

satisfied with Gilje's short chapters, even though they make the book a quick read. All told, however, I would recommend the book to anyone interested in the maritime and ideological dimensions of the war as well as anyone interested in connections between the colonial and early national periods in U.S. history.

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The Problem of Democracy in the Age of Slavery: Garrisonian Abolitionists and Transnational Reform. By W. Caleb McDaniel. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2013. Pp. 376. \$48.00.)

The Problem of Democracy in the Age of Slavery: Garrisonian Abolitionists and Transnational Reform is framed around a cohort of nineteenth-century antislavery and political reformers—including Europeans Louis Kossuth, Daniel O'Connell, and Giuseppe Mazzini and Americans William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips—who “defended democracy in an age of aristocracy, monarchy, and doubt about democracy's future” (p. 3). Historian W. Caleb McDaniel's book is part of the “Antislavery, Abolition, and the Atlantic World” series edited by historians R. J. M. Blackett and James Brewer Stewart.

McDaniel begins his account with chapters on the “education” of Garrison, whose career was transformed in 1827 when he encountered the minister Lyman Beecher shortly after moving to Boston. McDaniel maintains that the evangelical Beecher influenced Garrison in two important ways. Beecher's sermons provided Garrison with insight on how to combine the “faith he had learned from his Baptist upbringing with his interest in political and social affairs, and it fired him with the thought that God's spirit was active and abroad in the United States, judging the country's sins while also transforming it in preparation for Christ's eventual return” (pp. 30–31). In addition to the impact of evangelical Christianity, Garrison's education was furthered by witnessing the violence that was so often connected to

abolitionism. He saw firsthand the wrath of anti-abolitionist mobs that accompanied British abolitionist George Thompson as he toured the U.S., and he had himself come close to being lynched in Boston. Those events moved him to declare that a “reign of terror” was descending upon the nation.

As McDaniel notes in chapter 6, “The Problem of Aristocracy,” antebellum abolitionists were small-*d* democrats. Contrary to previous studies—which have downplayed the Garrisonians’ investment in democracy and majoritarianism—McDaniel convincingly argues that even though Garrisonians often abstained from voting, they did not condemn the idea of democracy; rather, they saw agitation as their most effective means of altering public opinion. In any case, they were often reluctant to align themselves with pro-democracy movements. A pertinent example that McDaniel describes in the book deals with the efforts of the Rhode Island Suffrage Association and Providence attorney Thomas Wilson Dorr to enfranchise the state’s laboring classes. Despite Dorr’s significant efforts to create a color-blind democracy in Rhode Island, the majority of delegates to the 1841 People’s Convention argued that it would be the death knell of their reform movement if black males were allowed to take a place in the body politic. The who’s who of northern abolitionism, including Frederick Douglass, came to Rhode Island at the behest of Garrison to protest the People’s Constitution, which withheld the franchise from African Americans but greatly broadened the suffrage of white males.

In a chapter on the revolutions and counter-revolutions that over-spread Europe between 1848 and 1854, McDaniel details the history of the Hungarian Louis Kossuth’s exile in the United States after his failed revolution. Kossuth’s actions were extolled by northern Democrats, who viewed his attempt to overthrow an autocratic regime as in line with Dorr’s 1842 use of popular sovereignty to overthrow Rhode Island’s archaic governing structure. The “sovereignty of the people, and the right of every nation to dispose of their own destiny” were “two very important principles” that were embodied in Kossuth’s hapless revolution, wrote former New Hampshire Congressman Edmund Burke in January 1852. However, as McDaniel notes, for many abolitionists, Kossuth did not adequately condemn the newly enacted Fugitive Slave Law in his public addresses, and so those activists spurned him.

McDaniel rounds out his study with two strong chapters on the Civil War and the problems that conflict created for the Garrisonians.

Prior to 1860, Garrisonians “did not believe” that public opinion accorded with their convictions about the evils of chattel slavery and the capacity for African Americans to be productive members of society. However, Abraham Lincoln’s victory persuaded them that they needed “standards” to evaluate the shift in the northern electorate. In 1864, a public quarrel between Garrison and Phillips threatened to destroy a decades-long friendship, as the two men debated whether or not Lincoln was fit for a second term in office.

Historians of antebellum America will likely find some fault with McDaniel’s decision to focus so tightly on Garrison and Phillips, a choice that prevents him from exploring the ideas of female and black abolitionists. McDaniel also devotes too little attention to the controversy surrounding an 1841 antislavery letter that was written by associates of Daniel O’Connell. The Irish of America were urged in the letter not to go into the American South. Garrison, of course, had named his Boston abolitionist newspaper in honor of the Catholic “liberator” O’Connell. However, as historian John F. Quinn noted in the pages of this journal several years ago (2009), O’Connell was eventually forced to distance himself from the letter and from Garrison due to southern opposition and the threat the fallout created for the repeal movement. In 1843, O’Connell did issue a statement in which he urged Irish Americans to obey the antislavery teachings of the Catholic Church, though his overture, as Quinn argues, did little to solidify a bond between Irish Americans and abolitionists.

McDaniel’s goals would also have been better served had he explained in more detail and with more nuance why northern Democrats in the late 1840s and 1850s, especially those in the Young America camp, often backed the democratic revolutionaries many Garrisonians first admired and then disowned. Some of these Democrats began to drift over to the Free Soilers in large part because they were dismayed about the vehemence with which southern Democrats denounced the European revolutionaries. These few points aside, McDaniel has produced a well-written and engaging work that will undoubtedly enjoy a wide readership and spark debate. *The Problem of Democracy in the Age of Slavery* is well deserving of adoption in both undergraduate and graduate courses on the abolitionist movement.

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of THE PEOPLE'S MARTYR: THOMAS WILSON DORR AND HIS 1842 RHODE ISLAND REBELLION (*University Press of Kansas, 2013*) and coeditor, with Russell J. DeSimone, of a digital edition of Thomas Wilson Dorr's letters: <http://library.providence.edu/dorr>.

"With Éclat": The Boston Athenæum and the Origin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. By Hina Hirayama. (Boston: The Boston Athenæum / New Lebanon, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2013. Pp. 236. \$29.95 paper; \$28.99 e-book.)

In *"With Éclat": The Boston Athenæum and the Origin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, Hina Hirayama offers an engrossing history of one of the city's most revered cultural institutions and an account of the all-but-forgotten support it received from a sister organization during its formative years. Hirayama deftly conveys an enormous amount of information in five compact chapters. With sidebars that detail the role both organizations played in developing nineteenth-century Bostonians' understanding and appreciation of the fine arts, *"With Éclat"* is part institutional history, part family biography. Anyone who has examined the records of Boston's oldest institutions, when so much was accomplished by gentlemen's agreements—and with deals documented by cryptic memoranda written after the fact, if at all—will appreciate Hirayama's meticulous sleuthing as she pieces together her complicated story and resurrects the contributions of the museum's first—albeit "honorary"—director, Charles Callahan Perkins.

The book opens with an overview of the Athenæum as an early collector of and venue for displaying fine art, a role that was formally recognized following its first annual exhibition in 1827. Hirayama documents the rise and fall of the collection's importance under the guidance of the Athenæum's Fine Arts Committee, a committee without a formally sanctioned purpose within an organization officially devoted to maintaining a library and reading room. In 1868, when the trustees decided to convert the sculpture gallery into library stacks, the Fine Arts Committee lost its standing within the parent organization. At about the same time, however, the Athenæum received a bequest from Timothy Bigelow Lawrence, which included a \$25,000 matching challenge from his widow to establish a gallery in Boston that would showcase her late husband's collection of arms and armor, along with "paintings, statuary and other objects of virtue and art" (p. 49).