform “the weak German cartel–abuse regulatory tradition into the strong antitrust regime established in the Cartel Law of 1957” (397). Freyer documents the evolving antitrust policies from the European Coal and Steel Community to the European Union. He includes the experiences of transition economies with anti-monopoly and restrictive business practices; accession to the European Union by the former communist states required the adoption of effective antitrust policies.

Freyer then traces the unfolding post–World War II Australian policies and practices, interlacing his discussion with comparisons to his preceding materials. He reveals the beginning of broad international cooperation in antitrust matters. A web of bilateral agreements emerged from the late 1990s to the early twenty-first century. Antitrust—whether in the United States, Japan, Europe, or Australia—always has to deal with multinational enterprises; Freyer skillfully incorporates the experience. This thoughtful, important volume should be compulsory reading for everyone who is interested in the history of the world economy. Within the vast and growing literature on globalization, Freyer makes a unique and highly original contribution.

Mira Wilkins
Florida International University

What can a long dead Austrian economist with only a marginal reputation in today’s economics profession tell us about capitalism? Plenty, writes McCraw in this expansive new biography of Schumpeter’s life and work.

Everybody loves the entrepreneur, but few understand what they so admire. Schumpeter’s great achievement was to explain how entrepreneurship drove economic growth. Unifying all of his work was a vision of capitalism as a historical, evolutionary process. Contrary to Karl Marx, however, he did not view class struggle as responsible for moving history so much as the restless, innovative, heroic entrepreneur who created new products, opened new markets, promoted new industries, and destroyed old ones in the process. The entrepreneur was the *agent provocateur* of capitalism, pushing or sometimes forcing it in directions that it otherwise would not go.

With his immense learning—McCraw calls him the last polymath—Schumpeter drew from history, sociology, politics, and the classics as he composed his wide-ranging, sometimes ponderous, studies of the history of economic thought and the dynamics of business cycles. Although not especially gifted in mathematics, he supported the search for an “exact science” of economics and was a founder of the highly technical journal *Econometrica*.

Theory, history, and *sozialökonomie* came together in Schumpeter’s most enduring work, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York, 1942), in which he characterized entrepreneurship as a social process as well as an economic one. Entrepreneurs’ deep, hedonistic drives upset the established social order, the self-satisfied world of embedded capital. Schumpeter argued that capitalism needed such individuals, or else the natural tendency to complacency would choke the capitalist engine. A child of the dying Hapsburg Empire, he well understood how stultifying an established order could be.

McCraw masterfully demonstrates how Schumpeter’s personal history—from his birthplace in the Czech city of Triesch to his professorships in Bonn and at Harvard—affect ed his economics. Personal calamities afflicted him with a pessimism that at times flowered into depression and left him insensitive to the pain caused by the dynamic capitalism that he championed. Any system, Schumpeter seemed to believe, was bound to be brutal in its own way, and many were far worse than capitalism. As McCraw argues, when Schumpeter wrote in apparent sympathy with socialism, he must be read as deeply ironic and at times blatantly sarcastic.

McCraw promotes Schumpeter as a visionary of capitalism as practiced in America today. He was practically alone in appreciating that all firms, no matter how large, must innovate or die. Now a truism, this was
much less obvious in the 1940s and 1950s when giant American corporations appeared unassailable and Keynesianism seemed to have ironed out the wrinkles of the business cycle.

Most startling, Schumpeter seems to have predicted both the limitless consumerism and the growing inequalities of the twenty-first century. Schumpeter understood that creative minds always seek social distance, ensuring that there be no limit to the demand for goods and distinctions. The “winner take all” nature of entrepreneurial competition meant that the successful few would grow enormously rich, which did not bother Schumpeter, given the social rewards that resulted. He had much less sympathy for the endless consumerism that logically went with this process. But it was another price paid for progress. He never seems to have considered the possibility that entrepreneurs would train their talents on the political system and seek to bend the rules in their favor. No rabid free marketeer like fellow Austrian Friedrich von Hayek, Schumpeter naively imagined that the state would operate like an idealized version of the independent civil service found in German-speaking nations.

As a theorist, Schumpeter devised a stripped-down model of entrepreneurship that emphasized the icon-smashing creativity of the individual. But he ignored much of the more mundane activity that is now commonly seen as entrepreneurial—starting a small business, being one’s own boss, or running a well-established family enterprise. Arguably, if the entrepreneur is an agent of social change, there is more to entrepreneurship than just the economic and technological consequences of innovation and creative destruction. Women, immigrants, minorities, and others outside the mainstream have used business as a way of overcoming social limitations and redefining social roles. Their strategies might not produce the sort of heroic material innovation that Schumpeter emphasized, but they are in keeping with the spirit of Schumpeter’s idea—moving history forward by challenging the status quo.

Kenneth Lipartito
Florida International University

This Land, This Nation: Conservation, Rural America, and the New Deal. By Sarah T. Phillips (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007) 289 pp. $75.00 cloth $23.99 paper

In this latest re-examination of the New Deal, Phillips examines how the evolving conservation movement helped to define federal policy during the tumultuous 1930s and thereafter. Using a term coined by Mumford in 1925, Phillips suggests that the “New Conservation” embodied an ambitious approach to land use and resource management that dominated federal planning circles from the 1920s through the 1940s.¹

¹ See Lewis Mumford, “Regions–To Live In,” Survey Graphic (May 1925), 152.
As many scholars have observed, rural electrification and conservation emerged as critical elements of New Deal economic reform. Phillips presses this point further by arguing that the management of natural resources became a key component of federal planning during this period. The consequences of federal conservation planning, she concludes, facilitated the maturation of the modern American state and, eventually, globalization.

Following in the path of other scholars, particularly Bruce Schulman in *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt* (New York, 1991), this book demonstrates that the conservation and management of natural resources during the war years paved the way for the emergence of the modern agricultural system. Phillips notes that during the 1930s federal officials recognized that rural poverty was one of the primary challenges to economic recovery. Yet many prescriptions for improving conditions on the farm ultimately led to consolidation, mechanization, and the displacement of poor farmers from the land. This was a central paradox of agricultural planning, and an unintended consequence of the agrarian planners’ attempts to regularize farm production and income.

By focusing on New Dealers’ attempts to bring rural America into economic balance with the cities, Phillips captures a central ambition of land use planning—efficient and sustainable production. As plans for managing natural resources moved beyond the national forests and navigable waterways into the farm fields of the Midwest and the South, the practice of conservation broadened both its reach and its impact. During the 1930s, “For the first time, national administrators linked conservation with agricultural programs, and considered environmental planning vital to the nation’s economic renewal and long-term vitality” (3). The successes and failures of these conservation programs subsequently informed New Deal and World War II resource-management policies, which were later exported abroad during the Cold War.

*This Land, This Nation* provides an engaging and well-crafted narrative of the impact of federal funding in the South; Phillips’ analysis is driven by examples from the Tennessee Valley and central Texas. The first chapter examines the emergence of policymakers concerned with rural electrification and land utilization during the 1910s and 1920s, demonstrating the continuities between Progressive reform and the policies that emerged during the New Deal. The following two chapters evoke the desperation and the optimism associated with land land-use planning during the 1930s. First, Phillips focuses on the advocates of rural electrification as they reshaped the landscape through the regional planning approach of the Tennessee Valley Authority. She then shifts her attention to Texas, where young congressman Lyndon Baines Johnson launched his career through his promotion of flood control and power projects in his district. These examples of the motivations and impacts of New Deal planning evoke the wide range of interests involved in implementing federal policy.

Phillips’ intent to convey a national perspective is most effective in
the fourth chapter, which evaluates the industrialization of natural-resource management during World War II. This chapter is paired with a compelling epilogue that explores the expansion of U. S. conservation planning abroad during the postwar era, thereby linking New Deal ideology to the modern global economy.

This ambitious, well-researched study engages many of the questions that have driven recent histories of the 1930s. It convincingly traces the connections between the idealism of the New Deal and postwar developments that often seem detached from the ideas embraced by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his cohort of agrarian planners. Although it has much to recommend it, particularly as a study of regional planning and economic change, it is not, strictly speaking, an interdisciplinary study; methodologically it does little to bridge the gaps between disciplines. Nevertheless, historians and scholars from other fields interested in American conservation will find that this engaging book contributes significantly to a more sophisticated understanding of the New Deal era.

Sara M. Gregg
Iowa State University


Numerous scholars have examined the Eisenhower presidency within the past few decades, but few have ventured so deeply into the complex scientific and technical issues surrounding nuclear testing during the 1950s as Greene does in his analysis of Eisenhower’s desire to obtain a nuclear test-ban treaty while struggling with conflicting scientific opinions. Greene lauds Eisenhower for his commitment to a test-ban treaty and his eventual willingness to overrule opponents within his administration, but he criticizes the former president for failing to provide decisive leadership that might have changed the ultimate outcome. Greene relies on a wide range of primary sources and a detailed understanding of the scientific and technical issues surrounding nuclear testing to describe Eisenhower’s difficulty in obtaining clear scientific advice to use in policy making.

Greene’s objectives include analyses of Eisenhower’s commitment to a nuclear test ban, of the scientific advice given to him, and of the extent to which divisions within the scientific community affected his decision making. He adopts an interesting research design that focuses not only on positions within the Eisenhower administration concerning radioactive fallout, nuclear testing, and the ability to detect nuclear tests, but also on the debates within the scientific community. This approach
provides a nuanced view of the complex issues that helped shaped Eisenhower’s decisions about nuclear testing.

Greene’s study reveals how difficult it was for anyone in the 1950s to understand the scientific and technical questions surrounding nuclear weapons. He argues that after the BRAVO nuclear test in 1954, the “sharply contrasting interpretations” of many leading scientists made “an informed opinion on the matter for laymen even more difficult” (62). These “contrasting interpretations” are vital to understanding Eisenhower’s policies. Although Eisenhower eventually secured a better grasp of nuclear weapons than most non-scientists, he was no less challenged than the average person in understanding their complexity. By exploring the scientific debates and the scientific advice that Eisenhower ultimately received, Greene provides insight into the difficulties that ultimately doomed the test-ban negotiations with the Soviet Union.

Greene reveals Eisenhower’s strong commitment to a nuclear test ban from at least 1954, but the conflicting and, at times, inadequate scientific advice that he received made it virtually impossible for him to negotiate a test ban with the Soviet Union while he was in office. Greene emphasizes the role that Lewis Strauss, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission during Eisenhower’s first term, played in controlling the information that Eisenhower received before 1957. Strauss was vehemently opposed to a nuclear test ban; he prevented almost any dissenting opinions from ever reaching the president. Only after Eisenhower had created the Presidential Science Advisory Committee in 1957 did he begin to receive advice supporting his desire for a test ban. Unfortunately, the lack of any scientific consensus prevented Eisenhower from formulating a coherent, and successful, negotiating strategy.

David L. Snead
Liberty University


Akera has written a complicated and nuanced retelling of Cold War computing history in the United States. He argues that “the intensity of technological innovation during the Cold War years resulted neither from military foresight nor from academic influence, but rather from a fundamental pluralism in the demands that were placed upon research” as it unfolded in a myriad of different “institutional ecologies” across the nation (1). In this way, Akera agrees with other “constructivist” scholars of technology that “the study of innovation is as much about institutional innovation as it is about technological innovation” (338). His con-
clusion that “the field of computing depended on individuals who were willing to move beyond their disciplinary training and their institutional allegiances” crowns an innovative study of how, in the broad history of computing technology, interdisciplinary experimentation changed over time (and space) into disciplinary tradition (343).

Akera’s argument unfolds in three parts. The first five chapters revisit the traditional history of computing research and development as tied to the emergence of the military-academic-industrial complex from the early twentieth century to the height of the Cold War. Those without extensive familiarity with this history will find this the most challenging part of the book, even though it covers territory previously explored by other authors, such as the ENIAC, EDVAC, and Whirlwind projects. Even for the expert well versed in the standard computer-history narrative, following Akera’s path through these cases demands serious engagement with a vast toolkit of concepts from science and technology studies—Pickering’s “mangle of practice,” Anderson’s “circulation of knowledge,” and Galison’s “trading zones” to name a few—that Akera uses to deconstruct and reassemble that narrative.

Akera offers two chapters each on the way in which industry and academia participated in the development of computing, first taking a look at IBM from the dual point of view of its sales force and its user community during the 1950s and then analyzing the engagement between computing and academia, contrasting the cases of MIT and the University of Michigan during the 1960s. These sections are more accessible to non-experts. The dual views of IBM, in particular, provide a corrective to more traditional corporate histories that avoid both the realities of sales work and the difficulties of end-user consumption. The contrast between MIT and Michigan allows Akera to explore “the differences between what occurred at the center and periphery of Cold War research” (277).

For all his insightful engagement with the latest theories about sociotechnical knowledge production and “institutional ecology,” however, the bulk of Akera’s book relies on traditional methods of case study and biography. Whether telling the story of Vannevar Bush in the National Defense Research Committee, John von Neumann at the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, or Jay Forrester at MIT, his book combines the best available secondary sources together with new archival research to illuminate a small and familiar set of complicated and contingent life paths that wound through the early ecology of comput-

ing. Thus does Akera negotiate the dialectic between institutional and individual histories in the history of computing in a new and productive way.

Greg Downey
University of Wisconsin, Madison


Sze’s Noxious New York is a well-considered and expertly written book that presents case studies of four neighborhoods in the metropolitan New York area and of four different environmental-justice movements: the South Bronx Clean Air Coalition’s campaign against the Bronx-Lebanon medical waste incinerator, the West Harlem Environmental Action’s campaign against the North River Sewage treatment plant, El Puente’s and the Community Alliance for the Environment’s campaign against the Brooklyn Navy Yard incinerator in the Williamsburg neighborhood, and the United Puerto Rican Organization’s campaign against the Sunset Park sludge treatment plant. These studies are not separate, however; in its entirety, Noxious New York reveals how the configurations of space and capital (are the two ever separable?) have produced not only specific land-usage policies of varying insalubrity but also group responses that were shaped within equally specific (local) circumstances.

Each episode is recounted in its own chapter, the author relying primarily upon interviews with activists, personal correspondence, media accounts, and published reports. Sze has provided the full scope of the issues at play, though a richer narrative might have been rendered by engagement with the obvious villains of the story (representatives of corporate interests, vacillating and pro-privatization politicians, or even NIMBYist members of more affluent neighborhoods) or by the inclusion of more traditional sources, such as City Council and Community Board meeting minutes. What makes Sze’s analysis so compelling, however, are her broad theoretical and historical sensitivities. If all environmental-justice politics are local, to paraphrase an old saying, they have emerged, Sze points out, within a nexus of national and global(izing) tendencies apparent for half a century. Noxious New York provides explanations of the global and local economies of waste disposal and energy production, and of the workings of identity politics as a means of building communal consensus around health interests.

Sze’s claim that her study is “one of the few that analyzes environmental racism and the environmental justice movement as responses to privatization and deregulation” (9), is important; it signals her view of the matter as rooted in urban political economy. Sze thereby situates
New York City environmental-justice efforts within the larger sweep of U.S. urban studies, a field that has not been overshadowed (though threatened to be) by the politics of suburban sprawl. If today the most salient political divisions seem to be less between “red” states and “blue” states than between red suburbs and blue cities, Sze is correct to identify the most critical issue in urban environmental justice as the decline of “municipal socialism,” a term coined by Melosi and used by Sze in her consideration of deregulation, privatization, and environmental politics.¹

Sze is concerned with the relationships between political economy and group identities, along with the political strategies that groups tend to employ. Racialization of space is not simply a top-down process of postwar ghetto creation. Organizations such as WE ACT and OWN utilize the “politics of representation” (141), basing their claims for environmental justice in the language of racial justice (both filed suits under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act). Of energy politics in New York, Sze notes, “the shape that deregulation took in New York City was racialized by activists who focused on the siting of power plants, which was concentrated in low-income areas and communities of color” (160).

Noxious New York is a call for more critical investigation and consideration of environmental justice as one of the most pertinent issues of the twenty-first century, and for Sze American Studies is uniquely positioned to capture the problematics and nuances of environmental injustice and the movements formed to challenge it. The political engagements that American Studies has embraced have informed the interdisciplinary methods that it, and Sze, have adopted. In that regard, the first chapter of the book outlines Sze’s borrowings from historians, geographers, and sociologists, and the last is a meditation on the “Promise and the Peril” of community-based research and grassroots alliances.

Samuel Roberts
Columbia University

From Sovereign Villages to National States: City, State, and Federation in Central America, 1759–1839. By Jordana Dym (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 2006) 390 pp. $45.00

This book joins a growing revisionist historiography that highlights the transformations, as well as the continuities, in the political culture of Spanish America before, during, and after independence. Specifically, Dym focuses on the importance of municipal governance even as those corporate bodies gradually lost sovereignty to the emerging nations of

Central America. Dym deftly combines an investigation of both political theory and practice, drawing from official gazettes, proclamations, constitutions, correspondence, and minutes from the meetings of bodies ranging from town councils to imperial parliaments held in archives in Spain, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.

Dym traces “a shift from a contractualist European political ideology based on municipal sovereignty—that of the *pueblos* [towns]—to a politics of national sovereignty—that of the *pueblo* [people]” (xviii). This analysis of changing political language and institutions, a process similar to developments throughout Spanish America and linked to debates about popular sovereignty in Europe and North America, should engage a broad audience. Dym argues that this transformation, accompanied by an expansion of the active citizenry, ultimately resulted in a significant political revolution. But change occurred not as a sudden “rejection of static, backward colonial institutions” but rather from a gradual evolution of municipal governance beginning under Spanish imperialism (xxi). The Bourbon monarchs of the late eighteenth century simultaneously strengthened royal authority and decentralized administration by establishing councils in smaller towns as well as major cities. This trend continued during the period of Napoleonic invasion of Spain, when a parliament with representatives from both the peninsula and overseas territories governed in place of the king. Although the 1812 constitution theoretically vested sovereignty in the nation, by expanding representative government at the community level and failing to demarcate the jurisdiction of regional bodies clearly, local councils could claim the most political influence on the eve of independence. Even several of the first state constitutions vested sovereignty in the pueblos (towns) rather than the collectivity of all individuals within their territories.

The detail with which Dym documents institutional developments (including ample appendixes) will be a valuable resource for Central American specialists. But even if the dynamics were particular to the region, they provide an important case study of how political theory works out in practice. The initial absence of strong provincial authorities meant that elected town councils took the lead in declaring their independence (variously from Spain, Mexico, and rival Central American capitals). Throughout the ensuing decades, however, this oft-noted fragmentation of the colonial Kingdom of Guatemala was counterbalanced by the appeals of the smaller towns to authorities at the level of the emerging nations to resolve local disputes. Dym’s macro-level approach, in contrast to the more numerous local case studies for this period, allows her to reveal the interaction of these countervailing centrifugal and centripetal forces. Yet, by focusing on relationships between rather than within communities, her claims of collaborations across lines of race and class are more tenuous. Dym convincingly documents the enfranchisement and political participation of men with African heritage. Although
she acknowledges that the consequences for the Indians were mixed, she provides relatively little information about this significant sector of the population.

Sarah C. Chambers
University of Minnesota


Adelman’s most recent book studies the transition from empire to nationhood in both Spanish and Portuguese America. Rather than portraying this passage as foretold—either because empires were doomed to fail, or because nationalism was bound to succeed—Adelman wishes to reconstruct the uncertainties of the process that led to the demise of one political structure and its replacement by another. He centers his narrative on a group of people forced into action after crisis (mainly the crisis of legitimacy in Madrid and Lisbon), and their struggles to redefine a new order. Although their actions were “the consequences, not the cause, of the end of imperial sovereignty” (395), “independence,” nonetheless, was a highly complex transformative process. Rather than a tunnel (that is, a clear project) leading away from subjection, it was similar to a labyrinth at times leading nowhere.

Most of the people that concern Adelman are merchants. He describes their growing power in the eighteenth century, and the effects that changes in the system of labor, slavery, international conflict, and war had on most of them. He analyzes why and how some of them were loyal and why and how these same people or others were not. Thus, Adelman is able to demonstrate the ways in which “private interests and public welfare were reassembled to re-imagine the relationship between capitalism and empire” and capitalism and state (173). Crucial to all of these processes was the need to redefine (and justify) the sovereignty of the new polities.

The study of Latin America’s movement toward independence has generated innumerable books. In recent decades, the older historiography, stressing the heroic actions of a few select men, or the transformative power of ideas (mainly imported ideas), gave way to a social and political reading of the events that lead to the “implosion” of the Spanish and the Portuguese American empires. Not unlike what Adelman proposes in his book, this newer historiography—for example, the work of Guerra and Rodriguez O—stresses the external pressures that precipitated the conflict and the climactic nature of the events.¹

Adelman’s book, however, has a few characteristics that make it both exceptional and important. First, Adelman stresses the role of merchants, which until now has been more stereotyped than studied. Second, Adelman covers both Spanish and Portuguese America, arguing that in many ways more affinities are evident across them than within them. Third, arguing against the separation between colonial and metropolitan history, he envisions the process of independence as a struggle between the various peoples of the empire for the definition of their relationship with one another. Fourth, Adelman’s book is also a reflection of the relationship between internal and external dynamics of large-scale social change. Arguing that in his case study, “social revolutions transpired when international pressures of competing sovereignties broke down state systems” (5), he demonstrates that a proper understanding of the transition to independence requires reconstruction (almost) of a “world history” in which local subjects were also shaped by world events (ix). Last but not least, Adelman’s book also includes an implicit call to bring the state back into the discussion. Although the merchants who take center stage in this book had primarily commercial interests on their minds, they were also clearly struggling to reconstruct the state by imagining what it could look like, how it could be justified, who would belong to it, and who would be excluded.

Tamar Herzog
Stanford University


It has become commonplace to note that travel literature reveals more about authors and and their contexts than about the place(s) that they visit. This remarkable book, however, manages to bring fresh perspectives not only to the study of travel literature as a genre but also to Indo-Persian society and culture in the early modern world. The authors provide detailed treatments of accounts of travel between the Ottoman Empire, Iran, and Mughal India. The accounts are all placed in proper context, extensively paraphrased or quoted, and compared with each other, in a manner that gradually makes readers familiar with the genre. The book focuses on illuminating the nature of this “Indo-Persian” cultural world.

The authors delve into the travelers’ lives, their careers, their vicissitudes of travel, and their attitudes toward the “other.” In this book, however, the “other” is not a static, absolute term, even for the travelers. Rather, the travelers reveal a deeply nuanced, complex and even paradoxical view of “self” and “other.” On the one hand, the great Islamic empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals shared a remarkable degree of cultural and institutional continuity. Persian was the language of
courtiers, and Arabic served as a lingua franca in all aspects of Islamic scholarship. Thus, scholars and courtiers shared a medium of discourse, as well as a corpus of “classic” texts that shaped their education and cultural norms. Courts across the region were familiar territory for scholars, poets, courtiers, and bureaucrats seeking employment. A large number of the travelers to India were spurred by just such opportunities. Islam was also a significant common feature, implying not only a shared literature and scholarship but also shared devotional practices and a shared sense of historical past and identity.

On the other hand, the travelers also reveal distinct hierarchies of power and cultural preferences within their common Indo-Persian world. A country’s political strength typically elicited greater respect from the travelers; Mughal India, in particular, fluctuated in stature from 1400 to 1800. The accounts also evince a more nebulous sense of “centrality” based on cultural capital. In its heyday, Mughal India attracted scholars and litterateurs, creating a virtual “brain drain” from Safavid Iran. However, the fact that the historical Islamic sites were located in the Iranian and, more especially, Ottoman empires accorded them a prestige that the Mughals, reigning over a majority Hindu society, never could match.

It is remarkable what was shared and not shared in this Indo-Persian world. Travel literature—in both the theoretical discussions and the glimpses into the authors’ own motivations, assumptions, preferences, and complaints—brings this world alive. *Indo-Persian Travels* enables this corpus of travel literature to illuminate the social, cultural, and intellectual history of the period.

Monica M. Ringer
Amherst College


In this masterful study, Brockey proposes to tell “in the main a European story, even if the Jesuits’ efforts in China have traditionally been set down as part of a Chinese tale (12).” The tale as previously told has enshrined Ricci’s account of his journey from Macao in 1582 to Beijing in 1610 as defining the mission whereas the church’s rejection of the Jesuit position on the performance of Chinese rites a century later ended it.¹ New scholarship using Roman and Chinese sources leads to a much more complex story of Roman Catholicism in China during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. With his deft analysis of a surprisingly

underutilized source on the history of the Jesuit mission—Portuguese language letters and reports in ecclesiastical archives in Portugal and Rome—Brockey has constructed a new chronology and trajectory for the Jesuit mission itself, placing it in what he calls “a proper European context (17).” Intentionally or not, he also brings the Jesuits back into the increasingly complex history of Chinese religious life.

The first half of the book is a new chronological account of the mission, turning not on the charismatic founders and subsequent events in Beijing and Rome but on the organization of the Jesuits’ Chinese vice-province under Niccolò Longobardo in 1619 and subsequent developments throughout China. Major political events—such as the Nanjing persecution of 1615, the Ming court’s crackdown on elite intellectual and political associations in 1625, the Qing conquest of 1644/45, the confinement of the Jesuits to Canton in 1667, and the rise of the anti-Jesuit French Vicars Apostolic—are all peripheral to the main trajectory. Controversially and persuasively, Brockey wants to show that by 1633, when Ming court factionalism and military defeats led to the execution of the Christian official Sun Yuanhua and the abandonment of his house in Jiading as the central residence for Jesuit learning and training, the Jesuits no longer needed literati protection. The mission was becoming a decentralized organization based on local catechists and devotional confraternities.

The second half of the book analyzes topically (1) Jesuit education, (2) Jesuit study of Chinese language and thought, (3) practices of conversion, (4) organization within the vice-province by priests, coadjutors, and catechists, and (5) the differences among devotional, penitential, and charitable confraternities. Meticulous attention to details and extensive quotations from the sources provide copious evidence for the author’s argument. In the first topic, for example, the memoirs of José Monteiro describe his training at Elvora in 1665 alongside others whom he did not know would join him in China (211). In the second, the study notes and letters of Sicilian Jesuit Francesco Brancati in the 1630s and Monteiro’s standardized Chinese textbook of 1700 help to demonstrate the effects of a shift in the order’s ratio studiorum from residence-based Chinese classical learning to abbreviated study and assignment to widely dispersed residences (273–286). In the fifth topic, Brancati’s worries in 1661 that “the exercises of the secret congregations of Palermo and Naples,” as performed by his fifty-three penitential confraternities in the Shanghai area, would not be understood by his successors from Elvora and Mechelen explain the subsequent standardization of confraternities into four types. If the book’s structure sometimes leads to seemingly unnecessary repetition, it successfully manages to highlight the historical development of organization and practice.

Alongside fascinating details about forcing vegetarians to eat beef before administering sacraments, insisting that men who converted denounce their family ties to concubines, banning food at meetings of charitable associations, and monitoring excesses of self-mortification,
there emerges a clear argument of how the mission was able to thrive at a distance from court and literati centers; it counted 200,000 believers by 1700. For Brockey, “The indispensable cogs in the clockwork of the mission church were its organizational confraternities” (363), based on one of the hallmarks of the Catholic Reformation’s confraternal movement—“the push to replace occupational groups with devotional ones in the late sixteenth century” (368). The Jesuits “had taken the raw materials of Chinese social and religious behavior and had molded them into an approximation of their European ideal.” The “odor of piety emanating from their mission church,” Brockey argues, continued through the eighteenth century in China and elsewhere (401). For current historians of China, this trajectory should meld persuasively with what we are learning about other religious traditions as well.

Jerry Dennerline
Amherst College

The Ambivalent Consumer: Questioning Consumption in East Asia and the West. Edited by Sheldon Garon and Patricia L. Maclachlan (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2006) 314 pp. $59.95 cloth $29.95 paper

The steady rise of cultural studies has contributed to the emergence of consumption as a distinct field of investigation within such disciplines as history, anthropology, and sociology; this past decade has seen exponential growth in the number of publications. Within Japanese studies, one of the most prominent examples in English is the ConsumAsiaN series, edited by Lise Skov and Brian Moeran. In Japanese, the extensive literature includes Yoshimi Shun’ya, Hakurankai no seijigaku [The politics of expositions] (Tokyo, 1992) and, more recently, Sekiguchi Eri, Gendai Nihon no shôhi kûkan bunka no shikake o yomitoku [The realm of consumption in contemporary Japan: Reading cultural mechanisms] (Kyoto, 2004).

The Ambivalent Consumer is a welcome addition to this growing field, offering an unusually solid demonstration of the potential offered by transnational interdisciplinary projects. The contributors come from the United States, Japan, and Europe; represent various disciplines in the social sciences; and draw on regional case studies that span from Sweden to Malaysia, although the United States and Japan receive particular attention. What makes this collection stand out, however, is the way in which the essays directly address questions of comparative method, rather than seeing in the act of comparison the automatic production of meaning.

This approach is accomplished on one level by tracking the historical construction of relations between American and Asian consumption practices and ideologies, particularly in the postwar period, thereby ensuring that the comparisons do not take place in a vacuum and are there-
fore less likely to resort to explanations based on “national character.” Moreover, the volume as a whole challenges the common assumption that the United States represents a global norm, aspirational regime, or historical endpoint as methodologically unsound, not just conceptually unsavory. Indeed, after Charles Horioka lays out the similarities between practices in Japan, other Asian countries, and continental Europe, he pointedly notes, “When it comes to saving and consumption, it is American exceptionalism [. . .] that demands further study” (italics in original, 135).

*The Ambivalent Consumer* generally succeeds in keeping its border-crossing promise, thanks to its unusually coherent structure. As Part II (on consumer practices and nation) best illustrates, each essay rises above serendipitous interconnectedness to make specific contributions toward advancing a thematic program. Moreover, although the volume as a whole centers on Japan, discussion of other Asian cases sheds light not only on regional diversity but also on the specific character of domestic power relations.

For the above reasons, the subtitle of this volume, “Questioning Consumption in East Asia and the West,” more accurately describes its contents than the evocative but in some ways empty main title. “Ambivalence” as a specific concept does not accomplish much in the volume (with the exception of Jordan Sand’s fine essay) beyond indicating that consumption has by no means been celebrated in all places at all times. The “consumer” is also largely presented as constructed in close interrelationship with the state, rather than explored in more independent terms. Nevertheless, the collection represents both a signal contribution to the field in the present, and an indicator of promising avenues of investigation for the future.

Noriko Aso
University of California, Santa Cruz