is aiming much of his introductory comment to the nonhistorical social science community, for he uses *States of Memory* to argue for a greater historical consciousness on the part of social scientists. In essence, this volume is a call for sociologists and political scientists to establish a truly “historical social science” around the issue of memory and the nation (p. 15). Historians can only agree.

Aaron J. Cohen

California State University, Sacramento


One of the more noteworthy features of *A Date Which Will Live: Pearl Harbor in American Memory*, Emily S. Rosenberg’s book on the ways in which Pearl Harbor resonates in the memory of Americans, is her often spirited defense of professional academic historians. This constituency, in recent years, has been abused by congresspersons, military types, and ordinary citizens for overcomplicating the past, or worse—for a dangerous ideological bias that sullies the plain truth about the nation’s heritage. Controversies over the *Enola Gay* exhibition (pro-Japanese, said many visitors), the design of the World War II Memorial on the Mall in Washington (fascist, say some of the professorial elite; dignified, say its defenders), and the new interpretative film shown at the site of the sinking of the *Arizona* at Pearl Harbor (offensive to many Japanese tourists) are all good examples of a growing resistance to the Ivory Tower point of view.

I can speak with some authority on this subject, as the co-author of one of the first studies of a World War II icon to be roundly attacked by veterans, editorialists, and the like for pointing out that the famous Rosenthal photograph of the Iwo Jima flag raising depicted the second such event, and not the first (see Karal Ann Marling and John Wetenhall, *Iwo Jima: Monuments, Memories and the American Hero*: Harvard University Press, 1991). Both books—ours and Rosenberg’s—approach events of World War II in a similar fashion. That is, they show how the memory of those deeply symbolic moments has changed over time, given changing political, emotional, and social contexts. But *A Date Which Will Live* displays, I think, a palpable lack of respect for nonacademic contributions to what must remain an open-ended debate about the custody of the nation’s past.

Every time a film is mentioned, for instance, the author points out that it was made for profit, as if professors dined on air, or manna from some History Heaven. To Rosenberg, there seems to be no chance that a director might be intent on creating a work every bit as worthy as any volume of history, and one equally reflective of his or her own particular historical vision. Tabloid-like book jackets come in for a drubbing, too, as if the drab wrappers of many
academic tomes are guarantees of special virtue. And Rosenberg sees little merit in the first-person memories and stirring narratives which have proven so compelling to a mass audience in recent years, thanks to the labors of Tom Brokaw and Stephen Ambrose. But we have not all gone to war (especially women), and books that help us to imagine what that experience was like—albeit colored by the passage of time—create an empathy that is surely important on a personal level, if not in the halls of academe.

Given these not-so-veiled assertions of superiority to the vulgar herd, I had expected to hate this book in the name of public historians everywhere. But I don’t. Strip away the attitude, and A Date Which Will Live is a fine, eye-opening account of how various aspects of the Pearl Harbor story have played out over time: Franklin D. Roosevelt’s use of the term “infamy” to describe an unprovoked attack; later assertions that Roosevelt had himself provoked the attack as a “back door” to entering the war on the side of the Allies; the so-called “Kimmel Crusade” to restore the reputation of the naval officer in charge in Hawaii at the time of the Japanese air strike; and the treatment of Japanese-Americans in the wake of December 7, 1941. Perhaps the most interesting section of the book offers an extended comparison between the rhetorical presentation of Pearl Harbor in 1941 and that of the Twin Towers attack of September 11, 2001.

In the upcoming presidential election, 9/11 will be a dominant issue. Already, some in Congress have suggested that the administration somehow staged the capture of Saddam Hussein in the days before Christmas to maximize its effect upon the electorate. In other words, FDR and George W. Bush are fellow puppetmasters, using terror and tragedy to political or geopolitical ends. The protracted debate over how to commemorate the World Trade Center bombing in physical form mirrors similar battles over other monuments, including the Pearl Harbor Memorial. Should there be statues? Of whom? Who was a hero—or was everybody a victim? Names? Whose names, and in what order? Should buildings rise again on a sacred site? What role should the memories of those who lost loved ones play in the design? These are dilemmas that are, perhaps, insoluble, because we are still uncertain about what it all meant and will mean in the future. The hesitancy, the confusion, and the determination are touching indications, I think, of how much Americans want to make sense of this latest attack.

Finally, Rosenberg’s account of how memory changes events might have been enriched by attention to nonverbal discourse. The 2001 Disney blockbuster, Pearl Harbor, is a case in point. Rosenberg analyzes the cost of the film, the plot, and the use of real World War II ships to argue that Hollywood was more interested in spectacle than in the implications of the historical event depicted. But the most special of all the special effects in Pearl Harbor was a computer-generated shot that followed a bomb straight downward from the belly of a plane through a smoke stack into the heart of the doomed Arizona. So whatever else the words of the script said or didn’t say, that one shot literally exploded with meaning. It suggested a brutal rape, the viewpoint of a Japa-
nese flier, and the technological dehumanization of warfare. It told a story that both contradicted and reinforced the ostensible narrative in complicated ways that ought to have been recognized and discussed. The aesthetic of history—its shape and form and color—is surely as important as its written or spoken words. The academic historian will continue to be ineffectual in the public arena unless he or she examines the field of battle now and then from the other guy’s point of view, daring to look straight down into the explosive heart of the matter.

Karal Ann Marling

University of Minnesota


Julie Des Jardins’ Women and the Historical Enterprise: Gender, Race and the Politics of Memory, 1880–1945 is a meticulously researched and argued book about the very nature of history and history making. Des Jardins argues that the emergence of history as an academic field in the late nineteenth century adversely affected women, both as subjects in and producers of history. Male historians implicitly and explicitly marginalized and discriminated against women.

Thus, women historians, both newly professional and those increasingly categorized as amateur, worked from the margins. The margins were sites of repression but also sites of experimentation and innovation (p. 93). The growing authority of academic history quieted but did not silence women historians. The margins, according to Des Jardins, allowed women historians to pioneer the examination of new subjects and the implementation of new methods in history that prevail today. Her case is a difficult one to make, but she makes it convincingly.

At the end of the nineteenth century, history became a social science in the American university. Emerging professionals, almost exclusively male, were obsessed with scientific methods and the search for objectivity. They privileged written sources, especially official documents such as court records and legal papers, over all others. The experiences of women were absent from those documents. Sources like oral testimonies, letters, and memoirs were considered tainted (p. 21), which had a devastating effect on women’s history.

The professionalization of history had an equally damaging effect on women practitioners. Earlier in the nineteenth century, “lady historians” like Martha J. Lamb, Alice Earle, and Sarah Bolton wrote popular histories for general audiences. Although their narratives were politically conservative and idealized the past, they began to insert women into history. Unwittingly setting an important precedent, they wrote about the details of women’s everyday lives for the first time, including accounts of courtship, marriage, sports,