Sensing the Past: Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting and Touching in History.
By Mark M. Smith (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2007) 180 pp. $55.00 cloth $19.95 paper

How do the senses shape human experience, and how does history shape sensorial experience? According to Smith, historians, anthropologists, art historians, and sociologists have answered this question principally by studying vision: Ever since Marshall McLuhan’s “great divide” theory, which linked the modern era with the visual era, and posited a lost aural/oral moment that faded with the invention of the printing press, the visual has taken a central role in sensory history. Scholars have written volumes on how and what people see, the power of sight and the ability to control it, and the ubiquity of surveillance. But others have begun to challenge this periodization of the “rise” of the visual. Noting that the visual cannot be understood in isolation from the audible, the tactile, the olfactory, and the gustatory, they have worked to integrate these senses into explorations of the experiential past. The point is that “premodern” societies depended on the visual and that “modern” societies felt, heard, tasted, and smelled the world as much as they saw it. As Smith puts it in this masterly extended reflection on these matters, the key to more nuance is “a habit of thinking about the past, an engrained way of exploring not just the role of sight but the other senses too” (4).

This book is a survey of the field of sensory history. Smith draws from a growing and unruly collection of work that includes histories of medicine and of music, anthropologies of commodities and of religion, and sociologies of smell and of taste. The volume emphasizes work that diminishes the centrality of visual culture by taking an intersensorial approach. Although his intention is never to dismiss the importance of vision altogether, Smith successfully demonstrates the limitations of a purely visual approach with compelling examples. A sensory history of the supermarket, for example, suggests that although changes in lighting and presentation altered the visual experience of shopping, equally transformative diminutions of sound and invitations to touch and smell produce accompanied them. Disturbing but telling studies situated in the American South have demonstrated the prevalence of theories of “racial smells” in racist ideologies. In another example, the act of touching assumes a historical dimension with shifts in theories of child rearing—from warnings during the 1890s against too much touching to the later re-evaluation of parental caresses as essential to a child’s well-being.

To his credit, Smith points out some shortcomings of the field, which are necessarily replicated in the book. The heavy emphasis on North America and Europe, for instance, is a call to scholars of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean to contribute. But this supposed lack of studies in languages other than English may be overdrawn; Spanish-language scholarship on sound, listening and technology, for instance, is burgeoning. Nonetheless, many of the paradigms drawn from
Europe or North America continue to dominate the study of the senses. The hope is that books like this one will spur work that not only contributes to the geographical scope of the field but also tackles the tough epistemological and methodological issues. This book is important for scholars interested in sensory history and anyone interested in acquiring the habit of sensing the past.

Alejandra Bronfman
University of British Columbia


In this volume, two eminent Australian historians take an exciting new look at the late nineteenth-century growth of what they call the “colour line” that produced “white men’s countries” throughout the world. This is not a conventional history of the growth of racial thought. Rather, Lake and Reynolds follow the interwoven and interconnected strands of immigration restriction and “Anglo-Saxon”-ism as they spread from the gold fields of 1850s Australia to the post-Reconstruction United States, 1890s Natal, Mohandas K. Gandhi’s South Africa, and the “Pacific Slope” from British Columbia to California, before returning to a defiantly exclusionist Australia. It is rare to see a work that so deftly ties together this transnational racial discourse, especially one that places not Britain or the United States but Australia at the center of this “global” narrative. For Lake and Reynolds, a “white” Australia “pointed the way” to new “race solidarities,” in which all peoples were forced into a “dichotomy of white and not-white,” and of those fit and those not fit for self-rule (9, 237). Among the casualties of this fierce Australian stance, as they point out, were the long-time British commitment to unhindered migration throughout the Empire and, in 1919, an endeavor to insert a racial equality clause into the League of Nations covenant.

Lake and Reynolds hinge much of their argument on what they see as Charles Pearson’s “disturbing prophecy” in National Life and Character: A Forecast (New York, 1893) (75). Written in Australia, Pearson’s book not only called into question the permanence of Anglo-Saxon dominance in the face of a resurgent Asia; it also precipitated an ever-more insistent determination to secure territory for the white race. Lake and Reynolds recount many familiar episodes in the growth of late nineteenth-century racism, among them Gandhi’s negotiations in South Africa and President Theodore Roosevelt’s expansionist enthusiasms. Much, however, is fresh and original. Most stimulating is the careful analysis of the circumstances that led to the spread of literacy tests from the United States, where they were used to deter blacks from voting, to
the British settler colonies, where they were employed to circumvent imperial restrictions on racially discriminatory immigration legislation.

The notion of “White Men’s Countries” is not the same as that of Rudyard Kipling’s famous “White Man’s Burden.” Lake and Reynolds make no attempt to situate the exclusionary racism that they discuss in the larger discourse of racial difference. These two contemporaneous racial ideologies—the one exclusionist and the other potentially assimilationist—are not identical, but since they are connected, they deserve to be considered together. Furthermore, Lake and Reynolds only ambivalently acknowledge the sometimes partial acceptance of the “whiteness” strategy even in settler colonies; in New Zealand, for instance, the Maori possessed a limited, but still recognized, place in the state.

An exceptional study that could find a place even in the classroom, *Drawing the Global Colour Line* should command attention from historians, sociologists, and political scientists alike.

Thomas R. Metcalf
University of California, Berkeley

*One Time Fits All: The Campaigns for Global Uniformity*. By Ian R. Bartky
(Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2007) 320 pp. $49.95

This book examines the historical origins of three different facets of our present experience of time—the International Date Line, the use of time zones and the international acceptance of Greenwich as the prime meridian, and daylight-saving time. All forsake local sun time in favor of conventions that allow a ready coordination of time telling around the globe or (in the case of summer) the perceived advantages of maximizing sunlight in the evening.

The least complicated story has the longest history. Bartky’s discussion of the dateline follows ships’ logs and accounts of travelers’ meetings from the circumnavigation of Ferdinand Magellan to the early twentieth century to see how sailors and settlers dealt with the consequences of moving in a westerly or easterly direction for their calendar reckonings. The line of demarcation between days of Asian or European/American dating has always reflected the different directions of colonization and commerce of Pacific settlements (like Macao, the Philippines, Fiji, and the early nineteenth-century Russian enclave at Fort Ross in California). It recognizes the dating kept by different localities rather than international agreement.

In contrast, the questions of a prime meridian and time zones were covered in promotional publications, conference sessions, committee meetings, and legislation. The unification of timekeeping and mapmaking practices on national and international scales became important for (some) railway managers and scientists from the 1870s onward, but it oc-
curred only gradually and in piecemeal fashion. Bartky’s analysis moves from scientific congresses airing the concerns of different disciplinary communities (especially geographers, astronomers, meteorologists, and hydrographists) to the work of key promoters like Sandford Fleming, and eventual government implementation.

The great strength of this book lies in following the treatment of common questions through these different theaters, and different national contexts. In both the United States in 1883 and Austria–Hungary and Germany in the early 1890s, the standardization of times by railroads was clearly the major factor leading to unification, and the subsequent implementation of zone time in civil affairs. The final major steps to present practice occurred when the French government adopted Greenwich time in 1911 and the Greenwich meridian in 1914.

Bartky’s careful account of American, British, and French developments is more convincingly detailed than his treatment of the German-speaking world—especially in his treatment of daylight–savings time.¹ The most significant champion of the need to prevent “the waste of daylight” was William Willet, a London builder who published a pamphlet with that title in 1907 and who succeeded in having his proposals debated in the House of Commons. But it was in wartime Germany and Austria–Hungary that daylight savings made its first appearance. Unfortunately, Bartky’s account is too brief to reconstruct the full context of its introduction.

Despite this limitation—as well as the limitation of Bartky’s focus on professional and technical groups, which shortchanges the social dimensions of time unification—this book will play an important role in future studies of time consciousness during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It extends Bartky’s earlier study of the development of a national consciousness for time in the United States, Selling the True Time (Stanford, 2000), and is especially valuable for indicating how diverse forms of internationalism played into disciplinary debates and bureaucratic implementation of time uniformity in the major Western nations.

Richard Staley
University of Wisconsin, Madison


In this gripping study of parents’ faith healing of their children, Peters effectively tugs readers’ loyalties back and forth between devout religious parents and parens patriae, the state in its role as “parent of the country”

¹ To date, the most important account of the German-speaking regions is Jakob Messerli’s book on Swiss time, Gleichmässig, Pünktlich, Schnell: Zeiteinteilung und Zeitgebrauch in der Schweiz im 19. Jahrhundert (Zürich, 1995).
The narrative compels tolerance for the strong faith that persuades parents to decline medical help even as they watch their children die. Yet, Peters also conveys the courts’ and prosecutors’ frustration that the legal system cannot protect children from fatal harm, or even punish the responsible parents after harm has occurred.

Peters effectively employs individual tales of faith healing from numerous times and places to create a broader narrative that identifies a recurring and vexing pattern, namely, that “secular political forces, whatever the noble intentions of the individuals who marshal them, still face an awkward task when they endeavor to police religious conduct” (212). His research and documentation are extensive. The stories include nineteenth-century England’s Peculiar People; John Alexander Dowie of the Christian Catholic Church, who began his healing ministry in Sydney, Australia, in 1876 and later emigrated to Chicago; the origins of Christian Science in Massachusetts in 1866 and the church’s later involvement in healing cases across the United States; as well as faith healings at Philadelphia’s Faith Tabernacle and Oregon’s Church of the First Born and Followers of Christ Church during the 1990s. In each case, a richly detailed narrative of the parents, their faith, and their interactions with state authorities unfolds as Peters offers finely nuanced accounts of the tensions between the competing claims of church and state.

These specific cases are ably woven into Peters’ broader narrative, in which he provides more general information that sets the context for the cases. This material includes a history of faith healing that sets the stage for the discussion of the parents’ beliefs, explanations of the legal requirements that illuminate the possible range of the courts’ responses to children’s death, and references to the history of medicine. The latter subject is especially interesting. Peters explains that faith healing became less credible as medicine and science grew more authoritative and reliable.

Although Peters writes in the first chapter that the “pursuit of justice in these cases . . . is the story of this book” (26), the conclusion contains no normative philosophical or legal account of justice. Instead, the powerful narrative leaves readers in the midst of a recurring story, repeated from century to century and across the world—the dramatic opposition between the claims of faith and justice in protecting children. The ambiguous conclusion is appropriate, given Peters’ reminder that the law has few or no tools powerful enough to influence parents who are able to accept their child’s death as the will of God.

Leslie C. Griffin
University of Houston Law Center
Handbooks of Roman art generally present the Romans as humorless. Good imperialists, soldiers, and builders, no doubt, but not funny (at least not intentionally). Clarke manages to overturn this stereotype by collecting a surprisingly rich array of examples of “subversive visual humor” and arguing that witty invective, vulgar parody, and burlesque played an important role in Roman visual culture. In two previous books Clarke devoted substantial sections to visual humor—Looking at Lovemaking (Berkeley, 1998), 212–240, and Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans (Berkeley, 2003), 160–180—but in this one, he presents a more systematic treatment.

The book opens with a general discussion of modern theories of humor (3–11), in which Clarke identifies three basic approaches: the psychological—laughter as stress release; the sociological—humor as a mechanism for easing social tension and a strategy for social survival; and the philosophical—humor as an important element within the broader framework of human thought and feeling. Clarke’s discussions of specific artworks make use of all three perspectives. But conscious of the tightly controlled hierarchy of imperial Roman society, Clarke is chiefly interested in the social function of his examples of visual humor. Partly for this reason, he sees Bakhtin’s notion of “carnival”—the inversion of hierarchies and the world turned upside down—as the most useful key for understanding the coarse and aggressive humor that he finds in much of his Roman material.1 Previous studies (based mostly on literature) have portrayed Roman humor as reinforcing social norms. Interestingly, Clarke comes to precisely the opposite conclusion about Roman visual humor, viewing much of the material that he treats as genuinely subversive (8).

One of the greatest strengths of the book is the astonishing variety of the visual representations that Clarke patiently assembles and addresses—rich and rewarding material for students of many disciplines. Art historians interested in provocative combinations of texts and images will find numerous case studies of pictures equipped with subversive captions; Clarke provides thoughtful and imaginative analysis of how the two work together. Social historians straining to hear the (usually all but inaudible) voice of nonelite Romans will find a detailed and respectful treatment of tavern paintings (109–132), and even crude scrawled graffiti (44–49). The many ribald depictions of pygmies and “Aethiopians” from Roman bourgeois homes might appeal to those looking for ancient examples of racial stereotyping (87–107). Also in abundant evidence are playful representations of the sexual act, from the routine and commer-

cial to the bizarre and exotic (191–227), and lampoons of the Roman gods (133–146; 165–89), as well as the coarse (but salubrious) apotropaic laughter of the crowd (63–81).

Not everyone will find these pictures funny, or be convinced by Clarke’s (sometimes labored) explanations of the jokes. But no one is doing more to enrich our picture of Roman visual culture, or to encourage a more imaginative and open-minded approach to it—especially to the little known nonelite imagery. For this contribution alone, the author and his book are to be greatly commended.

Christopher H. Hallett
University of California, Berkeley


In this big and ambitious volume, an eminent historian of technology tries, once again, to summarize the entire history of Western technology from the early Middle Ages to modern times. The coverage is impressive: Friedel’s dazzling tour de force describes almost every aspect of technology; it is not easy to find any glaring omissions in the book, except perhaps the deliberate decision to leave out the history of medicine. That it concentrates exclusively, and explicitly, on Western technology is understandable in view of the enormity of the material that Friedel covers.

Given that such books already exist—some of them multi-authored, edited collections and a few by scholars bold enough to attack such topics singlehandedly, such as Donald Cardwell’s magnificent Fontana History of Technology (Hammond, Ind., 1974)—what does Friedel’s volume bring to the table? For starters, the writing style is unusually lively, witty, and often insightful. Friedel begins each chapter with a telling anecdote or quote, and nowhere does he allow the text to sink into the bewildering details that explain the working of complex devices. The organization of the book is done with imagination and flair, with chapters bearing interesting titles like “Earth, Fire, Water, and Air” and “Stuff, Reality and Dreams.” The book, moreover, is rich in wonderful original illustrations of contraptions otherwise difficult to describe, many of them brilliantly executed by Dimitry Karetnikov. Friedel proves to be a master in picking a telling example to illustrate a more general principle. For instance, his choice of cheesemaking to demonstrate the many local differences in agricultural practice, as well the use of empirical trial- and-error methods to make up for theoretical gaps in knowledge, is exceptionally suggestive and well done. For an undergraduate never exposed before to this material, this book promises to be a long and exciting voyage of discovery. Nobody will ever be able to complain that the history of technology is “dull.”
Yet, like all singlehanded works of Really Ambitious History, this book is highly personal and idiosyncratic. Essentially, Friedel seems to resist any kind of analysis and interpretation. At the outset, he rejects any kind of economic determinism, barely mentions social constructivism, and eschews alternative frameworks, such as the evolutionary approach to the history of technology. The organizing term (not a framework by any stretch and much less a theory) is “improvement.” People laboring in workshops or toiling in fields tried to improve what they were doing and at times succeeded. Most of them had only a limited idea of what they wanted to accomplish. Improvement, Friedel maintains, occurred because there was a “culture of improvement,” which was either ephemeral or sustained (4).

Friedel feels that the evolution of technology needs to be understood on the basis of what the people who were carrying out these improvements were trying to do. This “individually-contingent” approach sounds sensible, but it misses most of what is interesting in the history of technology—namely, that technological progress was often accidental, unrelated to what people were trying to do. Unintended consequences, surprising interactions with other techniques, unanticipated bite-back effects, and the feedback of new techniques on useful knowledge and science are what make the story interesting.

For Friedel, technology is the effort by people to control nature—in short, to gain power. He discusses with great panache and knowledge how technology conferred this power, and how it could be, and was, used both for good and bad ends. But he does not concern himself sufficiently with what technology really is, which is human knowledge. As a result, he does not do justice to the complex and deep interactions between different kinds of knowledge and how they produced new and better techniques—sometimes by pure serendipity, sometimes by trial and error, and sometimes by preparing the minds that Fortune favors. For him, knowledge may have explained why techniques worked in the first place, but rarely, if ever, was it the cause of new technology, at least until late in the nineteenth century. But knowledge is far more than science, as we define it today. It involves any kind of understanding of natural regularities and phenomena, by at least some members of society, that could form the basis of a set of instructions on how to produce a good or service. Once this definition of knowledge is understood, it is easier to see how technology was affected by institutions, ideology, politics, income, and relative prices, as well as by the interaction of different kinds of knowledge itself.

The absence of any kind of serious analytical framework to understand the huge plethora of events and developments that Friedel covers, with stunning erudition, seems to have been a deliberate choice. He wanted, above all, to tell a story, and he tells it extremely well. The result, however, is that he does not venture a real explanation why technology flourished more in some eras than in others, nor why the trajectory and speed of technology’s development in “the West” were

566  |  JOEL MOKYR

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unmatched elsewhere. Things just happened, one after the other. The “culture of improvement” advanced technology, but who actually possessed this culture, where it came from, and how it was transmitted from generation to generation, as well as between different individuals and classes, remains essentially outside Friedel’s interests. The out-of-breath undergraduate putting down this book will ask “why”—and the book provides no answer.

This reviewer knows full well that there is no answer, or, more precisely, that there are so many answers that we can scarcely discriminate them, let alone rank them by plausibility. But we must keep trying, because, as a famous economist once said, once we start thinking about that question, it is hard to think of anything else.

Joel Mokyr
Northwestern University


In Blasphemy in the Christian World, Nash provides a rich and sweeping history of blasphemy from the medieval period to present day. The history of blasphemy, Nash contends, not only illuminates the changing views of the sacred but also shows the extent to which religion has regulated societies and individuals within them.

Despite modernist and postmodernist expectations that religion would wither away, the power of religion and, consequently, the threat of blasphemy persists. In the first chapter, Nash illustrates the endurance and relevance of blasphemy as a phenomenon in the modern world. In 2004, Jerry Springer: The Opera generated widespread controversy in England because the production not only contained a great deal of profanity but also ridiculed Judeo-Christian beliefs. Blasphemy controversies, however, are not unique to Christians. Witness the furor caused by the twelve cartoons of Muhammad published in the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten in 2005.

In Chapters 2 and 3, Nash outlines the history of blasphemy from 1500 A.D. to the present, delineating the differences and similarities between premodern and modern understandings of the concept. In the thirteenth century, Christians in Europe began to distinguish between heresy (the propagation of false doctrine and apostasy from orthodoxy) and blasphemy (expressing disrespect to God by using profanity or ridicule to discredit God’s power). Yet the concept of blasphemy proved to be remarkably malleable. Originally, Nash contends, blasphemy was interpreted as a religious crime with secular repercussions. Blasphemy laws helped the church and the state to exercise social control of deviant behavior, since blasphemy often occurred at taverns, and blasphemers were typically drunk.
During the Enlightenment, secular activists intentionally sought to subvert the intellectual credibility of orthodox Christianity and the Church’s cultural hegemony. Unable to extinguish such “active blasphemy,” states and churches slowly began to grant religious toleration to deists in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and to freethinkers in the nineteenth. By the twentieth century, libertarian concerns about free speech rights had eclipsed concerns about theology or the well-being of the community. But the triumph of free-speech rights has hardly been secured. As the recent debates about Andres Serrano’s photograph, *Piss Christ*, and Salman Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses* (New York, 1988) indicate, multiculturalism and other efforts to generate cultural and social inclusion conflict with issues of freedom of expression.

In light of this general survey, the final four chapters probe several themes. The fourth chapter analyzes blasphemy from the blasphemer’s point of view. Between the thirteenth and seventeenth century, “passive blasphemy,” typically committed by an unwitting drunk, gave way to “active blasphemy,” intentionally performed by an anti-Christian activist and artist. The fifth chapter examines how blasphemy laws provided local and central governments with policies to control unruly and subversive behavior. The sixth chapter assesses the different ways that blasphemers damaged their victims. The final chapter reviews the history of the relationship between blasphemy and film. Monty Python’s *Life of Brian* and Martin Scorsese’s *The Last Temptation of Christ* receive extended attention. The work concludes with a brisk and provocative survey of contemporary debates about the censorship of allegedly offensive challenges to conventional beliefs and morals.

This work will be of interest to historians of diverse fields, since the study provides a legal history of blasphemy that chronicles legislative changes. This particular dimension of Nash’s analysis draws heavily upon secondary sources, although his examination of twentieth-century blasphemy controversies relies upon primary sources, most notably landmark legal decisions, especially in Britain. The legal history of blasphemy explains what happened, but it does not adequately explain why the meaning of blasphemy changed. To answer this question, Nash draws upon religious and cultural history to recover the sources that fueled these changes throughout the past seven centuries. The entire study is framed by the work of Foucault on power and as well as Elias’ understanding of the role of manners in the evolution of society.\footnote{See Michel Foucault, “Politics and Reason,” in Lawrence D. Kritzman (ed.), *Michel Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture Interviews and Other Writings 1977–1984* (London, 1990), 57–85; Norbert Elias, *The Court Society* (New York, 1983); idem (ed. Eric Dunning, Johan Gouwblom, and Stephen Mennell; trans. Edmund Jephcot), *The Civilizing Process* (Oxford, 2000; orig. pub. 1978). Consequently, the degree to which the work’s thesis is convincing is in large measure contingent upon the cogency of Foucault’s genealogical ap-}
proach to the history of sexuality or Elias’ theory regarding the civilizing
of manners in the formation of the state.

To be sure, some historians might find Nash’s descriptions of cer-
tain controversies tantalizingly brief, in need of more detailed analysis of
their particular historical circumstances. Nevertheless, the work offers an
exhaustive survey of the subject. At the very least, it provides interpret-
ers with a grand map for contextualizing and comparing specific contro-
versies. In short, Blasphemy in the Christian World offers a fascinating view
of blasphemy through the ages. More than just medieval efforts to pro-
tect God’s good name or modern commitments to individual liberty and
freedom of speech, the history of blasphemy reveals what societies con-
sider sacred.

P. C. Kemeny
Grove City College

Castles, Battles, & Bombs: How Economics Explains Military History. By
Jurgen Brauer and Hubert van Tuyll (Chicago, University of Chicago
Press, 2008) 385 pp. $29.00 cloth $33.33 paper

An economist (Brauer) and a historian (van Tuyll) have collaborated to
illustrate how principles of economics can explain military history. Fol-
lowing an introductory chapter on economic theory, written in accessi-
ble language for non-specialists, they present six case studies drawn from
Western military history throughout the last millennium. Each case
study focuses on one economic principle, while also demonstrating in
brief how each of the six economic principles might be applied to five
sub-themes (manpower, logistics, technology, planning, and opera-
tions). A final chapter applies the principles to three contemporary mili-
tary problems—terrorism, manpower, and private military companies.

Though all of the cases are well researched and reliably presented,
some of them work better than others. The condottieri of the Italian Re-
naissance, for example, yield refreshing insights when their contracts are
subjected to the economic principle that incentives affect behavior. The
authors are less engaging when they apply the principle of opportunity
costs to conclude that medieval lords chose castles over standing armies
because they were more cost-effective. Many readers will be surprised to
learn that almost 72 percent of the bombs dropped on Germany during
World War II fell in the last eleven months of the war, a statistic in-
tended to support the authors’ conclusion about the diminishing returns
of the allied strategic bombing offensive. But military historians will find
none of the book’s conclusions novel. Researching almost exclusively in
secondary literature, the authors explain only what military historians al-
ready knew.

The weaknesses of the book flow from conflicting claims by the au-
thors about their methodology and results. At some points, they claim to
be applying microeconomic theory to military history, which they correctly identify as a seriously underconceptualized field in a generally undertheorized discipline. In practice, however, they apply economic principles, which they see as building blocks of theory. These principles achieve their universality at the price of specificity. To say, for example, that “unequal information creates power favoring one party over another” is to belabor the obvious. One hardly needs economics to achieve such an insight.

So, too, with results. The book’s subtitle claims that “economics explains military history.” Between the covers, however, the authors claim more modestly to show “how military history can be infused with economic reasoning and that from this new insights can be gained” (321). This pronouncement comes closer to the considerable achievement of this book. War and warfare are emotional and dramatic topics, freighted with moral and philosophical implications. Framing them in the rational calculus of economic behavior aids both understanding and insight. To view international terrorists as rational actors calculating their opportunity costs, information asymmetries, cost/benefit trade-offs, and substitution possibilities marks a welcome departure from the demonization and hyperbole that has characterized so much of the public discourse on the war on terror. Military history does need more conceptualization, and this book offers some useful tools.

Alex Roland
Duke University

The Good Women of the Parish: Gender and Religion after the Black Death.
By Katherine L. French (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008) 337 pp. $69.95

French’s innovative and richly documented study of laywomen’s pious activities in late medieval England juxtaposes prescriptive literary and artistic sources with documents that show how individual women participated in, and contributed to, their parishes. This comparison allows French to highlight the tensions between the feminine docility and humility advocated by sermons and saints’ lives, and the new opportunities for collective parish activities that women acquired in the aftermath of the Black Death. Didactic literature and art, as well as church liturgies, encouraged women to be modest, patient, and silent. Yet analyses of the churchwardens’ accounts, wills, and court and tax records from several parishes (in East Anglia and the West of England) show how women’s enterprises established them as parish leaders and fundraisers, moving them far beyond the constraints of women’s prescribed religious behavior.

The first two chapters argue that women’s family roles shaped their public expressions of piety. Transferring their household duties to the parish church, the “house of God,” women performed church-keeping
tasks like laundering, sewing and embroidering sacred textiles, candle making, and brewing ale for parish feasts. Such pious labor, French emphasizes, “integrated women into the parish community” and made the material church a “homey space” that women provisioned and organized (49). Similarly, at baptisms, churchings, marriages, and funerals, women augmented official rituals with liturgical adjuncts like adornments, furnishings, and processions. Through such para-rituals as supplying funeral candles, bells, wedding rings, and tapestries for the churching ceremony, laywomen expressed social and economic concerns and actively contributed to the rites marking the key events of life and death, despite the submissive position church liturgies assigned them.

Three chapters explore women’s collective actions in the parish. Close analyses of seating arrangements in a few parishes show that women’s places in the church could display marital status (in some parishes maidens sat separately), family wealth, husbands’ office holding in the parish, and even friendship. Seating proximity created a particularly female space and perhaps led some women to form all-female groups that raised money for the parish. Although such groups have only scanty documentation, French identifies almost fifty of them with economic activities that varied from dances, collections, and brewing to holding rental property. Besides adding to the parish coffers, these groups provided a rare forum for female collaboration, companionship, and public leadership. The rise in women’s groups in late fifteenth-century parishes paralleled the growing popularity of Hocktide, a holiday when men and women caught and released each other on payment of a forfeit that went to the parish. Organizing this revel gave women “official roles within parish administrations,” contributing as much as 20 percent of a parish’s annual income, but it clearly placed women at odds with the subservience that clerical writers praised (175).

French concludes that the late medieval parish accepted a broader range of female pious practices than prescriptive sources like sermons and confessors’ manuals would endorse. Episcopal visitation records, for instance, show little concern about women’s parish enterprises. Yet this post-plague era of women’s “collective, visible, and active” religious behavior was relatively brief (230), ending with the Reformation, which refocused women’s piety on their roles as wives and mothers.

Kathleen Kamerick
University of Iowa


No other decade in England’s long parliamentary history was ever like the 1650s. It began with the rule of the Rump Parliament, the purged remnant of the Long Parliament that had defeated the monarchy and
governed the country at the sufferance of the revolutionary army. Uniquely, the Rump combined the legislative and executive functions, while remaining the supreme national court as well. This breadth did not protect it from a forced dismissal by Oliver Cromwell, who ruled temporarily by the sword but soon called a new, appointed legislature, variously known as the Nominated Saints or the Barebone Parliament. This extraordinary body was sent home in its turn, and Cromwell, consolidating his authority under the traditional title of Lord Protector, returned to elected Parliaments in 1654 and 1656, each chosen under a different form. A third body, the Protectoral Parliament, convened by Richard Cromwell, Oliver’s son and successor, was dismissed in another army coup in 1659, at which point the Rump Parliament was recalled, to be dismissed and revived once more until it finally dissolved itself on the eve of the Stuart restoration.

These various parliamentary experiments deserve examination in their political context, the predominant circumstance of which was the presence of a revolutionary army led, until 1658, by Cromwell. His personality looms so large over the period that a mere institution seems pallid and diffuse beside it. But it must be remembered that the English Revolution itself was the product of parliamentary enterprise and that Cromwell never conceived his rule apart from it. If there was to be an England, there would have to be a Parliament. Charles I lost his head because he ignored that principle.

The Cromwellian period has come under renewed scrutiny in recent years, and the work under review, which synthesizes earlier studies by both authors, fills an evident gap. The protectoral parliaments have generally been viewed as a failure, preoccupied as they were by questions of institutional integrity and authority. These questions were natural. The first protectoral parliament, that of 1654, was called under the aegis of the Instrument of Government, a document produced by the army. Its reflexive response was to validate its autonomy by modifying the role prescribed for it, as well as the powers exercised by the lord protector. The second Parliament proposed to reconstitute itself as a bicameral body and to offer Cromwell a crown, the purpose of which, as Little and Smith show, was not to augment but to restrain Cromwell’s powers. People knew what a king was or ought to be; the Cromwellian protectorate had few apparent limits save those that Cromwell voluntarily chose to observe. A case in point was his exclusion of more than a hundred members of parliament (MPs) in 1656. Because parliaments had long struggled to assert the right to confirm and police their own membership, the Cromwellian exclusions were more shocking than anything done by the most authoritarian of monarchs.

Little and Smith contend both that Cromwell was a less detached (and capricious) parliamentary manager than has been assumed and that his parliaments were less obstructionist than they might superficially appear. There is truth to both these assertions. Cromwell’s contradictions as a statesman were of epic proportions; he idealized his parliaments as
the instrument of an elect nation but showed little patience with the pace of legislative procedure. The situation was complicated by the fact that this procedure was rendered highly problematical by unresolved disputes about the relation of protectoral ordinances to parliamentary statutes, the imposition of taxes, the control of the militia, and the status of the protectoral veto. Some of these disputes echoed those of Stuart and Caroline parliaments, but in none of those cases was the constitutional framework so unstable, and the relations of power so volatile.

A further complication was the presence in these parliaments of republican and royalist elements, both of which were ideologically hostile to the protectorate. Even the centrist Presbyterian base that was willing to work with Cromwell in the interests of stability was deeply at odds with him about religious policy. This tension led to shifting alliances with extraparliamentary interests, notably the army and the “courtiers” who staffed the protectoral bureaucracy. Little and Smith make the point that a surprising amount of work was done, mainly on routine matters, reflecting the traditional relationships between MPs and their localities. The protectoral parliaments, that is to say, however constituted and however empowered, tried to behave like parliaments, but they could not resolve the overarching question of executive authority that was the dilemma of the protectorate itself.

Little and Smith take a more sanguine view of Richard Cromwell than most historians have done, and they regard the collapse of the protectorate as contingent rather than inevitable. They maintain that Richard Cromwell enjoyed generally cordial relations with his parliament, to which he was closer both religiously and politically than his father was to his. They attribute his fall to a rearguard army action that was more a manifestation of weakness than of strength. But neither the protectorate nor the army could be the same without Oliver Cromwell. A crown would never have been given to Richard. A Dutch solution to the problem of the executive might have been the vesting of power in something like a Stadholder (not a stable solution even in the Netherlands, then in a republican mode). Richard, however, had the nigh-impossible task of squaring the circle between a parliament jealous of its own authority and an army left leaderless, anxious, and unpaid. Trouble was in the wind.

Each Cromwellian parliament was, effectively, a new experiment in recruitment, composition, and authority. Little and Smith have written the book in chapters alternating between chronological and topical narrative. The result is a series of overlapping snapshots, revealing in themselves but blurry as an overall picture. Some effort is made to construct an overall frame, but the non-specialist is left with many gaps to fill. The book’s model is Conrad Russell’s Parliaments and English Politics, 1621–1629 (New York, 1979), which traversed the border decade between Jacobean and Caroline rule. Russell’s book (which is not without its own flaws) had a much easier task, since each of his five parliaments had a set form and a traditional royal interlocutor. What emerges from Little and Smith is a series of improvisations in which the yearning for institu-
tional stability is undercut by uncertainty, opportunism, and the overawing figure of Oliver Cromwell, who in both his presence and absence was the determining element of the decade.

Little and Smith have made a valuable contribution to our revised understanding the 1650s, and to our appreciation of the work of parliaments in general. No aspect of English social, economic, legal, cultural, and intellectual history can be understood without them; they are both the starting and the end points of all interdisciplinary studies for this period. Nonetheless, a fuller synthesis of the protectoral parliaments awaits. Little and Smith themselves note the primary task of editing that remains to make the parliamentary records of the 1650s as accessible in scholarly editions as those of earlier parliaments were by the now-abandoned Yale Center for Parliamentary History. Hopefully, the History of Parliament Trust, which has picked up Yale’s unfinished work on the Parliament of 1624, will proceed with the parliaments of the Revolution as well.

Robert Zaller
Drexel University


The so-called “Red Lady” of Paviland in Southwest Wales came to light in 1825. Soon, William Buckland, an eccentric geologist from Oxford University, declared the remains to be those of a Roman tax collector buried with some of his receipts. Bones and Ochre tells the convoluted story of the Paviland remains, recently the subject of rigorous multidisciplinary analysis. Sommer’s “biography” of Paviland is a microcosm of debates about human evolution spanning nearly two centuries. She asks, “How can the same set of bones be read consecutively as postdiluvian tax man, female witch or prostitute of Ancient British times, male Cro-Magnon hunter of the Aurignacian Paleolithic, and male shaman or hero of the Gravettian culture?” (l). Her biographical answer revolves around two major scientific personalities and the multidisciplinary research of recent decades.

Part I describes how Buckland, given to describing nature as a historical romance, tried to reconcile science and religious dogma. He first described the Paviland skeleton as that of an excise man, then changed its sex to female, the remains of a woman who dealt in witchcraft. Buckland died before the scientific acceptance of human antiquity in 1859 and sought to interpret Paviland within the context of the scientific knowledge of his day. He also passed away before the epochal Cro-Magnon discoveries of Edouard Lartet and Henry Christy in the Dordogne, which placed the study of prehistory on a new footing.

From Buckland, Sommer moves to another eccentric figure from
Oxford, William Sollas, a geologist who came to archaeology and anthropology later in his career. He is best known for his *Ancient Hunters and Their Modern Representatives* (London, 1924), in which he compared the Cro-Magnons of southwestern France with the Eskimo. He considered Cro-Magnons the first truly modern humans and Paviland as one of them, a member of the Aurignacian culture, declaring that the bones were those of a man, not a woman.

Sommer calls the multidisciplinary study of the Paviland remains under Stephen Aldhouse-Green a happy ending. This project, which began in 1995 and saw publication in 2000, involved both re-excavation of the cave and a reanalysis of the bones and associated artifacts. Paviland was dated to at least 26,000 radiocarbon years ago, and mitochondrial DNA linked the skeleton to the commonest extant lineage in Europe. Sommer evaluates the multidisciplinary research, describes the varying interpretations of the burial, and points out that most of the specialists worked alone without consulting other members of the team, calling into question the multidisciplinarity of the research to some extent. Her “biography” is a reminder that most major archaeological finds have complex histories, which have close ties to the scientific debates of the day.

Research continues; the Paviland skeleton is being reappraised. New dates place the burial at about 31,000 years ago, one of the earliest modern human interments in Europe. In the meantime, Sommer offers a timely and comprehensive assessment of Paviland that will be invaluable for future researchers.

Brian Fagan
University of California, Santa Barbara

*Grand Designs: Labor, Empire, and the Museum in Victorian Culture.* By Lara Kriegel (Durham, Duke University Press, 2007) 305 pp. $84.95 cloth $23.95 paper

Despite the title, Kriegel’s ambitious book deals with the South Kensington Museum from its founding to its later incarnation as the V&A. Museums are a rich and complex resource; Kriegel brings histories of labor and design education together with current debates in museum studies. She aims to locate this museum within the concerns of market capitalism, industrialization, and democratization; her topics include taste making, empire (at least, British India), consumerism, and international tourism. This sometimes difficult mix is held together by artisanal concerns. With a lively narrative style, Kriegel marshals an impressive array of archival and periodical sources to reveal relationships between the museum; the British government’s initial concerns with design education, trade, and national taste; the empowering of artisanal designers; and the museum’s changing identities. Her visual resources in-
clude printed patterns and such products as calicos, chintzes, and wallpapers. The book has interest for museum studies, design education, and labor history.

The book opens strongly. Industrial rivalry with France, where design education and trade exhibitions were well established, and copyright protection for patterns provoked the establishment of the Government School of Design. Kriegel has a talent for telling a good story; she punctuates this potentially dry subject with lively debates between high art and trade needs, often involving accusations of “design piracy.” Issues of artisan and empire emerge with the 1851 Great Exhibition, in which the first hints of the vogue for hand-made wares from India appeared. The Exhibition led to the Museum of Ornamental Art from which the South Kensington Museum derived.

The museum’s founding ethos of improving taste conflicted with democratization; manufactures and consumers were reluctant to have taste imposed on them from above. Ironically, Henry Cole’s desire to improve the spectacle of British taste and the visual lenses of British designers resulted in the popular but short-lived Gallery of False Principles. When taste became an issue touching morality, empire, consumption, and trade, social reformers like economist F. J. Prouting challenged elite didacticism as offensive to Englishness, Protestantism, liberty, and commerce.

The book’s main problem, apparent in its title, is its tendency to fixate on specific areas of interest in its mixing of current controversies with historical ideas. Kriegel critiques a currently fashionable trope that views the museum as a vehicle of “consensual surveillance,” but she might have provided more nuanced accounts of museum history that join cultural history with art history and an understanding of visual intelligence.¹

As tools of democratic governance, museums had models of regulatory gaze that lay outside the European courts.² In modernizing cultures, increasingly complex ways of seeing evolved to suit economic, cultural, and social needs, apparent in public and private museums.³ Dutch arts of describing had promoted visual skills and trained eyes since the seventeenth century, and British artisanal manufacturers, such as Josiah Wedgwood, had used private collections to commercial effect.⁴ Goldgar’s discussion of founding debates about representation, democratization,

¹ A useful introduction to visual intelligence is Donald D. Hoffman, *Visual Intelligence: How We Create What We See* (New York, 1998).
taxation, and access at the British Museum deserve wider recognition, as does Conn’s discussion of the importance of an object-based epistemology in the Victorian collecting ethos.\(^5\)

A broader vision of London’s cultural geography would have explained why the museum moved to South Kensington; Britain, like other capital cities, created cultural spaces. That a satellite museum in the East End was established for working men suggests the importance of zoning as well as a recognition that workers were worth cultivating. Kriegel demonstrates how the South Kensington Museum had evolved to become a tourist destination by 1880. She misses the irony, however, in her use of Moncure Conway, an American, to exemplify the tourist assessment of the museum. As a representation of Empire, had the museum not succeeded in holding even former parts of the Empire in its collective gaze? Kriegel’s are far from the last words on the V&A, but she makes a stimulating addition to our knowledge of the artisan’s role in its history.

Melanie Hall
Boston University

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*The Notables and the Nation* is primarily an examination of the means by which political issues were communicated to the French public in the two years preceding the revolutionary events of 1789. Distinguishing her work from previous studies of late old-regime political culture that have concentrated largely on the political language found in pamphlets and journals, Gruder undertakes a wider study of all forms of political communication: manuscript newsletters, illustrated prints, songs, and public festivities and demonstrations, as well as journals and pamphlets. With the exception of the first three chapters on the Assembly of Notables, a chapter on eighteenth-century readers, and a final chapter on local public reaction to political events, the book is organized thematically around each of these genres, many of the chapters having appeared over the previous two decades in article form. Gruder’s goal is to determine how opposition to the royal government and noble privilege spread before 1789 and to examine, as specifically as possible, the impact of this opposition on public opinion.

Ideology plays little role in *The Notables and the Nation*, distinguishing this study from other works on eighteenth-century French political

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culture that emphasize the importance of ideological discourse before 1789.\(^1\) Gruder’s methodology involves a thorough examination of the sources in each of her categories to determine their structure, political message, and intended audience. She also investigates the nature of the reading public to which communication was directed, the influence of political messages on that public, and the royal government’s efforts to control communication through censorship. In the end, *The Notables and the Nation* provides a more complete description of the means by which the French were brought into the debate about the nature of monarchical government than heretofore available.

In undertaking her task, Gruder analyzes her sources without significant reference to their historical antecedents or the ideological disputes of the era. She seems reluctant to engage the scholarship of other historians. For instance, she undertakes substantial research into the objections of lower-court magistrates to the royal judicial reform in 1788 that was designed to weaken the parlements. Yet, she makes no clear attempt to determine what, if any, relationship this resistance had to the Jansenist-inspired parlementary constitutionalism that Van Kley identified as the ideological basis of the Parlement of Paris’ resistance to royal authority after 1750. Similarly, Gruder’s impressive attempt to gauge public opinion through an examination of the vast body of largely unpublished community declarations produced in 1788 fails to place this phenomenon in the larger context of contemporary political debate. Although her discovery of a spontaneous and widespread demand for increased representation of the third estate in the Estates General is noteworthy, she ignores the ideological implications of the language of these declarations; they continued to conceptualize representation within the framework of the king’s sovereignty. This language stands in stark contrast to the most advanced political thought of late 1788 that insisted upon the sovereign authority of the general will of the nation, a significant indication that public opinion had yet to adopt an important component of national party ideology.

Despite these reservations, Gruder’s exhaustive examination of the various genres of media attempting to influence public opinion in 1787/88 adds much to current understanding of French political culture on the eve of the revolution.

Kenneth Margerison  
Texas State University

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The Melodramatic Thread: Spectacle and Political Culture in Modern France. By James R. Lehning (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2007) 180 pp. $24.95

Brooks claims that melodrama was a radically democratic theatrical form during the Restoration because its impulse was to make its representations clear and legible to everyone.\(^1\) Legibility was achieved by weaving universalistic concepts of good and evil into melodramatic plots. In his interdisciplinary study, *The Melodramatic Thread*, Lehning explores the relationship between melodrama and democracy through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. By paying close attention to the melodramatic form in political as well as theatrical performances, Lehning promises a new understanding of the process of democratization in modern France.

In order to understand the process of democratization more fully, Lehning proposes an interdisciplinary approach. He includes methods associated with political science, but given the paucity of anecdotal sources recording audience reactions to performances, he also uses the methods of literary analysis and cultural studies to explore how political ceremonies and theatrical performances helped to constitute the process of democratization.

In Chapters 2 through 5, Lehning deftly moves through nineteenth- and twentieth-century French history, selecting representations of the Revolution of 1789 and the First Republic to support his claim that “French mass democracy is closely linked to the commodified spectacle in modern France” (17). His documentation and analysis of performances on stage and screen, as well as those played out in the streets, courtrooms, and textbooks of modern France, are rich in detail and suggestive in their interpretive framework.

For Lehning, melodrama casts the issues, whether domestic or political, in a particular sensibility in which virtue is threatened by vice, and the conflict unfolds through the intervention of a heroic character. This struggle between good and evil might be played out in any number of ways—republicans versus monarchists or counterrevolutionaries, radical republicans versus liberal republicans, and so on. Despite the absence of any agreement about what embodied virtue, Lehning argues that this struggle between good and evil became, through the impact of melodrama, the legitimate way of viewing politics.

As illuminating as Lehning’s insights are concerning the melodramatic sensibility found across these various texts, his inclination to treat all representations—declarations, processions, plays, and legislative debates—in the same way without considering their disparate audiences; the particular conditions of their production; or their various origins as entertainment, national policy, or political opposition is a little unsettling. Even if, as Lehning insists, these performances “created forms of

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viewing that constructed the world—whether the world on stage or the world of politics, society and economics—in melodramatic terms,” surely critical distinctions need to be made between these two worlds (46).

By viewing public ceremonies and other political spectacles through the lens of melodrama, the dynamic processes by which multiple expressions about the French Revolution (and French politics more broadly) might have been expressed become emptied of their particular meanings. Consequently, Lehning’s notion of a monolithic political culture obscures key distinctions in French politics and culture—between creating national attachments or national identity and participatory democratic practices; between official, commercial, and oppositional cultures, even when they evince important continuities; and between melodrama and other theatrical forms. Moreover, a deeper understanding of the divisions within French politics may be gained by exploring such critical distinctions.

Sally Debra Charnow
Hofstra University

Heirs, Kin, and Creditors in Renaissance Florence. By Thomas Kuehn (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2008) 237 pp. $60.00

Kuehn has established himself as one of the premier historians of the legal anthropology of Renaissance Italy. What distinguishes his work is the mastery of the medieval legal documents—the statutes, consilia of the jurists, formularies of the notaries, household records, fiscal accounts, and registers of specific acts—combined with a sensitivity derived from anthropology and social history for the crucial concerns of families. There is always a great deal to be learned from his interdisciplinary approach.

His new book examines the seemingly strange phenomenon of inheritance repudiation. Why would anyone want to reject an inheritance? Nevertheless, the Florentine archives contain registers of 11,317 repudiations of inheritance from 1365 to 1534, thus demonstrating that many Florentines must have found the legal rejection of an inheritance or bequest useful, even necessary. For most of these reluctant inheritors, the reason was simple: The inheritance was burdened with debts. Almost 75 percent of the repudiations were by sons (and occasionally daughters) of their fathers’ estates, usually because accepting the inheritance would have placed the heirs in the hands of their fathers’ creditors.

Avoiding creditors, however, was only part of the story. Kuehn demonstrates how the repudiation of inheritance could be used to promote a family’s inheritance strategy. By transferring inheritance to a minor, for example, a family could limit liabilities by taking advantage of the law that required an inventory of its estate be made to protect the interests of the underage heir. Or the heir might repudiate in order to di-
rect the inheritance to a girl in need of a dowry, which would be protected from seizure by the dowry laws. Likewise, the prohibition against accepting only a part of an inheritance might be circumvented by a daughter accepting her mother’s dowry while repudiating her father’s debt–burdened estate. Part of such strategies might be to protect the integrity of the kin group from the financial mismanagement of a member of the previous generation.

There were also deceitful uses of repudiation that betrayed the trust necessary for the efficient functioning of the markets and of credit. This type of fraudulent repudiation prompted legislators to attempt to protect the integrity of credit markets, though fraudulent repudiation might also be part of a family’s strategy. As Kuehn puts it, “it was a way to stay in the game and score points in relation to their neighbors” (81), allowing a family to recover from the vicissitudes of life in the fifteenth century, in which social mobility was as often down as up.

Integral to Kuehn’s illuminating, magnificently researched book is the conception that inheritance was a process rather than an act by an individual and that the family was not a social unit but “a set of understandings . . . governing relations between kin” (17). These understandings are revealed through inheritance, as much from the point of view of the living heir as from the testator who wanted to control the family from beyond the grave.

Kuehn demonstrates once again the strengths of legal anthropology in the hands of a historian. What so many other social historians lack is the precise command of the legal tradition that frames virtually every document employed as evidence. Understanding exactly how the law defined an issue must be the starting point for understanding how historical actors created strategies for life and managed their affairs. But knowing the law of Renaissance Florence is not enough because its historical significance lies in the processes of generational transition in a family, in the thin tissues of trust, and in the sinews of credit across society.

Edward Muir
Northwestern University


Designed by the author for classroom use, this book covers the background of anti-Jewish policies and practices in prior centuries as well as the German setting and Nazi policies during the Holocaust. Furthermore, it sets the events of the 1930s and 1940s into the broader framework of Nazi racial policies, covering such issues as the compulsory sterilization and systematic killing of handicapped so-called Aryan Germans and the killing of Roma (Gypsies) and others considered inferior racially
by the Germans. The approach is, in part, chronological and, especially for the war and postwar years, geographical in a way that makes good sense. The text combines a summary of basic information with detailed examples, numerous illustrations, and extensive quotations from documents and testimony. Each chapter is provided with a chronology and bibliographical listings of primary and secondary sources. The authors of important books in the field are frequently mentioned by name in the text, and endnotes include source references.

What makes this book especially useful both as a textbook and as a general introduction to the subject is the author’s broad approach. Instead of trying for novelty in interpretation or the unearthing of hitherto unknown detail, Crowe places the Holocaust in the context of German racial policies, something rarely done so effectively. Similarly, the breadth of coverage, which includes the policies of countries neutral in World War II and the postwar trials of many European countries, is a helpful feature of the book. Students will also benefit from the explication of several topics about which scholars differ in interpretation. The author is balanced in his presentation of Jewish resistance and his description of the extent to which authorities and ordinary citizens in countries occupied by, or allied with, Germany assisted or resisted the murder programs.

Certain errors are important to note. The discussion of the 1919 peace settlement and the German inflation is out of date. The compulsory sterilization law of July 14, 1933, was enacted by the German cabinet, not the parliament. The review of the Holocaust in Norway omits the role of State Secretary Ernst von Weizsäcker in repulsing the offer of Sweden to accept Norway’s Jews—a factor in the Swedish decision to announce publicly the willingness to accept Denmark’s Jews. The section on Hungary needs rewriting. Prime Minister Paul Teleki did not resign after his suicide, and the distinction between what happened in Budapest and the rest of the country should be clarified. The extension of the Holocaust to the Dodecanese islands is barely mentioned but belongs in the context of Adolf Hitler’s insistence on killing of Jews throughout the world, not only in Europe. The attachment of a murder commando to Erwin Rommel’s headquarters in Egypt also deserves mention in the book. Two important books that Crowe missed are Richard Breitman’s *Official Secrets: What the Germans Planned, What the British and Americans Knew* (New York, 1998) and Rüdiger Overmans’ *Deutsche militärische Verluste im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Munich, 2000). All of the currency conversion figures need another look. These are all minor matters in a textbook that deserves widespread use.

Gerhard L. Weinberg
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
In *Banking on Global Markets*, Kobrak presents a detailed business history of the investments and dealings of Deutsche Bank, Germany’s leading financial institution, in the United States. The book is divided into three distinct parts, following chronological order. The first part covers the years 1870 to 1914; the second focuses largely on the period of the two world wars, 1914 to 1957; and the third discusses the most recent period from 1957 to 2000.

The author consulted an impressive list of primary sources for the years before 1970, mostly from the Deutsche Bank archives, supplemented with documents from the New York Federal Reserve Bank, the National Archives in Washington, and the Bundesarchiv in Berlin. Based on these rich sources, especially for the first part of the book, Kobrak gives a detailed account of Deutsche Bank’s activities in the U.S. market. In the second half of the nineteenth century, investment strategies of the bank primarily focused on manufacturing, railroads, and utilities. For example, Deutsche Bank was involved in the creation of Edison General Electric and the financing of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Kobrak also delves persuasively into the management of the bank at the time, discussing the differences in leadership style between Georg von Siemens—the speaker of the management board of Deutsche Bank—and Henry Villard—the German-born American entrepreneur who headed Deutsche Bank’s affairs in the United States for about a decade starting in the mid-1880s. In this narrative, Kobrak highlights differences between Deutsche Bank as the prototype of the German universal bank and the less-regulated American financial market.

During World War I and into the interwar years, Deutsche Bank was mostly occupied with the repatriation of German funds, but it also worked to facilitate U.S. investments in Germany. In the post–World War II period, the bank emerged again as a leading financial institution, struggling to find its place in the changing international environment and adapting to fast-moving technologies. Unfortunately, since Kobrak did not have access to primary sources for the most recent twenty years of Deutsche Bank’s history, the last section of the book is based on secondary sources and interviews with senior executives. This more recent history of the bank is of great importance, because Deutsche Bank’s relationship with the United States during this time became cemented through the merger with Banker’s Trust. Unfortunately, Kobrak has little more to say about this period in Deutsche Bank’s history than what is already known from the financial press.

Business–history scholars interested in management styles and personnel matters related to international finance will comprise the primary audience for the book. The book unfortunately holds little appeal for general readers. Even though the author claims in his introduction that
by juxtaposing Deutsche Bank with the United States, he “proposes to make a contribution to our understanding of these great transformations in financial institutions and capital markets,” the book does not live up to this aim (3). A macroeconomic leitmotiv that linked the various microeconomic stories that the author gleans from the extremely rich archival materials would have made the book more accessible.

The first printing of the book contained numerous typographical errors and infelicitous phrasing, but these shortcomings have since been corrected.

Kirsten Wandschneider
Occidental College


Painter examines the politicization of music criticism in Germany and Austria between 1900 and 1945 by focusing on the treatment of the symphony genre in that period. The book is divided into three main sections: writings about the symphonies of Gustav Mahler and Anton Bruckner at the fin de siècle; writings about the same figures between 1914 and 1933; and symphonic traditions under the National Socialists, primarily the compositions of Paul Hindemith and Carl Orff. The author makes extensive use of reviews, editorials, and lengthier critiques to get at the idea of the symphony, and how it changed over that tumultuous forty-five year span. She aims to “recover the listening habits and aesthetic values these writers aspired to instill in the public” and to “explore the debates around exemplary works, controversial and otherwise,” in order to recreate “the politicization of music” that “required a massive discursive effort by critics and biographers, and a willing readership” (2, 5, 3).

Unfortunately, Painter’s aspirations are thwarted by a lack of focus in argument and prose, and an alarming lack of editorial attention. In the introduction, she notes that the terms progressive, liberal, conservative, and nationalist have both aesthetic and political connotations, and that the two sets of meanings are not necessarily aligned (10). In other words, a politically liberal critic may have an aesthetically conservative musical agenda. This is a crucial distinction, but the author is not assiduous in her application of those terms throughout the book, leaving unclear whether the use of a label in a given context refers to a critic’s politics, aesthetics, or both. Given that the point of the book is to examine politicization, this lapse muddies the waters considerably.

Distinguishing between Austrian and German critics is essential as well, but she does not do so consistently beyond the introduction. Symphonic Aspirations is well grounded in hundreds of citations from many different critics, but most of these writers are virtually unknown today. It
is difficult to remember which politically conservative aesthetic liberal was writing for which anti-Semitic newspaper. Thus, the book’s greatest strength—its primary sources—becomes a hindrance. A brief list of critics and newspapers and their known political affiliations would have been enormously helpful.

Non sequiturs and dense prose may be stylistic issues obfuscating valuable insights or symptoms of arguments not yet fully formulated. Either way, the large number of such infelicities indicates that greater editorial intervention was certainly warranted. This irritation aside, the sheer amount of material that Painter invokes demonstrates that musical criticism did, in fact, become politicized across the entire political spectrum—though this conclusion is hardly news. Intrepid readers will find a treasure trove of primary sources, from which they can draw their own conclusions.

Joy H. Calico
Vanderbilt University

*To the Threshold of Power, 1922/33: Origins and Dynamics of the Fascist and National Socialist Dictatorships, Volume 1.* By MacGregor Knox (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007) 448 pp. $75.00 cloth $24.99 paper

This book comes with much advance praise; the back cover is filled with accolades from a number of well-known historians in the field of German and Italian studies. Indeed, much about the work is impressive. Based upon a vast array of literature that reflects the author’s prodigious erudition, this is one of the few books in comparative history that is genuinely comparative rather than just an accumulation of parallel chapters.

However, the analysis is based upon two historiographical postulates that, as Knox himself states, will raise eyebrows among some of his professional peers. The first is that the primary cause of the dynamics of history is war and the pursuit of power. As Knox puts it, “politics and war led the way, society followed” (40). The second is the firm belief that until 1945, Italian and German history constituted a *Sonderweg* in historical development. Although Knox pays lip service to the truism that all societies have their own Sonderweg, he insists that Italy and Germany are unique cases. They were incomplete societies that developed “national myths” of unfulfilled expectations that could be achieved only by war (57).

With these two postulates firmly in mind, Knox proceeds to write the history of Italian Fascism and German National Socialism *à la longue durée*. Reaching far back in history, Knox insists on a centuries-old longing for leaders and followers who would finally take the countries into battle to achieve their unfulfilled expectations. The actual fascists, who do not appear in the book until page 300, provided this element because
World War I had created determined warriors and a “technocratic-fanatical Führer” (192).

In pursuing his thesis, Knox depicts his subjects with broad brush strokes. This is not a book of nuances. So far as Knox is concerned, Germany started World War I in order to achieve global supremacy. He states this proposition as a “self-evident truth” (235). Knox clearly sees no merit in the carefully balanced assignment of responsibility for the outbreak of the war that Wasserstein recently advanced.1 Similarly, he portrays Prussia as a “warrior state” of radical nationalism (89). Clark’s recent, more nuanced account of Prussia is not mentioned in the bibliography.2 Moreover, this longing for world domination had far-reaching antecedents. Knox quotes the Reformation figure Ulrich von Hutten to the effect that the Germans were determined to be a “weltherrschendes Volk,” a phrase that Knox translates rather freely as “natural leader of the world” (29).

For both Italy and Germany, World War I represented the culmination of their Sonderweg, and national failure. Germany was defeated, and Italy achieved only a mutilated victory. In both cases, the national myths decreed that democracy would be a failure and a renewed war inevitable; Italian Fascism and National Socialism were the answer to the fulfillment of the national myths. In the final analysis, the military in both countries brought the radical right to power. In 1922 and 1933, the military leadership determined that Italy and Germany needed the Fascists and the Nazis in order to prepare the two countries for the next war (379).

Is this tour de force persuasive? In some ways, it is. The military certainly played a major role in Germany and Italy, and frustration with the outcome of World War I in both countries is undeniable. It is problematical, however, to link these developments exclusively to centuries-old national myths. Knox does not ascribe much significance to economic factors in history. He claims that the Germans voted for Hitler because of his radical nationalism, not because of the effects of the Depression. To achieve his purpose, the author engages in some careful culling of the evidence. For example, he allows for virtually no German Enlightenment. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing does not appear in the narrative or the index, but the minor nationalist poet Emanuel Geibel does. Moreover, Heinrich Class, who liked to think of himself as a major mover and shaker, would be pleased with his portrayal in this book. According to Knox, he exemplified the sentiments of all German Bildungsbürger.

In pursuit of his thesis, Knox also permits himself a few linguistic liberties that, on balance, weaken rather than strengthen his argument.

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He consistently uses the word *Führer* when writing about German political leaders. Though *Führer* certainly means leader, for most English speakers, the term immediately evokes Adolf Hitler. Hence, to describe Bismarck as a Führer is to suggest that he was an earlier incarnation of the Nazi leader. Similarly, to translate the word *Lager* as “armed camp” adds a gratuitous and misleading adjective that is not part of the original noun (136). After all, a *Ferienlager* is simply a vacation camp site. To take one final example, a *Gericht* can mean either a court of justice or, irrelevant in this context, a dish of food. It is certainly not a “place of execution” (153).

Overall, this book is in many ways an impressive achievement, but it is also a picture painted starkly in black and white tones. Some shades of color might have made the argument more persuasive.

Dietrich Orlow
Boston University


This significant monograph supersedes a plethora of treatments of premodern East Slavic identity. Rarely is a study so judicious in its evaluation of primary sources in the original languages as it is ambitious in scope. Plokhy seamlessly interweaves analysis of medieval chronicles and early modern diplomatic sources with critical evaluation of the grand narratives that have become central to the identities of modern Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians.

The first three chapters of the book are devoted to medieval identities. Plokhy challenges the notion of an Old Rus’ nationality, dismissing the simplistic visions of ancient unity and continuous fraternal feelings that were promoted by Soviet historians. The next three chapters analyze the identity projects of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries. Significant attention is devoted to early modern identities in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the shifts in political loyalties that resulted from post-Reformation religious policies and polemics. Plokhy proves that the paradigm of reunification of lost Rus’ lands that was central to both imperial Russian and Soviet historiography finds little support in the diplomatic documents of the period.

In the final section of the book, Plokhy argues that although some Ukrainian intellectuals advanced a vision of a Little Russian fatherland that excluded Russians and Belarusians from their imagined community, others played a central role in shaping the “all-Russian identity” that pervaded the Russian imperial project. Much of what modern Russians believe about their nation, origins, and affinities to other East Slavs can
be traced to intellectual constructs first articulated in early modern Ukraine.

Because this book will serve as a foundation for all future studies, a few minor omissions should be noted. The sections on medieval history would have benefited from consideration of several studies by Henryk Paszkiewicz, who ably covered similar ground in the mid-twentieth century. Belarus’ recedes into the background after 1654, and the intellectual trends of late seventeenth-century Muscovy are not traced in depth. Later chapters offer little treatment of popular identifies and the kinds of sources that allow historians to access them (petitions, interrogations, court cases, etc.).

The only major criticism pertains to the author’s contention that early modern Russians lacked a developed ethnonational vocabulary to distinguish themselves and their people (see especially 216, 235). Abundant examples of vocabulary related to nations and national identity can be documented decades before the Petrine period, and the influence of Western concepts in shaping Russian national identity can be traced to seventeenth-century translations of European newspapers, German cosmographies, and Polish histories.

This book will become essential reading for anyone seeking to understand the premodern roots of modern divisions in Eastern Europe. Scholars interested in the historiography of the Middle Ages and early modern era, as well as in religion, identity, and nation-building, will find in this book a nuanced story of the mutual invention, complicated interaction, and cultural construction that has influenced East Slavic politics and self-perceptions for hundreds of years.

Brian J. Boeck
DePaul University


“The Soviet state placed children’s affairs at the heart of its political legitimacy” (1), Kelly observes, but her book shows how their actual achievements fell far short of producing, as it claimed, “the happiest children in the world.” Children’s World is an encyclopedic, meticulously researched, cultural history of Russian childhood from the last years of the Russian empire through the fall of the Soviet Union. Although Kelly’s subject and sources are genuinely interdisciplinary, her argument and approach are traditionally historical. She combed government archives for information on education, orphanages, social services, juvenile delinquency, and the changing legal status of children; conducted personal interviews; mined memoir literature; and studied children’s literature, theater and film, children’s games and leisure activities, and childbirth/child rearing. A major virtue of the book is its more than
100 illustrations, ranging from rare archival photographs to propaganda posters.

Part I, “Imagining Childhood,” is an overview of “ideologies” of childhood in four historical periods: the prerevolutionary years (1891–1917), the early utopian years (1917–1935), high Stalinism (1935–1953), and post-Stalinism. Part II, “Children on Their Own,” examines the response of government and society to the waves of street waifs and orphans resulting from famine, revolution, purges, and war. Traditional Russian reluctance to adopt, and economic constraints that made life difficult for everyone, only worsened the plight of children who found themselves without the crucial support of biological parents. Part III, “Family Children,” which is organized around four stages of childhood development, is, in many ways, the most engaging material; it deals with the lived experience of most of Russia’s children. Class differences between the rural peasantry, the urban working class, and the educated middle class remained far more important than government policies. Ethnicity—Kelly mentions only the Jews and Tatars in addition to the dominant Russians—also played a major role. Her conclusion, “The End of Childhood?” discusses “coming of age”—morally, educationally, and sexually.

Child-rearing traditions passed from one generation of mothers to the next proved extremely resilient, despite the huge political convulsions that transformed Russia. Immediately after the revolution, the young Soviet state attempted to “medicalize” childbirth and “rationalize” the process of child rearing, aiming to reduce Russia’s disgracefully high rate of infant mortality. Maternity hospitals, children’s medical clinics, nurseries, and day-care centers were decreed, but underfunding made them scarce, even late into the Soviet period. Despite government propaganda, unhygienic practices persevered in some villages well into the middle of the twentieth century. Kelly is well aware of the regional, class, and historical differences of Soviet children’s experience and chary of generalizations linking specific practices, like swaddling, to national character. Rather, she offers a path-breaking book with a wealth of information from which others can draw their own conclusions and further research.

Jane A. Taubman
Amherst College


This welcome contribution to the history of the 1917 Russian revolution uses a comparative study of two Volga River provinces, Nizhnii Novgorod and Kazan, to explore the responses of “ordinary people”—
workers, peasants, townspeople, rural intellectuals, soldiers, and soldiers’ wives—to the political and economic challenges of the revolution. The study builds on a long history of scholarship; generously synthesizing the contributions of both Western and Soviet historians, Badcock adds evidence from an impressive mining of local archival and newspaper sources.

Using the methods of political and social history, Badcock organizes her book thematically. Chapters about the dissemination of narratives chronicling the February revolution and about efforts to “enlighten” the ordinary people of the provinces show the divergence between the interests of central revolutionary authorities and that of local populations. A case study of the populist Socialist Revolutionary Party in the two provinces indicates the shallowness of political identification, serving to caution historians to be wary of inferring “political opinion” from voting patterns in 1917. A chapter about soldiers emphasizes the violent potential of armed and disaffected reserves who answered to no authority and who contributed to the mounting breakdown of civic order in provincial towns and in the countryside.

Finally, Badcock looks at two of the most central political problems of 1917—the redistribution of land and the shortage of food. The two provinces differed in their economic status, but Badcock importantly emphasizes that the differences within provinces were much greater than those between provinces. Kazan province, in particular, was an ethnically diverse region. She notes also that the difference between provincial towns—with their overwhelmingly Russian populations—and their rural hinterlands was also more significant in shaping local responses than was the gap between center and “periphery.” Local heterogeneity makes generalizations sometimes difficult; Badcock duly notes considerable (but not systematic) variations across the two provinces.

Nonetheless, the evidence that Badcock presents clearly shows a huge gulf between the interests of the central government and those of the ordinary people in the provinces so far as land and food supply were concerned. The revolutionaries evinced a strong opposition to private property, that of both big landowners and “improving” peasants who had chosen to separate their farmsteads from the collective before 1914. Through legal means, new democratic institutions, intimidation, and occasionally violence, land in these two provinces became socialized, despite the opposition of their governments. Similarly, local residents rejected central decrees relating to the grain monopoly and took the marketing and distribution of foodstuffs into their own hands.

Badcock emphasizes throughout that what appeared to central observers as “dark” and “unconscious” behavior by ordinary people was in fact rational and calculating. What drove a wedge between “elites” and “people” in 1917 was not the ignorance of the people, but the significant conflicts of interest between a strong central government and provincial populations, which sought local solutions to local problems. In this way, Badcock reinforces the prevailing wisdom that the revolutionary process of 1917 led to unbridgeable polarization between those
with power and those without it. Her important contribution is to demonstrate how this process worked from the perspective of the latter group, which had its own logical agendas.

Badcock is careful not to stray beyond her carefully assembled evidence. Nonetheless, her book suggests certain interesting continuities with Soviet-era policies that are usually blamed on the Bolsheviks but seem to have grown out of the larger political and social conflict begun in 1917: a hostility to the market but also to forced grain requisitions; an antipathy toward the richer peasants (labeled by Badcock as “separators” rather than “kulaks”); popular indifference to democratic institutions and processes; the marginalization of women from the class of political actors; and, finally, the ungovernability of vast stretches of the Russian lands.

Diane P. Koenker
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign


In the 1990s, Serbian nationalism turned deadly. The question still motivating historians is why? Where did this potent brand of nationalism come from? Was it simmering beneath the surface ready to explode? Was it ingrained in the Serbian ethos? Defying conventional wisdom, Miller answers these last two questions with a resounding “no.” In his innovative study of the development of Serbian nationalist thought from the 1940s to the 1990s, he persuasively argues that Serbian nationalism developed as the intellectual antidote to Communism. Indeed, it was an ideological response to the real and perceived problems that Serbs faced in Josip Broz Tito’s Yugoslavia.

The Nonconformists sets out to examine the evolution of Serbian nationalism through a prism as intuitive as it is unlikely—writers and artists, figures typically associated with radical politics but less often with the political right. Miller explores how the cultural politics of Communist Eastern Europe created a situation in which certain members of the intelligentsia began to align their arts with a politics reminiscent of everything that culture should not be—repressive, censored, and unyielding. The landscape that he maps centers on three Serbian intellectuals from the same cultural milieu—Dobrica Ćosić, a novelist and well-known supporter of Slobodan Milošević; Mića Popović, a painter; and Borislav Mihaljović Mihiz, a playwright and literary critic.

Miller opens his study with portraits of these intellectuals during the early decades of Tito’s Yugoslavia, through which he analyzes the nuanced shifts in each man’s art and politics as the economic, political, and social landscape of Serbia transformed. He draws from methods of political and intellectual history, as well as cultural analysis, art history,
and literary criticism, producing a model of interdisciplinary scholarship. He then integrates these elegant portraits with the book’s middle chapters, which explore how, by the late 1960s and early 1970s, each intellectual—and by extension, a segment of the Serbian elite—became disillusioned with Titoism’s repression, intolerance, and failed promises of social equality. The moment and causes of disillusionment differed for each man, but the results were the same—a turn toward some form of Serbian nationalism.

But this nationalism, Miller contends, should be considered a process, rather than a fixed category. Although the eventual outcome is no mystery—a form of nationalism that set the stage for carrying out genocide—Miller does not rush toward this conclusion. Instead, he disaggregates the intellectual processes that contributed to the radicalization of Serbian national ideology throughout the 1980s. Most prominently, he explores how the intellectual movement for freedom of expression, tolerance, and anti-corruption dangerously combined with an emerging Serbian complex of victimization. Miller points to Kosovo as the catalyst for this convergence, turning the intellectual debates political and becoming the principal symbol of Serbian victimhood. Thus did it transform the movement “from a pure—perhaps overly pure—emphasis on the principle of free expression to a cathartic embrace of Kosovo as a reaction of all the ills faced by Serbia and even Yugoslavia” (277). Miller emphasizes that it is not his intent to create sympathy for the nationalists but to understand why some Serbs viewed Milošević and the radical nationalist movement as a solution to the oppression that they felt in Yugoslavia. He does so superbly.

The Nonconformists is not a fast-paced book; it is nearly impossible to skim. Every chapter—indeed, every page—contributes to Miller’s narrative about the processes of nationalist transformation. By examining the gradual shifts in this transformation, Miller convincingly demonstrates that radical nationalism was neither intrinsic to the Serbian psyche nor a fait accompli. Those who believe Miller’s argument (as I do) will agree that this process is destined to continue. “Perhaps,” as Miller concludes hopefully, the next ideological turn will be toward something “more humane.”

Emily Greble Balić
New York University


This work is a full-bore investigation into the lifeways of the Huron-Petun (or Wendat-Tionontaté), who inhabited the region between Lakes Huron and Ontario from at least the mid-first millennium until they ceased to exist as a separate entity in the 1650s. The emphasis is on the archaeological recovery and interpretation of evidence—the only
possible source before the sixteenth century. Based on the number, and size, of sites discovered that can be attributed to this group, Warrick concludes that the Huron-Petun population remained fairly steady, even after the introduction of maize cultivation, until the fourteenth century when the group expanded and the population increased, reaching a maximum of around 30,000.

This level remained much the same until the seventeenth century, when all kinds of catastrophes began to visit the Huron-Petun. For Warrick, this run of misfortune does not include the onset of European epidemic diseases, at least not at first and not directly. The arrival of the Europeans, however, helped to create a domino effect, in which the Iroquois were constrained to move ever westward, seeking new sources for new trading opportunities. But, at this time, “there is no archaeological evidence for catastrophic depopulation” (204), from any cause. When the first Old World diseases struck during the 1630s, abruptly and dramatically, things took a distinct turn for the worst. In less than twenty years, the Huron-Petun lost more than 60 percent of their population and were dispersed and integrated into neighboring groups.

Warrick attributes this delayed effect to the fact that few children were born to Europeans in the northeast until well after 1600, and that earlier-arriving adults did not carry the requisite pathogens, which died en route. He does not fail to note that his position contradicts the early-and-often scenarios that some scholars have advanced—although their version has proved less popular in the Northeast than in many other areas of the Americas.

Warrick’s conclusions are partly based on contemporary documentation—or sometimes the lack of it—but, as noted, most heavily on archaeological data. He believes that “[c]ase studies, such as this one, are the only means of resolving the problem of Native American depopulation” (5), but his notion seems to be unduly sanguine. For instance, Warrick bases his estimate of the pre-epidemic Tionontaté population on “[a]rchaeological and inferred but undiscovered site totals” (222), a fair way of admitting that archaeologists always work with undetermined—and undeterminable—parts of possibly much larger wholes. Archaeology can contribute at the level of orders of magnitude, but it is hard to see how it could credibly do much more toward solving the thorny quantitative issues that cluster around American Indian population and depopulation beginning in 1492 with any degree of precision.

Nonetheless, as an intensive study of a small but centrally located group, Population History is particularly useful in dispelling prevailing notions about the rapid and unrestrained spread of highly mortal diseases. The work also exemplifies well the daunting amount of work that lies ahead for those who wish to learn more about the course of history in the pre-contact Americas.

David Henige
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Between 1715 and 1718, an alliance of southeastern Indian groups orchestrated attacks across South Carolina, killing more than 400 British settlers, and transforming the southern political landscape for the remainder of the eighteenth century. Ramsey’s examination of the causes, tactics, and effects of the Yamasee War is the first book-length treatment of the subject. By focusing on a war that was waged by Native American groups who were deeply involved in South Carolina’s commodity and Indian slave trade, Ramsey is able to investigate the dynamics of the Atlantic market on the peripheries, the relationship between trade and diplomacy, Native American alliance networks, and the rise of a racialized slave system. Within these realms of intercultural exchange, Ramsey examines the interplay between cultural systems and historical contingencies.

Ramsey’s methodology hinges on tracing “an evolving, multifaceted series of discussions among Indians, Africans, and the English in an effort to understand the multitude of choices that transformed the South” (9). In Chapter 1, Ramsey argues that prior to the war, discussions between English traders and Native Americans were strained by differing assumptions about gender, debt, and slavery. For the remainder of the book, however, he shifts his focus to market and diplomatic contingencies, more than entrenched cultural differences, in an attempt to understand the dynamics of the war. Constrictions of credit and the Atlantic market, which could now handle only deerskins from southeastern Indians who were used to trading a variety of skins and furs, put Native Americans at a sudden economic disadvantage, creating widespread discontent. The South Carolina government’s failure to address their complaints consistently, and particularly its inability to unify the voices of its Indian agents, sparked the Yamasee attack. Ramsey’s excavation of the tactics and alliance systems cultivated during the Yamasee War reveal the complex interplay of cultural, historical, ethnic, and local factors.

The Yamasee War transformed South Carolina plantation organization and racial ideologies. Using wills and postmortem probate records, Ramsey calculates that at its height before the war, Native Americans comprised 25 percent of the enslaved population, a number that would drop to 2 to 3 percent after the war. The fluidity of Native Americans’ slave status, their continued relationship with free Native Americans, and government-coerced manumissions due to diplomatic pressure always made them a problematical slave source. During the war, colonists began to view their Indian slaves as potential enemies. They later extended these race-based fears to their black slave majority.

After the war, southeastern Indians gained an unprecedented amount of power, marking a period of “vibrant interaction” and “intense struggles to influence the new terms of engagement,” in which...
diplomatic concerns about commodity prices, transport, and alliances trumped market forces (184). Ultimately, however, these interactions did not transform either party; Native American and English groups continued to maintain their separate identities and pursue distinct objectives. This understanding of intercultural exchange is consistent with the interpretations offered by White and Merrell.¹

Ramsey’s lack of direct engagement with theories of cultural change is the only disappointing aspect of this book. For example, readers might wonder why Native American slaves assimilated to African and English cultures while free Native Americans, who had constant contact with white traders and consumed European goods, preferred to maintain their traditional culture. A discussion of these two diverging situations would have added to this outstanding book and made it even more useful for an interdisciplinary readership.

Jessica Ross Stern
California State University, Fullerton


How people have perceived themselves as a community, and how identities are related to past allegiances and present circumstances, are essential questions in understanding the forms of resistance and accommodation that have shaped the Black Atlantic. Sidbury explores familiar territory as well as new terrain in examining these questions in the context of the Anglophone North Atlantic. By demonstrating the changing perspective of people of African descent in Britain and North America during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, he successfully grapples with an interpretation of African and African-American thought that puts historical flesh on the conceptual bones of Gilroy’s “Black Atlantic.”¹

Sidbury’s focus is specifically the North Atlantic Anglophone world, with minor consideration of the Anglophone Caribbean or other influences of the broader Black Atlantic. This restricted view is exceedingly rewarding. Sidbury is able to establish that the struggle for cultural identity by people of African birth and African descent in the emergent United States hinged on their identification with Africa. In this astutely reasoned and carefully crafted study, he establishes that enslaved people of African origin who were on a quest for freedom in America sup-


pressed their dispersed origins to identify instead as “Africans,” as reflected in the writings of Africans in Britain and North America as early as the 1760s and 1770s. This evolving pride in African-ness was expressed in various institutional and literary forms throughout the decades of the American Revolution and the early years of the American Republic.

Despite this process of “becoming African in America,” the close affiliation with Africa rapidly dissipated as an intellectual and cultural factor among the free black population of the United States after 1820. Sidbury demonstrates that identity politics among free blacks hinged especially on perceptions of how identity related to abolition, resistance to slavery, and the protection of free status and equal opportunity. Although being African in America had become a source of pride by 1820, such sentiments were suddenly challenged with the rise of the American Colonization Society, which blacks perceived as a mechanism for the deportation of free blacks and former slaves, serving to tighten the reigns of slavery on relatives, friends, and others among the downtrodden enslaved population with which the free black population sympathized. To identify with Africa suddenly became a sign of betrayal to brethren still in cruel bondage. Becoming a resilient community in America now meant to identify as “colored,” not African.

Sidbury draws on a variety of sources, familiar and unfamiliar stories, and scholarly discourses to weave together his arguments about how the concept of “Africa” emerged and changed in North America. As the title suggests, he consciously plays with the concept of “Black Atlantic,” as advanced by Gilroy and critiqued by subsequent historians. Because he is concerned with self-perceptions of identity, Sidbury uses the classic texts—Cugoano, Wheatley, Equiano/Vassa, and Venture Smith—on both sides of the Anglophone North Atlantic. He then shows when and where “African” churches and “African” Masonic lodges were established, and how their racial segregation was cast in a nationalist and diasporic framework that ultimately extended to the colonies of former slaves in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

His study of Paul Cuffe is especially important in helping to establish the broad contours of a black Atlantic identity. Sidbury establishes how identity as “African” emerged at a specific period and in a clearly defined context that was associated with the fight against slavery and the slave trade, and that this phenomenon of diaspora identity crossed the Atlantic. By exploring the many leaders of the black community in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and elsewhere, Sidbury follows the inter-

woven odyssey of black survival and determination during the decades of the New Republic.

Sidbury argues that the minds of the black community changed almost overnight, in a manner that temporarily left the leadership of the emergent community at odds with the sentiments of the community as a whole. Opposition to the American Colonization Society, specifically, propelled the free black community to adopt a common platform that championed fighting slavery in the United States. The shift was a mass reaction against deportation in favor of confrontation. Sidbury suggests that this shift marked the period from c. 1820 to 1850 when the Fugitive Slave Law was enforced, thus elaborating his concern with establishing particular periods of intellectual and cultural identification in the United States and inevitably the racial politics of the nation.

Sidbury handles his data well, whether drawing from well-known figures like Wheatley and Equiano, exploring the intricate interactions between Nova Scotians and Maroons with the Temne in Sierra Leone, or establishing the context for the politics of Liberian settlement. This finely nuanced and rewardingly insightful study is a fine product of the new historiography of the Black Atlantic.

Paul E. Lovejoy
York University

*Passion Is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution.* By Nicole Eustace (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2008) 613 pp. $45.00

In this provocative study, Eustace boldly advances a “history of eighteenth-century American emotion”(3). Although the results occasionally do not fulfill the initial promise, she earns high marks for demonstrating not only that the social grammar of feelings and passions is a fruitful field of study but also that insights into the contested meaning of common emotions contributed to the coming of the American Revolution. Eustace argues that ordinary people developed subtle rhetorical strategies in which appeals to emotions—such as love, anger, grief and sympathy—allowed them to manipulate, even to resist, those who held real power. She has taken on a huge topic, and to make it manageable, she decided to focus principally on the emotional landscape of colonial Pennsylvania.

Eustace has no time for the Enlightenment with its universalizing claims for reason. She insists that by concentrating almost exclusively on abstract philosophical concepts—discussions of classical republicanism and the liberalism of John Locke, for example—historians have short-changed the role of emotion in how people claimed and contested social status. In support of her position, she provides strikingly original read-
ings of a wide range of documents. Eustace moves confidently from poetry to letters, from formal government reports to newspaper articles. Whatever the source, she exposes subtle linguistic strategies. As she explains, people in Pennsylvania “expended considerable effort deciding how to describe their own emotions and those of others according to the social ranks and relations they wished to establish” (14).

Everyone in Pennsylvania seemed to know the conventions governing these emotional exchanges. Not surprisingly, members of the colonial elite insisted that ordinary colonists should control expressions of anger and behave like proper gentlemen. Those living on the frontier adopted a different perspective, asserting either that rage signaled genuine masculinity or demanding that the leaders of society voice real sympathy for their suffering. Rulers softened direct commands through a rhetoric of love and sympathy.

So innovative and ambitious an approach inevitably raises questions. Eustace’s analyses of the evidence often seems strained, turning on readings so subtle that one wonders from time to time whether the people that she is studying could possibly have understood how their own rhetorical strategies served to subvert shared cultural conventions. Take, for example, her claim that the Paxton Boys—Scotch-Irish settlers who had just murdered Native American prisoners in cold blood—“appreciated the subtle social signals encoded in the vocabulary of anger” (342). Sometimes the people in this book seem to have been players engaged in a complex game, in which the players who knew the rules made moves and countermoves, trumped the emotional claims of opponents, and exposed rhetorical contradictions. One cannot help but wonder whether their emotional contests involved more substantive elements. Greater attention to the real theological differences separating the various Protestant sects in Pennsylvania—especially those of evangelical persuasion who celebrated religious enthusiasm—would have added an important dimension to our comprehension of the rules of emotional expression.

Finally, since Pennsylvania, like the rest of the eighteenth-century Atlantic world, was undergoing a radical commercial transformation—de Vries’ “industrious revolution”—we might have expected Eustace to devote attention to such troublesome passions as greed, covetousness, and envy.¹ Channeling selfish emotions for the common good was not specifically a Pennsylvanian problem or an American problem; it was the major challenge confronting the age.

T. H. Breen
Northwestern University

"Contextual history," McMichael explains, permits the sources and actors to dictate the type of history written—be it political, legal, social, etc. The objective is to provide “a more integrated sense of the ways in which people of the time saw their world” (7). The result in this work is a series of topical chapters supporting a thesis similar to those of Woody Holton in *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves, and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia* (Chapel Hill, 1999) and Leslie Hall in *Land and Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia* (Athens, 2001). That is, the former British, French, and especially newly immigrated Americans in West Florida were loyal to the Spanish regime because it offered ready access to land and a stable political and social environment for slave holders. When those conditions changed after 1803, so, in time, did the loyalty of the American residents of the Felicianas, the district between Baton Rouge and Mississippi’s southern border. Whether the picture that emerges is “a more integrated sense of the ways in which people of the time saw their world” is doubtful.

The work opens with a two-chapter, mostly economic history of Spanish West Florida before 1803. Based in large part on the Pintado Papers at the Library of Congress, sales documents in the so-called West Florida records held at Baton Rouge, and relevant secondary sources, these chapters deal primarily with land grants and sales (contrasting West Florida with Kentucky) and slavery (the means, along with land, to wealth). The rest of the work takes up the story in 1803.

McMichael finds that neither the United States’ assertion that West Florida was part of the Louisiana Purchase, nor the Kemper raids of 1804 and other filibustering, nor the operation of Spanish slave law—which Americans must have found strange, if not unsettling, because it afforded slaves legal rights unknown in English America—seriously disturbed this loyalty. Loyalty began to erode with the Spanish decision in late 1804 almost to stop granting land to new immigrants, and with the inability of the government to stop a crime wave that arose because criminals could enter the province from Mississippi and Louisiana or escape to those places. Moreover, land prices in the Felicianas fell even as they rose in other parts of the province.

Loyalty took a fatal blow in the multifaceted political crisis that began with the U.S. Embargo Act of 1807, deepened when Napoleon seized Spain in 1808, and reached acute proportions when Carlos de Grand Pré, a beloved local governor, was removed from office on the suspicion of being too friendly with a French envoy. Carlos Dehault de Lassus, his replacement, was, by all accounts, a corrupt, obtuse official who irritated residents. The West Florida Republic that lasted from September to December 1810 was the result.

The strengths of this work are a quantitative study of the chief com-
plaints of the residents at their initial assembly in July 1810; the section on crime and another on the difficulty that “men of character” had in obtaining land (128); a sophisticated, sympathetic presentation of how the Spanish legal and governmental systems worked; and a correction of the errors of earlier studies of the revolt. Yet the quantitative work has problems. Readers may wonder whether the sixteen major crimes reported between 1805 and 1810—nine of which were committed by persons from outside of the province who had crossed into it or by persons who fled across “the line” into U.S. territory to escape prosecution (Tables 12 and 13, 132–133)—were as significant a cause of unrest as McMichael suggests.

Furthermore, his discussion of the land issue (142–148) does not explore why Feliciana sales were so numerous from 1803 to 1804 and from 1806 to 1810 (207 n. 74), when prices were falling in that district; nor does it discover who authorized the change in Spanish land policy after 1804 that McMichael credits with the price rise elsewhere. Nor does he link this changing pattern of land prices to the fortunes or participation of particular individuals in the rebellion, which he shows was almost entirely the work of Felicianos.

In the end, McMichael’s thesis rests on shaky logical ground, even if it seems plausible. Nonetheless, this important addition to the literature of the so-called Spanish Borderlands and the early history of the South holds out the promise that further, highly detailed research can reveal even more about this neglected area of our common history.

Paul E. Hoffman
Louisiana State University

America’s Three Regimes: A New Political History. By Morton Keller (New York, Oxford University Press, 2007) 336 pp. $27.95

This brisk and informative book offers a sweeping new perspective that organizes the United States’ political past into three “regimes” encompassing the colonial period to the present. This framework allows Keller to emphasize long stretches of continuity and the survival of earlier political forms disrupted by powerful hammer blows of successive events. It took the Revolution and subsequent developments through the War of 1812 for the polity to depart from the colonial era’s “deferential-republican” regime and, by the 1830s, to assume the form of a “party-democratic” regime that lasted to the 1930s. From that point to the present, Keller proposes, political life has been governed by a “populist-bureaucratic” regime.

Keller devotes about a dozen pages to the colonial regime that was influenced both by Old World attitudes to power (deference) and the New World colonists’ inexorable movement to self-government. The Revolution, independence, and the Constitution then fixed republican
governance on the new nation. Subsequently, the “torrents of change that swept over America from the 1770s to the 1830s created a new regime, party-dominated in form, democratic in culture. This regime persisted in ‘deeply embedded permanence’ for a century, in the face of the Civil War, the rise of the world’s largest industrial economy, and profound transformations of American society and culture” (67).

Applying the term regime to colonial politics seems slightly incongruous as an umbrella to capture the diversity of colonial societies. Regime suggests a controlling overlord, a central authority of some kind. Later in the book, Keller uses the term political culture in reference to his second and third regimes, and it could easily, and more appropriately, be applied to the first phase of his story as well.

Our current regime is populist because “public affairs are defined increasingly by voices outside the party-political apparatus—the media, advocacy groups, experts, bureaucrats, judges—who claim to speak for particular social interests or for the people at large.” Its bureaucratic character derives from a reliance “on government agencies and the courts to define and enforce public policy. . . . More, and more powerful, administrative agencies are a major part of the new bureaucratic regime.” Just as the populist impulse vies with and displaces political parties as the “primary definers of public policy, so have bureaucrats and judges sought to displace politicians as the primary dispensers of public power” (202).

Readers of this journal will appreciate the use that Keller makes of political-science scholarship, though his narrative is grounded mostly in the work of historians. Keller differs with many historians, however, in rejecting the party-systems approach to nineteenth-century politics. It holds that significant voter and party realignments took place during the 1850s and 1890s. As noted earlier, Keller argues for a 100-year “party-democratic regime” that extended from the 1830s to the 1930s. Yet his bird’s-eye view of American politics is not necessarily incompatible with the realignment concept that disaggregates his trinity of regimes.

America’s Three Regimes is entertaining reading, written in a clear and lively style and packed with fresh insights, along with fruitful comparisons with English (and to a lesser extent European) politics. But a brief tour of our political past from colonial settlement to the present is bound to gloss over many subjects. Moreover, Keller’s accounts of events occasionally reflect a lack of acquaintance with recent literature or conflict with it. This reviewer would have a long list of such disagreements in areas of his familiarity, from the description of traditional agrarian populist movements of the 1780s and 1790s to the linking of urban riots in African–American ghettos to federal action on school desegregation (36, 41, 58, 59 for the populist movements, 268 for the riots). The urban discontent began in 1964, and desegregation not seriously until 1969/70.

To be fair, much of Keller’s loose treatment of specific events results from his decision to condense and concentrate on his larger thesis. Given
his focus on the state, however, it is necessary to question his discussion
of the weakness of the antebellum federal state as a cause of the Civil
War. He neglects to discuss the defense of slavery by southerners and the
Jacksonian Democrats of the antebellum decades as a major cause of the
federal government remaining weak.

The most provocative, if not controversial, section of *Three Regimes*
is Keller’s discussion of populist-bureaucratic political culture from the
1930s to the present. The problem begins with the various meanings of
the often-abused concept of *populist* or *populism*. To repeat, in Keller’s
view, our present regime qualifies as populist to the extent that “voices
outside the party-political apparatus” “claim to speak” for the country’s
population—the operative phrase being “claim to speak,” which, in
every case, requires scrutiny. Modern populist politics, he adds, focuses
on how power “can be used . . . to enforce and enhance the rights of in-
dividuals and groups.” But Keller also quotes approvingly the statement
that populist politics is “as much a matter of style as substance” (202).

Most historians can agree, as Kazin pointed out in *The Populist Per-
suasion*, that populist rhetoric and style had been adopted by political
leaders (and advertisers) all across the political and social spectrum. As a
*New York Times* columnist observed on the death of Senator Paul Well-
stone, a genuine populist, “Almost every politician in modern America
pretends to be a populist; indeed, it’s a general rule that the more slav-
ishly a politician supports the interests of wealthy individuals and big
corporations, the folksier his manner.”

To his credit, Keller recognizes at various points that a populist pol-
itics is not necessarily *democratic* (another slippery concept), or, to put it
differently, populist politics are not necessarily representative, or serving
the public interest, or delivering the greatest good for the greatest num-
ber. He might profitably have expanded on this theme.

A further problem arises from the variation in types of populism—
of the left, of the right, and of a mixture of the two. Not until late in his
account, and only in passing, does Keller recognize the important dis-

tinction between “conservative populism” and “progressive populism”
(276). Nor does he employ the equally useful term *reactionary populism*.

These conceptual issues, however, will not necessarily attract seri-
ous dissatisfaction with Keller’s account of politics during the last few
decades. Given the sweep of his account, and the amount of material
that it covers in a brief compass, he might fairly counter that any objec-
tions deriving from minor lapses or practical choices would amount to
nitpicking. But certain omissions, and some incomplete versions of re-
cent events or processes, are too important to ignore. For example,

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1 Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (New York, 1995); Paul

2 Notwithstanding Keller’s admirably wide-ranging assessments of contemporary politics,
his stance as a moderate, or an observer relatively satisfied with the current state of affairs, will
probably generate far more criticism.
Keller renders an incomplete picture of the role of race and racial politics in American life from the 1950s to the present. The suggestion made by many historians that the establishment’s concern for the nation’s image in the Cold War led it to advocate improved civil rights for African Americans seems reasonable, but Keller dismisses this observation as “conspiratorial” (222). Of much greater import, he hardly mentions the continuing role of southern whites’ reaction to the civil-rights movement and legislation. A powerful connection existed between white racial anger and resentment against various waves of desegregation and the creation of a Republican South in place of the Democratic South that had persisted from the Civil War to the 1960s. The backlash against black protest and progress also heavily influenced northern voter alignments.

Keller reports the massive shift of southern whites from Democratic to Republican voting but leaves out the how and why. Surely he is aware of the books by Carter and Edsall, as well as studies of the decline of the New Deal Coalition and of the “white backlash,” though no mention of them appears in his account. New books by Kruse and Lassiter, most likely too recent for Keller to have included, have added even greater substance and detail to the central place of white racial backlash in the formation of Republican voting suburbs of Southern cities, and indeed, to suburbs elsewhere.3

These issues aside, Keller’s book is valuable, and thought-provoking, demonstrating a sure grasp of most of the larger currents that have shaped American politics. It is an impressive accomplishment as a brief but wide-screen introduction to the entirety of American politics.

Ronald P. Formisano
University of Kentucky


“Popular constitutionalism” is a hot topic among American constitutional theorists. Dismayed at the growing conservative dominance of the Supreme Court, a number of legal academics have challenged the preeminent role that judges have assumed in enforcing constitutional rules. They insist that the ultimate say on constitutional interpretation belongs

to the sovereign people.\textsuperscript{1} This view is sustained by a number of recent histories of antebellum constitutionalism.\textsuperscript{2}

In this work, Fritz, looking at antebellum popular sovereignty, argues that modern Americans no longer understand what was once a vibrant concept that had practical consequences. The framers relied on it to justify shelving the Articles of Confederation and ratifying the new Constitution by processes other than those that it had specified. Fritz rejects the common view that this was a one-time use of a largely rhetorical device. State leaders regularly relied on the sovereignty of the people to justify departures from specified procedures for amending state constitutions. Most state constitutions explicitly affirmed the inherent right of the people to alter or abolish governments by any mode convenient to the public welfare. Constitutional guarantees of the right to assemble and petition for the redress of grievances reflected the notion that the people retained an active right to monitor government.

Most Americans saw popular sovereignty as mandating broad political participation in government and continued scrutiny of it. Public meetings to state grievances and consider how to secure their remedy therefore might presage extra-constitutional action, as they had in the run-up to the American Revolution. Calling popular “conventions” implied even more clearly the ultimate authority of the people over their government. In one of his most important contributions, Fritz recovers the variety of methods that James Madison said the people could use to “interpose” when they believed constitutional principles were being subverted. Such Madisonian interpositions were not “nullifications” of government action but interventions calculated to challenge the offending measures.

Americans divided over the legitimacy of such active exercises of popular sovereignty. A conservative minority insisted that popular sovereignty was exhausted once it created governments; thenceforth, the people could act only through formal procedures, which need not be pronouncedly democratic. In effect, government, rather than the people, became sovereign. These arguments were reiterated in conflicts ranging from what conservatives called Shays’ Rebellion of 1787 in Massachusetts to the Pennsylvania “Whiskey Rebellion” of 1794 and “Dorr’s Rebellion” of 1842 in Rhode Island. In all of these cases, conservatives denied the legitimacy of the people exercising sovereignty through mass meetings and conventions.


Fritz also closely considers different understandings of popular sovereignty over the United States government. He argues that Madison understood American sovereignty to rest in the people of the states acting collectively. This middle-ground concept faded as rival, polar notions emerged—the view of Daniel Webster that sovereignty resided in a single American people versus John C. Calhoun’s idea that it lay in the people of each state.

In his study, Fritz relies entirely on conventional historical methods. He thoroughly investigates published public documents and controversial literature, as well as the historiography of key events. Despite the apparent relevance of his work to controversies concerning popular constitutionalism, however, his sole discussion of the concept occurs in the epilogue, and then only to distinguish the broad conception of collective sovereignty that he resurrected from the popular constitutionalism described by other legal scholars. Constitutional theorists will be disappointed in this failure to engage the theoretical literature. Only a short section of the epilogue deals with “jurisprudential implications” (296). Fritz briefly contends that if the Supreme Court properly understood Madison’s ideas of federalism, it would have utilized different reasoning to overturn state-imposed term limits on elected members of Congress. If it understood the original concept of popular sovereignty, it would concede greater authority to the people to decide disputes between branches of government, and it would abandon its claim to judicial supremacy over constitutional controversies. But he concedes that “the collective sovereign today has no practical role to play in the operation of government” (298).

American Sovereigns can be cited by theorists challenging present-day judicial supremacy in constitutional interpretation. It is a good history retrieving long-lost understandings of the American constitutional system. But it is traditional in its approach and circumspect in suggesting present-day implications. It does not seem to have been conceived as an interdisciplinary project, and it must be judged for its significant contribution to history rather than for other purposes.

Michael Les Benedict
Ohio State University

Entrepreneurs in the Southern Upcountry: Commercial Culture in Spartanburg, South Carolina, 1845–1880. By Bruce W. Eelman (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 2008) 313 pp. $42.95

Most southern historians would likely agree that in the era since World War II, the two most influential students of the region’s nineteenth-century history were Genovese and Woodward. Among the many achievements made by these two men was to get other scholars to talk

1 See, for instance, Eugene D. Genovese, The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Econ-
about subjects and themes in which they themselves were interested. In the case of Genovese, one of the principal themes involved the nature of antebellum southern society, particularly whether or not the region’s economy should be characterized as capitalist and the degree to which free inhabitants of the South conformed with, or at least aspired to, emerging bourgeois standards and norms. One of Woodward’s key concerns was the degree to which the Civil War represented a distinct break in the region’s history, demarcating an Old South from a New South, each with its own character, class structure, and, ultimately, *raison d’être*.

Scholars have been arguing about these issues for decades, and, not surprisingly, parts of Genovese’s and Woodward’s positions have come under fire. Few critics, however, have challenged both Genovese and Woodward in one work. In that regard alone, Eelman’s *Entrepreneurs in the Southern Upcountry* is worthy of note. That Eelman’s study has a number of other virtues adds to its importance.

Although nineteenth-century South Carolina has been the subject of a number of important studies over the years, most concentrate on the low country rather than the upcountry, Eelman’s area of interest. Moreover, in focusing primarily on “commercial culture” and “town classes”—merchants, bankers, entrepreneurs, lawyers, physicians, etc.—Eelman distinguishes himself further from most students of South Carolina’s history in the nineteenth century, who have devoted their attention primarily to planters and slaves and, to a lesser extent, yeoman farmers. Eelman’s revisionism completes the process of scholarly differentiation.

Challenging parts of Genovese’s interpretive scheme, Eelman contends that, by and large, the free population in Spartanburg County in northwestern South Carolina and in the town of Spartanburg was market-oriented, responding rationally and relatively vigorously to market signals and signs. From almost the outset, in fact, the small town of Spartanburg, in particular, was home to a significant number of enterprising entrepreneurs who, throughout the antebellum period, promoted a developmental agenda that included support for infrastructural improvements, manufacturing, economic diversification, public education, and legal reform. Interestingly enough, this agenda was promoted, according to Eelman, not to undermine the slave economy but to render it more sustainable through a thoroughgoing process of modernization.

The fact that this agenda did not gain a great deal of traction in the Spartanburg area during the antebellum period owed much, the author claims, to the profits possible by producing cotton and to opposition from low-country planters, who dominated politics in South Carolina. For the record, Genovese would not necessarily disagree with such claims, which could be construed as supporting his overall interpretation of the antebellum South, even if they force some modest concessions re-

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Regarding the prevalent economic ideology of the upcountry and the agenda of the upcountry bourgeoisie.

Things were different in the postbellum period, however, when much of the modernizing agenda espoused by Spartanburg’s entrepreneurial class was adopted. Thanks to Woodward, among others, we long have known about the surge of railroad construction and the rise of manufacturing in the upcountry in the decades after Appomattox. But unlike Woodward, Eelman stresses continuity rather than change over the course of the nineteenth century, arguing that little was “new” about either the developmental blueprint for Spartanburg or for those who succeeded in implementing significant portions of it in the 1870s and 1880s.

In this well-researched case study, Eelman makes an important contribution to the historiography of the nineteenth-century South. If he has not relegated Genovese or Woodward to the dustbin of history, he has demonstrated that parts of their arguments need adjustment. With the publication of Entrepreneurs in the Southern Upcountry—along with recent studies by Wells, Byrne, Downey, and Marler, among others—the region’s antebellum merchants and manufacturers are finally beginning to get their due.2

Peter A. Coclanis
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Making San Francisco American: Cultural Frontiers in the Urban West, 1846–1906. By Barbara Berglund (Lawrence, Kansas, University Press of Kansas, 2007) 294 pp. $34.95

At the heart of this study is the concept of “cultural frontiers,” a term Berglund has coined to characterize restaurants, hotels, boarding houses, places of amusement, ethnic neighborhoods, fairs, and exhibitions, “to illuminate how race, class, and gender relations were hammered out in the course of everyday life” (xii). This approach is filled with great promise, recognizing as it does that social relations are either changed or reinforced by micro-level social interactions in particular “sites.” In five chapters, Berglund presents in-depth case studies of hotels, boarding-houses, and restaurants; places of amusement; Chinatown as a tourist destination; the thirty-one Mechanic’s Institute Fairs held between 1857 and 1899; and the 1894 California Midwinter International Exhibition. Drawing primarily upon published periodical accounts of these sites, Berglund makes many original empirical contributions to the history of

2 Jonathan Daniel Wells, The Origins of the Southern Middle Class, 1800–1861 (Chapel Hill 2004); Frank J. Byrne, Becoming Bourgeois: Merchant Culture in the South, 1820–1865 (Lexington, 2006); Tom Downey, Planting a Capitalist South: Masters, Merchants, and Manufacturers in the Southern Interior, 1790–1860 (Baton Rouge, 2006); Scott P. Marler, Merchants and the Political Economy of Nineteenth-Century Louisiana (New York, forthcoming).
San Francisco and effectively demonstrates the importance of such sites for the study of cultural formation.

Berglund’s central thesis is that “order-craving elites and middle classes” worked throughout the period covered to impose “nationally dominant hierarchies” of race, class and gender on San Francisco, to achieve a “transformation from a disorderly boomtown to a well-ordered American Metropolis” (25, 48). Yet, given the well-known fluidity of social identities and relations in the nineteenth-century United States, and the refusal of any American city to become well ordered, Berglund’s overarching interpretive schema is simplistic and improbable. Berglund repeatedly contrasts a “disordered” San Francisco that gradually falls into line with a supposedly “American” pattern, which is never analyzed in its own right. Instead, Berglund effortlessly asserts “nationally dominant social arrangements” (59, also 48, 94, 170, 218), which she places on a unilinear scale, using a ladder metaphor. But as New Western and Chicano historians have amply shown, race/ethnic and gender relations became highly multidirectional in the aftermath of the U.S.-Mexican and Civil Wars, despite the ongoing maintenance of white supremacy. While it is likely that all American social relations were becoming more stratified through World War I, the claim that San Francisco was more confused than the rest of the nation, except during the extreme Gold Rush years from 1849 to 1856, is simply not supported.

Berglund compounds her interpretive errors by casting the problem of class and race as one of relative ordering rather than as identity- and group-formation. She frequently evokes the “middle class” as a stable referent, defying ample scholarship by Blumin and others showing that the boundaries of the American “middle class” were in constant upheaval during the entire nineteenth century.1

Although Berglund’s goal of connecting place making with nation making is sound, her explicit refusal to analyze the “Habermasian public sphere” was a serious oversight, given her own definition of “cultural frontier” (230 n. 19), xii). The riotous, market-driven, multilingual press of San Francisco, with twenty-one dailies in 1880 and every imaginable ideological perspective (in Chinese, French, German, Spanish, and Yiddish), could have served Berglund as more than merely a source of quotations, witnesses, and stories. The discourse of the press is precisely what connects the embodied practices of the urban everyday with “imperial, nation-making processes” (218), by probing and publicizing the social interactions of the semiprivate, semipublic urban places that Berglund correctly identifies as crucial sites of social formation.

Philip J. Ethington
University of Southern California

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1 See Stuart Blumin, The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760–1900 (New York, 1989).
Kiowa Humanity and the Invasion of the State. By Jacki Thompson Rand (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2008) 198 pp. $45.00

In this penetrating book, Rand extends and deepens recent analyses of American Indians subject to U.S. colonialism during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Drawing on the theoretical perspectives of Bourdieu, Thomas, and Appadurai, Rand does not intend to “overlook resistance and agency” but to provide “a more holistic picture that includes the unexpected, life-sustaining outcomes of everyday life routines. . . . that absorb colonial assaults and carry colonized peoples into the future” (7).  

Rand begins with a richly detailed account of the “Kiowa scheme of life” prior to the American invasion, when the Kiowas “enjoyed considerable freedom of movement, an independent means for provisioning themselves, and the sovereign right to advance their own interests and choices” (11). In contrast to Kiowa humanity, the “values of the [American] state” were anything but humane (33). Rand focuses especially on the failure of the federal government to provide adequate food to the Kiowas after the 1867 Treaty of Medicine Lodge Creek. Through an analysis of congressional appropriations data, Rand persuasively concludes, “If the Kiowas possessed nothing more than the government goods they actually received, Kiowas would no longer be in existence today” (49).

How, then, did Kiowas survive? One way was through the labor of young Kiowa men, who raided Texas settlements in the 1860s and 1870s. In contrast to U.S. officials, who criminalized these acts as “depredatations” and interpreted them as manifestations of a cultural disposition toward war, Rand sees raiding as necessary to avoid starvation in a context of declining game and inadequate treaty rations. Kiowa women’s labor was also crucial to survival. Beadwork produced for the tourist trade purchased vital economic resources. Furthermore, whether created for this purpose or for the community, beadwork was a “political act” in that it “defied the U.S. attack on tribalism and ensured that the Kiowas would retain specific traditional forms and patterns of work” (150).

Rand also offers a compelling analysis of men’s cultural production in the form of ledger drawings by Kiowa prisoners at Fort Marion, Florida. Rather than seeing these works of art as “evidence of nostalgia for a disappearing era,” an interpretation “reinforcing the colonizing nation’s narrative,” Rand offers a more subtle reading, suggesting that they “reveal the double consciousness the men carried and contemplated in their own lives, futures, and identities” (103–104).

In contrast to the main currents in American Indian history, Rand insists on seeing Kiowa survival as part of a larger history of genocide in the Americas. She uses the term genocide several times, noting at one point that “Indian people survived... genocide, but were erased from United States history” (9). Though some readers may resist an argument for the pervasiveness of genocide in U.S. history as a return to a discredited historiography of “victimization,” Rand’s account of Kiowa creativity under life-threatening conditions offers a compelling synthesis of agency and oppression, one that asks readers to take genocide seriously while affirming Kiowa—and Native—humanity.

Jeffrey Ostler
University of Oregon


Foglesong’s argument in this study of American efforts to change Russia is straightforward. The cover displays an American soldier with a helmet marked “MP Occupation Forces,” taken from a special 1951 issue of Collier’s magazine devoted to “Russia’s Defeat and Occupation, 1952–60” (107–108). Foglesong begins with “the first crusade” to free Russia from 1881 to 1905 and concludes with an epilogue about the “afterlife of the crusade” in the twenty-first century (7, 219). The assumption is that pre-Soviet critiques of Russia, ranging from outrage at the Siberian exile system and the treatment of Jews to the efforts of Protestant missionaries and promoters of American agricultural machinery, are of a piece with Collier’s special issue, President Reagan’s policies, and the American response to the Soviet collapse.

Foglesong suggests that these connections are made in both the religious rhetoric of would-be improvers of Russia from late nineteenth-century Protestant activists and the policy statements of President Reagan, as well as in the widely held presumption that, under the right conditions, “Russia would emulate the practices and institutions in the United States” (223). The first third of the book concerns the diverse projects of religious activists and missionaries, of political reformers, and of the critics who denounced Russian pogroms and the treatment of Russian Jews. Foglesong also discusses George F. Kennan, early pro-Bolshevik enthusiasts, social reformers reacting to the Great Depression, and William Christian Bullitt, the first U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union. Chapters 5 through 6, which treat the years 1945 to 1974, focus more on policy, as do the remaining Chapters 7 through 9, which treat 1974 to the present.

In this broad sweep, Foglesong tends, with some justification, to conflate Russia with other objects of American efforts to transform the
world. For example, he finds Americans’ initial Russian “crusade” similar to that of “Protestant reformers [who] sought to uplift China, the Philippines, and other countries in Asia” (24). Yet, Russians and Americans have seen each other as global twins and rivals since the early nineteenth century. To ignore this special link is to miss a dialogue involving such figures as Vladimir Nabokov and Ayn Rand (Alice Rosenbaum), as well as John Dewey and Lincoln Steffens, none of whom appear in the index. After all, Alexandr Pushkin read Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* (London, 1835), and James Fennimore Cooper met with Russian aristocrats in Paris who expressed their envy for the freedom that American elites enjoyed.¹

Another problem is Foglesong’s use of sources. His research of American images of Russia is extensive; he documents 229 pages of text with more than 100 pages of notes and bibliography, including a sprinkling of Russian entrees. The detailed and informative notes will be valuable to anyone interested in exploring American attitudes and involvement in Russia. However, Foglesong treats the “crusade” as a near-continuous conversation or discourse in American society and among American elites about how to improve and change Russia. With respect to his observations about policy, this approach can be stimulating. His view of the years 1954 to 1974 as a turning point in U.S. policy, from “liberation” to “liberalization,” makes sense (129), and his evocation of the complaints of David Lawrence, founder of *U.S. News and World Report*, and other advocates of liberation is interesting. Yet, the issue of who conversed with whom and to what end remains murky. For example, to discuss American proponents of “liberation” without considering the role of Americans from Eastern Europe is curious. Nevertheless, the author succeeds in contextualizing American policy in a larger set of discourses and public activities.

Jeffrey Brooks
Johns Hopkins University


In this fascinating new study, McElya explores the power of historical memory, demonstrating how Americans shaped the image of the black mammy figure over time to meet their evolving needs. As McElya correctly notes, the image of the black mammy—the faithful and loving female household slave—was always a fiction. Created during slavery, the mythical mammy figure was an important part of the paternalistic de-

¹ Many such interactions are discussed in Aleksandr Etkind, *Tolkovanie путешествий России и Америки в путешествях и интертекстах* (Moscow, 2001), which does not appear in Foglesong’s bibliography.
fense of slavery as a positive good. Unlike the brutal and sexually abusive relationship as portrayed by the abolitionists, white southern defenders of slavery argued that the relationship between enslavers and enslaved was one based upon love and respect. As the most dependable and loving slave, and the one who always ranked her white owners’ needs above her own and those of her real black family, the mythical mammy came to be seen as the epitome of this idealized view of race relations.

The main contribution of McElya’s insightful study is to show how this earlier view of the mammy figure was adapted after the abolition of slavery into one of the most popular and powerful images in modern American politics and culture. That white southerners would appeal to nostalgia after the Civil War to help them reconstruct their devastated society is certainly understandable. Yet, even more important is the role that the mammy figure has played in helping whites outside of the South to come to grips with their own racial fears and concerns. The prevalence of the mammy figure provided them with a nonthreatening view of race relations and a comforting view of black people. As McElya argues, “The myth of the faithful slave lingers because so many white Americans have wished to live in a world in which African Americans are not angry over past and present injustices, a world in which white people were and are not complicit, in which the injustices themselves—of slavery, Jim Crow, and ongoing structural racism—seem not to exist at all. The mammy figure affirmed their wishes” (3).

McElya explores a wide range of instances in which twentieth-century white Americans “clung to mammy” to find their way in an increasingly diversified and industrial society. Most visible was the Aunt Jemima character, who first appeared in 1893 at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago and who, in a slimmer form, is still a viable advertising image today. In addition to using old-fashioned nostalgia to sell modern-made pancakes, Aunt Jemima has also reinforced ideas about white supremacy and black servility for millions of white Americans.

McElya does a far better job of exploring the importance of the mammy figure in early twentieth-century American life than she does in the latter decades of the century. Nonetheless, her interdisciplinary approach, as well as her numerous fascinating insights, makes this an important study for understanding the lasting legacies of slavery, and the nation’s failure to acknowledge fully this tragic aspect of its past.

Steven Deyle
University of Houston

In the Shadow of Race: Jews, Latinos, and Immigrant Politics in the United States. By Victoria Hattam (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2007) 273 pp. $47.50 cloth $19.00 paper

In this engaging study of how race and ethnicity in America have evolved during the last century, Hattam examines an ambitious range of
topics: the shift from the Lamarckian understanding of the heritability of acquired characteristics to the biologically determined genetics of Mendel, “the invention of ethnicity” by New York Zionists writing in the 1910s and 1920s, debates about the meaning of race within the 1911 Dillingham Immigration Commission, changes in the racial and ethnic categories used by the Census Bureau throughout the twentieth century, recent mayoral contests in New York and Los Angeles, and the contemporary debate about immigration. Prophetically, Hattam even offers an insightful analysis of the rhetoric of Barack Obama, contrasted with that of Al Sharpton, at the 2004 Democratic convention.

What connects these topics is Hattam’s preoccupation with how race- and ethnicity-based discourse lead to divergent understandings of difference and disadvantage in America. As she puts it, “Ethnicity has served to reinscribe, rather than challenge, the enduring inequalities that accompany racial difference” (11). Hattam’s approach is to analyze the “discursive formations” that inevitably frame how political actors conceive of their interests (11). She is particularly focused on the “associative chains that permeate the discourse and continue to link ethnicity with pluralism and openness and race with inequality and power” (12).

A potential hazard with this approach is to neglect, or just to simplify inordinately, the interaction of such abstractions with material or institutional interests. Hattam avoids this problem when exploring how race ideology collided with reality in the wake of America’s conquest of Mexico in 1848. Since 1790, Congress had restricted citizenship to free whites. Yet the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo afforded Mexican citizens residing in annexed territories eligibility for U.S. citizenship. By any conventional understanding, such Mexicans were not white, and therefore arguably ineligible for citizenship. But the federal courts eventually affirmed that these Mexicans were entitled to citizenship even though they were not white, thereby helping to forge an ambiguous group identity for them that persists to this day.

A similar example highlights how during the 1920s, employers prevailed against race-based immigration restrictions and kept the borders open to nationals from within the Western Hemisphere—especially Mexican workers. Again, interests trumped ideology and consequently shaped immigration policy for generations to come.

When Hattam turns to recent events, her analysis is much less cogent. She is notably evasive about the divergent interests of African Americans and Latino immigrants. Highlighting how Jesse Jackson addressed antirestrictionist Latino protesters on May 1, 2006, Hattam neglects to point out how few blacks joined those marches. More generally, she simply ignores the social and economic differences resulting from voluntary migration (Latinos) and involuntary migration (blacks).

This oversight is not hard to explain. As Hattam notes, she regards “dismantling the race-ethnicity distinction” and “reconfiguring the associative chains” as “a prerequisite for building a robust antiracist coalition in the years ahead” (17).

This explicit ideological agenda leads Hattam to neglect an obvious
and intriguing alternative interpretation of U.S. racial and ethnic politics. Hattam looks to a racialized class politics to transcend the race-ethnicity divide that she bemoans. Yet, contrary to her argument, ethnicity in America has at various times and places—not unlike race—been the basis of challenges to exclusion and inequality. This history complicates the analysis and makes Hattam’s preoccupation with forging a black-brown coalition much more problematical. But surely we have to understand history before we can change it.

Peter Skerry
Boston College

Hell on Wheels: The Promise and Peril of America’s Car Culture, 1900–1940. By David Blanke (Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 2007) 266 pp. $34.95

Far from being a pure symbol of individualism, the automobile was once the basis for a social contract championing progress and equality. Why did this contract break down? Employing an impressive range of automotive periodicals and archives, Blanke traces the puzzle’s answer to a conflict over the fast-growing incidence of automobile accidents during the first half of the twentieth century. For him, popular belief held at the time that safe driving had to be the individual’s civic achievement, whereas reformers called for common measures instead. This opposition of views excluded any possibility for the citizens to agree with bureaucrats on the collective discipline needed to enhance traffic safety.

Blanke centers his argument not on a chronological frame but on a thematic three-part analysis. He begins by showing how the core characteristics of a widespread “automotive love affair” developed during the early age of the automobile (3). More precisely, he emphasizes that driving quickly became “the standardized test of modernity” in the country (40). This deep-rooted fascination with automobiles plays a central role in Blanke’s story. He argues in Chapter 2 that in the first two decades of the twentieth century, most Americans shared experts’ early belief that a few unsafe drivers caused accidents and had to be removed from the road. In the following chapters, however, Blanke highlights a growing tension between the popular perceptions of safety and that of the reformers. For him, experts’ notion that deviant drivers were symptomatic of deeper “structural problems” led to a rationalization of public intervention (93). As illustrated in the last part of the book, the new plan of action denied concerns about people’s intimate relationship with their automobiles in favor of a proposed universal treatment of the problem. This strategy stymied any emerging social contract between officials and citizens; the bureaucrats effectively subjugated the informal experiences of drivers to the formal necessity to “hold individuals accountable for collective safety” (173).
Blanke’s analysis, however, may overlook the kinds of conflict between pro- and anti-automobile sensibilities that McShane and Norton describe.¹ Scrupulous readers can indeed remain skeptical about Blanke’s reliance on data from prominent pro-automobile lobbying groups to analyze popular fascination with the automobile (47–50). The American Automobile Association, for instance, published reports and statistical analyses not only to describe but also to promote America’s love affair with the automobile, as it appears in other parts of the book (73–74, 169–170). To provide an example, Chapter 2 perfectly documents an important overall growth in car ownership, but it does not explicitly show what diminished the strong resistance to the dissemination of the automobile throughout the country. One can still wonder, therefore, if certain economical forces were instrumental in unifying the popular opposition to the new expertise.² From that perspective, a study of the process of national consensus building against public intervention would have probably given more force to Blanke’s analysis.

Blanke, nevertheless, shows great skill in highlighting that accidents deserve to be treated as a major theme of historical research. His book will undoubtedly raise curiosity and interest about a topic underestimated for too long in American history. Through the history of traffic safety, researchers may indeed discover social perceptions of life and death, as well as their political uses by progressive reformers.

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Université Paris I—Panthéon Sorbonne


Smith’s goal in writing this book was to bring African-American voices into the history of American environmental thought.¹ Hence, she had to expand the traditional boundaries of environmental thought beyond concern about wilderness, parks, wildlife, and pollution, and include democratic agrarianism, scientific racism, and pragmatism. Smith focuses on such leading black intellectual and political writers as Martin Delany, Henry Bibb, Booker T. Washington, and especially W. E. B. Du Bois and Alain Locke, placing them in conversation with mainstream white

¹ See Clay McShane, Down the Asphalt Path: The Automobile and the American City (New York, 1994); Peter Norton, Fighting Traffic: The Dawn of the Motor Age in the American City (Cambridge, Mass., 2008).
¹ The week that I assigned African American Environmental Thought to my graduate environmental-history course, a student showed it to the mostly African-American athletes that she tutors and invited responses. Nearly all of them remarked, “‘Environmental thought’? That’s a white thing.”
intellectuals and with each other. In this body of thought she locates the roots of the environmental-justice movement that emerged in the 1980s. Smith consciously excludes other contributing elements to black environmental thought, particularly popular ideas and folk culture, as well as religion, magic, songs, stories, and the actual engagement of farmers and hunters with the natural world. Intending only to lay the groundwork for future study, she acknowledges that much remains to be done to recover black environmental thought completely.

Throughout the history that Smith traces, African Americans subordinated nature and the environment to greater goals of freedom and racial equality. To nineteenth-century theorists, slavery and post-Emancipation racial oppression distorted and perverted blacks’ relationship to the land, to the detriment of both land and people. They mixed goals of racial justice with the Jeffersonian agrarian ideal of land possession. Because white writers at the end of the century excused the discrimination and segregation of African Americans on the grounds of a putative primitive closeness to nature and distance from civilization, black writers felt pressure to distance themselves from nature at the very time when environmental writers from John Muir to Theodore Roosevelt were trying to get closer to it. By the early twentieth century, pragmatism and primitivism in art suggested that experience, not racial attributes, shaped the human relationship to the environment, thus granting a greater role to culture. Smith brings her analysis to a culmination in the Harlem Renaissance analysis of the urban environment, which she sees as a bridge to the environmental-justice movement.

The book has many strengths. Smith helpfully identifies many themes of nature and the environment in the works of major African-American writers; her analysis of DuBois’ writings in particular is insightful and informative. This short book will indeed form, as the subtitle suggests, “foundations” for future study. The long gap between Harlem Renaissance writers and the environmental-justice movement, however, will need to be filled and the contributions of most aspects of literature and popular culture added. The book raises the question, however, of whether redefining the subfield of environmental thought to include agrarianism, scientific racism, and urbanism renders it too broad to be meaningful.

In a larger sense, Smith’s redefinition returns to Clarence Glacken’s foundational conception of the concerns of environmental thought in *Traces on the Rhodian Shore* (Berkeley, 1967): “These three ideas—of a designed earth, of the influence of the environment on man [sic], and of man as the modifier of the environment—were . . . modified and enriched by other theories relating to culture growth and to the nature of the earth” (5). By building on Glacken’s broad definition of environmental thought, Smith shows that it need not be only a “white thing.”

Mark Stoll  
Texas Tech University

The subject of Esperdy’s book is the New Deal program that encouraged merchants to replace outdated commercial facades with modernist storefronts on Main Streets throughout America. These storefronts are tricky to analyze. As Esperdy notes, they existed “somewhere between full-fledged architecture and industrially designed consumer products,” and they functioned “as billboards or advertisements as much as... physical shopping spaces” (218). As such, they place Esperdy in a murky scholarly world somewhere between high-style modernist architecture and the presumably lower tastes of mass commercial culture. Yet it is the ambiguity of these storefronts’ status that allows her to approach them from multiple perspectives; the resulting analysis is the richer for it.

Over the course of the book, Esperdy discusses the economic incentive behind the modernization trend; the logistics of how building materials such as plate glass, extruded metal, and structural glass were manufactured and marketed to prospective merchants; and the cultural symbolism of modernism as a style of youth, progress, and individuality. The touchstone throughout the book is the social significance of Main Street, the thoroughfare common to mid-sized America that represented local identity and civic wealth. The Great Depression challenged the wealth of Main Streets across the country, and thus their identity; any attempt to modernize them was wrapped up in how communities wanted to see themselves and be seen by others.

“Modernize Main Street” was actually a slogan used by the Better Housing Program (BHP) in 1935 to advertise its interest in stimulating building and lending for commercial properties. As Esperdy explains in her detailed opening chapters, although the federal government wanted to stimulate the building industry, it did not in itself provide the funds to do so. Instead, through the Modernization Credit Plan (MCP), it agreed to insure private loans issued for building modernization. Thus, the goal of the “Modernize Main Street” movement was to stimulate both building and lending—bringing both jobs and money into the economy via the private sector.

In one of the most compelling sections of the book, Esperdy retraces how major building industries lined up to support BHP and MCP, hoping to reap profits in a newly energized building market. Two major glass companies, Pittsburgh Plate Glass and Libbey-Owens-Ford, not only provided materials to the building market. In response to the Main Street initiative, each also developed packages of building materials that a merchant (with the help of an architect) could purchase as an ensemble. The effect was one-stop shopping for your new store facade.

That the building industry so closely mimicked the marketing tactics of consumer goods is one of Esperdy’s thought-provoking discoveries. Later, as she analyzes the aesthetics and form of these new store-
fronts, she argues that design was driven by the marketplace’s insistence on newness and by the modernized products sold within the stores. This is an instance of form following merchandise, though not necessarily function (166). Esperdy’s multifaceted approach to history—examining urbanism, economics, building materials, consumerism, and architecture—allows her to implicate these modernist forms with commercial culture thoroughly, thereby expanding our understanding of modernism’s place in modern society.

Kristina Wilson
Clark University


Scholars have long recognized that whites, especially suburbanites, resisted sharing residential neighborhoods with African Americans in the twentieth century. Before World War II, Freund argues in Colored Property, whites rejected black neighbors for reasons that they did not hesitate to articulate in implicitly racist terms. But after World War II made it unpalatable for whites to acknowledge the racism that undergirded their preference for segregation, they couched their prejudice in terms of a purportedly race-neutral, market-driven defense of their property values. Freund shows, however, that their claim to a nonracist, purely capitalist motivation was disingenuous. Both the actions of the federal government and the development of the real-estate industry served to embed racial assumptions into the performance of the housing market in a way that validated whites’ preferences for segregated neighborhoods without exposing their racism.

Freund’s book consists of two monographs hinged together by the common themes of race and property in the twentieth-century United States—a national overview of the development of land-use policies and a case study scrutinizing housing regulation and market practices. In short, it is both a top-down and a bottom-up study of the culture of property relations in the twentieth century. The national study is exhaustive in its secondary research, rooting its analysis in secondary scholarship from diverse fields, including history, sociology, geography, government, housing, real estate, law, planning, politics, and economics. Freund’s account reveals how planners, real-estate professionals, legislators, and judges wrote racist assumptions about the desirability of racially homogeneous neighborhoods into theoretically nonracial land-use regulations, such as zoning. Significantly, when the federal government intervened in the housing market during the Great Depression, it worked actively to disguise its influence, encouraging Americans to believe that the suburban boom was the work of the unfettered free market.
The second half of Freund’s book uses traditional archival research to survey the Detroit metropolitan area—towns like Dearborn where the housing stock was largely indistinguishable from that in the city. The choice of this homogenous environment underscores his contention that whites’ postwar sensibilities about race rested on their beliefs rather than in material differences between the places where they and African Americans inhabited. Drawing on recent scholarship about racial formation, Freund points out that many suburbanites who had lived in Detroit as immigrants reinvented themselves as “white” homeowners in the suburbs.

As the civil rights movement made it increasingly difficult for whites to express racist views, their public rhetoric about why they wished to live in all-white environments shifted. The arguments about property and land use developed by real-estate and planning professionals during the interwar years allowed whites to assert their desire for exclusively zoned communities without having to resort to the language of racism or acknowledge their preferences for racial segregation. Evidence for whites’ hostility to black neighbors has been well rehearsed elsewhere. What Freund brings to his study is crisp argumentation that connects the quotidian life of postwar suburbia to the prewar work of housing and government professionals.

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Searching Eyes: Privacy, the State, and Disease Surveillance in America. By Amy L. Fairchild, Ronald Bayer, and James Colgrove (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2007) 368 pp. $50.00 cloth $19.95 paper

The practices, technologies, and knowledges associated with “public health” today were conceived largely in the eighteenth century under the rubric of “medical police.” Medical police was a confederate science (composed of a number of discreet fields) that had public health and safety as its objective. It involved everything from regulation of the medical professions and the safety of traffic and buildings to sanitation and the wholesomeness of food. The words used to describe practices aimed at health and safety mutated throughout the nineteenth century, becoming, for instance, “public hygiene,” “political medicine,” and “state medicine,” before a decisive shift toward the nomenclature of “public health” began at the end of the nineteenth century.

In the Anglo-American world, talk of medical police aroused great suspicion. Hence, Anglo-American historians in the second half of the twentieth century construed medical police and public health as “opposite models” for achieving health. They characterized medical police as distinctly continental, tied to absolutist regimes, basing it on a model of authoritarian intervention and coercion, whereas they construed public
health as a function of education and persuasion. As such, public health was meant to represent a specifically Anglo-American trend toward liberal government, unaffected by medical police.

The first, and most significant achievement of this painstakingly researched book, is to fully explode the historiographical myth that medical police and public health were irrelevant to each other. Though not centrally concerned with the “policing” of disease, by focusing on disease surveillance, Fairchild, Bayer, and Colgrove demonstrate that police, understood as the combined practices of inspection, investigation, information gathering, and forceful intervention, did not disappear from public-health practices in America. This demonstration alone makes Searching Eyes a major breakthrough in research about government efforts to secure the population of twentieth-century America.

The book, however, has other achievements that also recommend it for serious consideration by historians, sociologists, and students of public health. If (as I have suggested elsewhere) all modern states are police states, this book brilliantly reveals the complexities entailed by policing disease in the context of a democratic state. It shows how both physicians and patients reacted to disease surveillance at different times and for different illnesses. In the case of venereal disease, public-health authorities and physicians were in agreement about the need for strong interventionist and coercive measures. However, as efforts expanded from a focus on the compulsory examination of the poor to surveillance of the population as a whole, physicians became more reluctant, struggling with a “divided loyalty” between individual patient privacy and the health of the community as a whole. A national study in 1970 showed that only one out of every nine private physicians reported cases to public-health officials. Indeed, the earliest form of resistance to surveillance efforts came from physicians trying to protect the privacy of their patients—a phenomenon that the authors term “paternalistic privacy.”

In the case of occupational disease, the response was even more complex. Private physicians and public-health officials had to deal with trade-union representatives, business interests, and company physicians. The targets of surveillance in this case did not resist it. On the contrary, through their union representatives they demanded it. Similarly, in the case of breast-cancer registries, activists led the charge for increased surveillance in the hope of enhancing an understanding of the etiology of the disease. It became a case of having “the right to be counted.”

In the case of HIV, however, the authors show that patient resistance was significant. Many activists at the time rightly viewed surveillance as a threat, but this book shows that they were wrong to assert that surveillance efforts in the context of HIV marked a qualitative shift from supposedly established practices of education and persuasion. Indeed, many ac-

1 Carroll, Science, Culture, and Modern Slate Formation (Berkeley, 2006).
tivists labored under the traditional misunderstanding that education and police represented fundamentally opposite poles of public-health policy. This book shows that both ends have always been part of efforts to secure the health of a community. Nonetheless, as the authors reveal, the surveillance and intervention that surrounded HIV-AIDS was, in the context of infectious diseases, “by far the most robust” (238). In the case of HIV, resistance based on individual privacy was central, particularly in the protection against public naming of sufferers. In the case of AIDS, resistance gave rise to what the authors call “democratic privacy.” An important victory for AIDS activists was gaining the right to know about inclusion in a disease-surveillance database.

The authors bring out all of the details and intricacies of disease surveillance and the police of health in a democratic state, particularly in the American federal system of government, in which variation among states is the norm at any particular time. Disease surveillance is central to the articulation and subsequent institutionalization of the “right of privacy.” The tension between private lives and public health is foundational and enduring; public-health efforts have always involved tradeoffs between the intrusions of government and the “right to be left alone.” The threats of bioterrorism and a flu pandemic evoke increasingly more explicit equations of health police and law enforcement. No one should be surprised by President George W. Bush’s suggestion that the national defense against a new flu strain might best be left to the military. Nor should anyone be surprised that an immigrant in San Joaquin county in California was detained by the sheriff for failing to take her tuberculosis medication, nor that a man in Maricopa county in Phoenix was similarly detained for not following instructions about wearing a face mask in public. What everyone needs to know—the great contribution of this book—is that these police powers are well established in law. The authorities can deploy them either “softly softly,” as the British describe the disposition of uniformed constables, or in a draconian way.

Recall “Typhoid Mary,” who was arrested twice in early twentieth-century New York and eventually remanded to the custody of the city’s Board of Health for more than twenty years.2 The health officer who arrested her in the company of two NYPD officers later reflected, there was “little a Board of Health cannot do in the way of interfering with personal and property rights for the protection of public health.”3 One of the great many virtues of this book is to show that the issues surrounding disease surveillance in a democracy have not changed for a century.

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2 Judith Walzer Leavitt, Typhoid Mary: Captive to the Public’s Health (Boston, 1996).
3 Carroll, Science, Culture, and Modern State Formation, 217, n. 23.

For decades, physicians have tried their hand at the history of medicine in medical journals, as if an M.D. degree were adequate qualification. Similarly, more than a few historians have ventured into medical history with little founding in the sciences. The physician-historians usually ignore the questions of most interest to professional historians, whereas most historians possess insufficient medical background to place their points of view in the proper context. Rarely comes a scholar with both the formal training and experience of a physician and the formal training of a historian, Aronowitz being one of the exceptions. Further grounding in linguistics only adds to Aronowitz’s capacity. Unnatural History, a superb book, reflects his interdisciplinary background.

Aronowitz appropriately avoids the “triumphal” history trap common to the work of physician-historians, who tend to see the history of medicine as a story of uninterrupted progress in the conquest of “myth” and the revelation of “truth.” He understands that medicine, no less than other systems of knowledge, is in many ways a social construct embedded in the culture of its own time. Until recent decades, for example, most physicians treating breast cancer operated under the illusion that the disease remained stationary, until at a certain point in its natural history, cancer cells severed their moorings with the tumor site and traveled to distant organs and killed their host. From that paradigm came the logic that shaped breast-cancer treatment for two centuries: Early detection, followed by radical surgery, was the key to a cure. Inherent in that logic was a tendency to blame the patient, not the surgeon, when metastasis occurred on the grounds that she had presented too late for science to rescue her.

Late in the twentieth century, the paradigm shifted. Physicians decided that breast cancer was a systemic disease from the outset and that, as Aronowitz demonstrates, the issue of “time”—of getting to a surgeon immediately and cutting out malignant tissues before they had time to spread—had relatively little to do with long-term survival. The biology of a woman’s tumor, not necessarily the speed with which the patient sought radical treatment, was far more relevant. Chemotherapy and radiotherapy gained ground as alternatives to radical surgery. Aronowitz’s cross-training shows up in his explanation of that shift. He employs articles in medical journals as primary sources, but because he also analyzes the private, personal papers of the physicians writing them, his perspective becomes especially well informed.

In delving into the manuscript collections of surgeons like William Stewart Halsted and George Crile, Aronowitz ventures between the lines of articles in medical journals, describing the evolving thought of the physicians, the physical and emotional condition of patients, and the interplay between both groups. For Aronowitz, the prominence of
gender—the issues surrounding female patients being treated by male physicians in a breast-obsessed culture—is no closer to resolution than ever. “Americans live in an era,” he writes, “that celebrates the historical progression to honesty in the naming and diagnosis of cancer, informed patient consent, and shared decision-making. But closely examining the felt experience of breast-cancer patients and their doctors, especially how they have actually made decisions, suggests an alternative history. In this less positivist history, there has been more continuity than progress in the ways in which doctors and patients have actively worked together, often colluded with one another, to balance hope, despair, and the existential demands and consequences of clinical decisions” (283).

James S. Olson
Sam Houston State University


The scholarly literature on Canadian-American relations has traditionally focused on interactions between the two governments. More recently, historians have begun to broaden their lines of inquiry by looking at the relationship between peoples, cultures, communities, and regions. Stuart’s Dispersed Relations emerges from this growing interest in transnational and borderlands history.

Stuart devotes one part of the book to each of his four themes—culture, society, economics, and politics. Each part begins with a history of Canadian-American relations in the relevant area, a synthesis of Stuart’s extensive reading in the secondary sources. He then moves to current events, providing a lucid description of recent history and the present situation, basing his analysis on media sources, government publications, and interviews. Stuart has not created a new analytical framework but rather has employed the tools of different disciplines—including history, political science, and sociology—to answer his central question about the nature of the Canadian-American relationship.

Stuart’s combination of approaches is highly successful. Because much of the scholarly literature has employed a government-to-government framework, differences between the two countries are exaggerated. By widening the scope, Stuart shows that despite occasional political conflict, the two countries have tightly interwoven cultures, societies, and economies. In short, the relationship is much closer, more complex, and more intense than many scholars have recognized.

Stuart’s ideas are not original; concepts surrounding transnational history and borderlands have been floating around the scholarly community for years. But Stuart has brought them together and applied them to the Canadian-American relationship in a sustained way. The
book could mark a new point of departure for the study of Canadian-American relations. Scholars must continue to study the conflict and cooperation between the two governments, since there is still much we do not know. But to these studies we must add examinations of social, cultural, and economic linkages between Canada and the United States. 

Stephen Azzi
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The Other Quebec: Microhistorical Essays on Nineteenth-Century Religion and Society. By J. I. Little (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2006) 278 pp. $70.00 cloth $35.00 paper

The Other Quebec is built upon Little’s long and comfortable familiarity with the history of the Eastern Townships in Quebec. Little is the author of several monographs on settlement and colonization in the area and two annotated sets of family letters; his knowledge of the sources provides the depth that is the virtue of a good microhistory. Little describes his work as “window” into the past: His chapters, most of which have been previously published, introduce the mystical mental world of tin peddler Ralph Merry (1798–1863); the fatherly love, and anxiety, of Anglican minister James Reid in the 1830s; the precarious gentility of English immigrant Lucy Peel; and the moral purpose evident in the work of schools inspector Marcus Childs. The particularity of the biographical approach allows the analysis to transcend the local. Merry’s experience of regular infusions of divine love, for example, was the product of New England, as much as the Eastern Townships, and Little’s description will be of interest to all students of religious experience.

Little aims higher, however; he employs the particular “to reveal a much more complicated society than the one depicted through the teleological lens of social control, separate spheres and modernization theories” (9). In large part, he succeeds. The chapters reveal that modernity was not necessarily secular. Chapter 6 describes the carnival-like atmosphere created when the railway brought 9,000 people to the Beebe Adventist Camp meetings in 1878. Marguerite Van Die’s contribution to the collection—a perceptive study of a Christian businessman, Charles Colby (1827–1907)—demonstrates how Henry Ward Beecher’s imminent theology offered stability in a volatile and speculative business climate. The final chapter is a historical “whodunit” involving a Presbyterian minister, the local postmaster, and a purloined sum of money. The identity of the thief remains a mystery, but the process of picking through the clues reveals the shifting balance of civil and religious authority in a rapidly modernizing world.

The revision of separate spheres is less successful; Little’s chapter on Lucy Peel, closely based upon Amanda Vickery’s work on gentlewomen in Georgian England, shares the flaws of Vickery’s highly contentious
work. Vickery has been criticized for misrepresenting, even “wildly caricaturing,” feminist interpretation of the separate spheres. Little argues that “Peel’s journal undermines the easy generalizations many historians have made about the impermeability of the separate spheres” (84). But scholarship today stresses the porosity and mutability, rather than impermeability, of the separate spheres, and his account, particularly the description of Edmund Peel’s attentiveness to his wife during child birth, and his devastation at the loss of their firstborn, might better be seen as a contribution to, rather than a criticism of, contemporary feminist scholarship.

Little’s book offers a richly realized glimpse into lives and moments in the past, demonstrating how religion, as lived and experienced, permeated Canadian society.

Joanna Dean
Carleton University


In 1678, an African-born servant near death professed as a nun in the Carmelite convent in Puebla, where she had lived for more than six decades. When she died a year later, her funeral was attended by town notables and crowds of ordinary people drawn by this humble and obedient woman’s reputation for piety and virtue. This is the story that opens Bristol’s engaging book about seventeenth-century Afro-Mexican religion. Each of the six chapters that follow is framed around similar stories culled from spiritual biographies, colonial chronicles, and Inquisition records. In them, Bristol explores efforts by slaves and free people of color to assert their Catholic faith and defend heterodox forms of Christianity in the face of race prejudice and challenges from their masters and the agents of Spanish civil and ecclesiastic authority.

Bristol’s wide-ranging study stretches from the conversions of captives in the early days of the trade from West Africa to the public and private devotions of acculturated Afro-Mexicans during the middle years of the colony, primarily in Mexico City, Puebla, and Veracruz. By the mid-seventeenth century, most of New Spain’s black population was American-born, and blacks and mulattoes together outnumbered both Spaniards and Native Americans in the principal cities of the viceroyalty. As a result, Afro-Mexican ritual practices were a well-established part of urban cultural and social life, even though colonial authorities viewed them with ambivalence and suspicion.

Bristol focuses especially on the black confraternities that promoted community solidarity and shaped cultural expressions of ethnic identity, and also on medicinal and divination practices of African origin that gave
authority to Afro-Mexican healers and legitimacy to their specialized knowledge. These latter practices, which invited accusations of witchcraft and sorcery, provide a context for Bristol to examine black resistance and shifting attitudes among Church authorities toward religious non-conformity. She also casts cases of blasphemy and renunciations of God in terms of resistance. When these utterances, often made during punishment, led to denunciations before the Inquisition, they gave slaves opportunities to air grievances publicly against cruel masters.

Bristol’s discussion of the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of her work is concise and useful, but limited. She characterizes her approach as drawing on the conventions of microhistory, with close attention to the details of individual case studies as a pathway to understanding broader contexts and reaching larger conclusions. With its emphasis on the contingencies of colonial authority and the interdependence of dominant and subordinate subcultures, her book is anchored in the familiar social history of accommodation and resistance. As such, it joins recent scholarship by Few, Villa-Flores, Procter, and Restall that shows how important the African contribution to Mexican history has been.1 Though her interpretative framework may hold few surprises, the stories that she recounts are well chosen and compelling, and her treatment of historical context is artful and comprehensive.

Kevin Gosner
University of Arizona

The Man-Leopard Murders: History and Society in Colonial Nigeria. By David Pratten (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2007) 425 pp. $49.95

Pratten’s masterful book uses an apparent epidemic of “man-leopard murders” in Ibibio and Annang-speaking southeastern Nigeria immediately following World War II as a window onto the changing and complex dynamics of social life in colonial Nigeria. These murders bore similarities to panics tied to supposed man-leopard murders in other African settings. Although Pratten effectively examines the Nigerian case comparatively, it is his fine-grained historical narrative that is most impressive. He provides a uniquely intimate analysis of the consequences of colonial intervention on the micro-politics of everyday life in the affected communities, wherein gender and generational conflicts figure pro-

foundly in the political, social, and religious experiences of and responses to British rule.

Utilizing a remarkable array of sources, from European and African archives to contemporary oral-history interviews, Pratten weaves a rich tapestry that brings alive the complexity of the colonial period, incorporating police and court records, British administrators’ reports, newspaper accounts, colonial anthropological research, Christian mission documents, and much more. The book is written in the manner of a detective story, drawing readers into the mystery of what really underlay these murders and the multiple and lively debates that they engendered in both local Nigerian and British colonial accounts. But unlike a typical detective mystery in which the culprit is ultimately revealed, Pratten’s features intertwining culpabilities, manifold truths, and enduring uncertainties.

Pratten traces the economic and political strategies of the British—including the manipulation of chieftancy, efforts at taxation, trade and development policies, and the concurrent role of mission Christianity—as they unfold in ordinary Nigerians’ everyday experience of kinship, marriage, and divorce. Although the book does not purport to be about gender, it is in fact one of the most nuanced gendered analyses of Nigerian colonial history ever published. Pratten’s examination of people’s anxieties about brideprice, marriage, and divorce admirably connects macrosociological transformation to the most intimate aspects of power.

The book is equally about colonial and local political imaginations. But Pratten does not allow the seemingly fantastic nature of the man-leopard murders to become an exercise in exoticism—either as a simplistic rendering of Nigerian beliefs in the supernatural or as a polemical critique of British colonial fantasies about the African “other.” He deftly reveals how the multiple and often contradictory interpretations that the murders generated in both colonial and local discourse connect to equally contradictory social problems produced by the political and economic projects of British colonialism in Nigeria. Rather than resolving the murder mysteries, Pratten demonstrates that the truth is ultimately an intricate and complex matter.

Pratten’s history is suggestive with regard to a wide range of trends and phenomena in contemporary Nigeria, from current anxieties about brideprice, sexuality, marriage, and changing gender dynamics to recent booms in urban vigilantism and common modern narratives about the relationship between money and ritual murder. Pratten himself argues that explanations of the present through analogies to history are often undertaken without doing the hard work of documenting and understanding the actual events and processes that occur between the past and the present. The Man-Leopard Murders certainly succeeds in providing this rich history.

Pratten’s original interest in the man-leopard murders was clearly spurred by his anthropological fieldwork. Yet curiously, at the end of the book, he notes that most of his contemporary interlocutors were re-
luctant to speak extensively and candidly about this history. The book, which ends with Nigeria’s independence in 1960, would have been even more satisfying had it gone further to use the past as a vehicle to understand the present. But perhaps that will be the purpose of Pratten’s next study.

Daniel Jordan Smith
Brown University

*Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder after 1914.* By Martin Thomas (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2007) 428 pp. $49.95

This study of information gathering in the British and French dependencies of the Middle East and North Africa during the interwar period focuses on questions facing all colonial administrators—where and how did they acquire the data on which to base their decisions, and how accurate and objective were their sources? The colonial enterprise depended on sound intelligence, accurately interpreted and rapidly transmitted to those in a position to use it effectively. The information collected had the potential to improve the quality of local life, and its accumulation was often justified in those terms, but its much more common usage was simply to advance colonial agendas. Urban policemen, rural tribal administrators, and numerous informants were the cogs in this system, relaying information ranging from statistical data on health, agriculture, and meteorological conditions to assessments of the power residing in tribal federations and of the influence wielded by such emergent institutions as political parties and labor unions in urban areas. The challenges of employing coercive measures in regions where imperial control was stretched thin underscored the importance of the intelligence services as a first line of defense.

Presenting this book as the first comparative study on intelligence gathering, Thomas paints on a broad canvas—from Morocco to Iraq, from Syria to Sudan. The archival material about colonial intelligence is voluminous, and he has mined it extensively. His apparent intention to leave no stone unturned in describing imperial intelligence networks results in a cluttered landscape that reveals parallels and connections among divergent regions but often obscures profound differences.

World War I heightened the importance of intelligence, but the gathering and assessing of information had been underway in these dependencies for many years. Thomas discusses the evolution of intelligence processes, including the increased utilization of technology, beginning in the late nineteenth century. He also describes the forerunners of the “Empires of Intelligence.” For the British, India provided a model, as did the World War I-era Arab Bureau. For the French, the Bureaux Arabes and Services des Renseignements offered similar early examples of successful intelligence organizations.
No matter how well trained or well qualified the intelligence agents were, it was impossible to guarantee that their reports would be analyzed effectively or put to appropriate uses. The deliberate distortion of information or the suppression of data that did not accord with their superiors’ views could create serious problems, as revealed in the intelligence failure that occurred when British officials in Baghdad altered reports from agents in Kurdistan in the early years of the mandate in order to promote their vision of Iraq’s future. In some instances, however, agents in the field missed the obvious. Their frequent obsession all across the region with Bolshevism and pan-Islam during the 1920s blinded them to the more pertinent problems posed by the growth of labor and secular nationalist movements.

*Empires of Intelligence* presents a wealth of information that will interest students of French and British imperialism in North Africa and the Middle East. The author’s willingness to go beyond traditional imperial boundaries to forge a comparative study, though not always entirely successful, is a groundbreaking approach that deserves credit and commendation.

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*The Precious Raft of History: The Past, the West, and the Woman Question in China*. By Joan Judge (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2008) 400 pp. $65.00

Judge, author of a solid monograph on the first years of the Shanghai newspaper *Shibao*—*Print and Politics: “Shibao” and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China* (Stanford, 1997)—turns her attention yet again to the decade leading up to the republican revolution of 1911, a period that she contends was “a key moment in the unfolding of Chinese modernity” (2). (The title suggests a much broader temporal scope than is justified by the content.) In this study, she analyzes a wide range of late Qing writings on women, focusing on definitions of female virtue, talent, and heroism particularly as presented in collections of biographies of women. Most of the writings were by men, though some were by women. Their biographical subjects included Chinese and foreign women, both ancient and modern—for example, Ban Zhao, Qiu Jin, Joan of Arc, and Florence Nightingale. The author of one such biographical collection urged his (women) readers to use it in the same way that Buddhist scriptures had been used, as a “precious raft,” so Judge explains, to “transport individuals to the shores of enlightenment” (250). Hence the title of her book.

This study is primarily an intellectual history that draws liberally from the work of Western critical theorists. It analyzes the relevant late Qing writings within the framework of four “chronotypes,” a concept taken from the titled work of Bender and Wellbery, which Judge claims
to constitute “a new hermeneutics of historical change” (12).¹ The four chronotypes are arranged along a spectrum from eternalists through meliorists and archeomodernists to presentists. Eternalists, simply put, sought to maintain traditional values and rejected any accommodation with modernity; presentists, at the other end of the spectrum, rejected traditional values and sought guidance from the outside world. In between, meliorists and archeomodernists both accepted and advocated modernity but differed regarding the extent to which they were willing to preserve tradition; archeomodernists (a term attributed to Walter Benjamin) were more willing to jettison the past, especially the recent past, than meliorists.

What these clumsy-sounding labels mean, in practice, is that, for example, the Qing official Zhang Zhidong was an eternalist; Wei Xiyuan, the author of the Illustrated Biographies of Resourceful Women, Past and Present, a meliorist; Liang Qichao, the constitutional monarchist, an archeomodernist; and Qiu Jin, the revolutionary martyr, a presentist. Judge’s well-supported conclusion is that the turn of the twentieth century was “a period of pluralistic modernities and heterogeneous temporalities,” when “[i]ndividuals staked out their political positions by resignifying the past, invoking Chinese or Western icons, and establishing divergent hierarchies of heroism” (231).

The book, arranged topically, is divided into three roughly equal parts, one on female virtue, one on female talent, and one on female heroism. It is thoroughly researched. Its more than fifty black-and-white illustrations are well integrated into the text. However, among its few shortcomings are a misspelling or two and mistakes in rendering the Western name of the Tianjin newspaper Dagong bao (L’Impartial).

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The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan. By Yasmin Khan (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2007) $30.00 cloth $16.00 paper

In this fine book, Khan not only understands the dynamics of how national histories operate; she has also sought to overcome their limitations by drawing from a vast variety of secondary literature and finding accounts of eyewitnesses. For instance, she has gone to archives in America to look at United States Consular accounts of activities in India, to the accounts in the British records of India, to interviews, and to Indian records in a number of different localities.

Khan is even-handed in her attempt to look at the action from different perspectives. Her interest is to examine the “givens” about the

Partition with a new and fresh eye to determine the constituent elements of the problems that arose from the enormous confusion and speed with which Partition was accomplished. For instance, her argument is that the Partition was not an inevitable outcome but the contingent product of a specific moment, when individuals and ways of thinking or discourses coalesced around formulations to resolve particular problems. At the end of the book, she notes, however, that the Partition really satisfied no one, certainly not the dalits (formerly called “untouchables” or “Harijans” by Gandhians). Sikhs were not only displaced but later became the focus of great hatred at the pogrom that was instituted after Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards in October 1983.

According to Naipaul, post-Partition India became a place of a million mutinies—the site of revolts from many groups whose issues had not been addressed by the great emphasis that people had placed on the Partition.1 To her credit, Khan spends much time on events in and around Pakistan, ensuring that her presentation be balanced.

Some of the best writing in the book concerns the circumstances surrounding the large number of women who were raped, mutilated, and killed in India and Pakistan. This is an area of considerable scholarship. Menon and Bhasin, in particular, show that many of women who were rescued were ultimately transported to camps and fitted into a bureaucratic mold of what a middle-class woman should be.2 Khan quotes the words of one of these women who complained about the kind of busy work that the camps were training them to do and the kinds of women that they were training to be. These women embodied the honor of their respective countries, which tried to “rehabilitate” them; they were no longer acceptable to their own families because they were “tainted.”

At the end of her book, Khan briefly looks at the accounts of this episode in South Asian history in the schoolbooks of both India and Pakistan, concluding that both “national histories” in these schoolbooks “come remarkably close in the cursory manner in which they deal with the violence associated with Partition. The horror and suffering that millions of ordinary men and women faced receive no more than a few lines of cold recording.” She finds a great gulf between “these later renderings and the actual experiences of Partition” (202–204).

Although many questions will not be answered without further research, Khan has done a fine job of attempting to report what “really happened” in north India and Bengal between 1945 and 1950.

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