Book Reviews

Editorial note: Book reviews are edited for typographical errors, and otherwise are printed as received.

Reviews

A TOKEN OF MY AFFECTION: Greeting Cards and American Business Culture. By Barry Shank. New York: Columbia University Press. 2004.

In this astute work of cultural studies, Barry Shank uses the humble greeting card to understand the ways our emotional and economic lives are intertwined. Shank's overarching thesis is that "our world of feeling and our need for a shared emotional language to articulate that world is powerfully though not wholly determined by the organization of our economic life" (12). His study starts with the progenitor of modern greeting cards, the valentine, which began commercial mass production in the U.S. in the 1840s. The valentine was one sheet, often adorned with layers of richly textured materials such as lace, foil, lithographed images, and even bits of hair. It communicated the status of the sender, namely his potential value as a mate and member of the middle class. The palpable materiality of the card—which, though mass-produced, included hand assembly, as if to symbolically ease the transition to industrialization—served to objectify emotional eloquence and externalize a person's "agentive interior" (63), those inner qualities "believed to be a requirement for success in the growing market economy" of the 19th century (8).

By the 1920s, the greeting card industry required an almanac to keep track of the card-sending holidays that it had helped create. Postcards, birthday cards, and the ongoing mainstay of the industry, Christmas cards, had become ways to maintain social connections in an age of geographic mobility and in a culture dominated by big business. They performed cultural and economic work, maintaining kinship networks as well as associations with business colleagues (part of what Shank calls the "business of friends" essential to corporate success). Yet their language was dominated by stereotypes and clichés, a distillation and displacement of emotion that Shank argues reflected the competition, bureaucracy, and standardization of business culture in the first half of the 20th century. Just as elements of work might be compartmentalized, so might emotions be put safely in their rhetorical place by the standardized sentiment of a cliché. This allowed senders to express a sentiment yet remain distant from it. (The recent use of

irony in greeting cards serves the same purpose.) Surprisingly, Shank found that the handwritten notes that senders added to their cards employed similar language, suggesting the larger impact of corporate culture on emotional expression.

In the past forty years, niche marketing, information management, and increasingly flexible mass production displaced Fordist practices in the greeting card industry. Recent genres of expression, such as ironic humor and "from me to you" cards, accept the difficulties of communicating elaborate and authentic expressions of emotion. They accept the "inevitable loss of the modern ideals of material and emotional abundance" (267) characteristic of postmodern society and then sell the sentiment.

A Token of My Affection is an important work of American studies and contributes much to business history, which has been shy to engage this sort of iconographic, textual, and cultural analysis. By treating greeting cards with seriousness and never falling prey to simplistic assessments about social agency and the mass media, Shank also revitalizes and complicates the study of popular culture.

University of California, Riverside Catherine Gudis

COINING CAPITAL: Movies, Marketing, and the Transformation of Childhood. By Jyotsna Kapur. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press. 2005.
RAISING CONSUMERS: Children and the American Mass Market in the Early Twentieth Century. By Lisa Jacobson. New York: Columbia University Press. 2004.

The status of children in modern American society brims with ironies and contradictions. We cherish the joys of unfettered youth, but we herd kids into so many adult-structured activities that they have no free time. We try to teach children limits but yield to their pestering. We fear the effects of media on them but allow them to watch *Desperate Housewives* and *Scream 2*. We fret about their wasting time and their exposure to violence but seem powerless in the face of their nonstop devotion to the internet and video games. Most of all, we are uncertain of whether we want them to act their age or act grown-up, and we ourselves both hanker for and are repelled by the culture of youth. The two books under review here, by media specialist Jyotsna Kapur and historian Lisa Jacobson, address these issues with fresh perspectives.

Kapur is particularly interested in the ways that current consumer-driven culture simultaneously encourages children to grow up while at the same time distorting what they should be considering as they encounter the larger society. Without sentimentalizing bygone days, she points out how concepts of childhood have evolved, mainly as a consequence of capitalist ideology, from a site of innocence and purity to one of sophistication and manipulation. She builds her argument on analyses of children's films, some of which, such as *The Little Princess*, *Jumanji*, *Matilda*, and *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, are adaptations of literary works, while others, such as *Toy Story* and *Pocahontas*, are fantasies about imaginary or real characters. While familiarity with these works, which I do not have, would help a reader understand Jyotsna's argument more clearly, she does explicate the ways that these media products represent a "reinvention of childhood" in which commodification has corrupted the social sensibilities of both children and adults. She concludes by urging creation of a "safe" childhood guided by "human needs" rather than profit (167).

Jacobson argues that the targeting of children as consumers did not originate with Disney, Mattel, McDonald's, or Nickelodeon. Rather, advertisers began marketing to kids as early as the 1890s and developed their child-orientated campaigns throughout the early twentieth century. Using an impressive array of sources, including marketing

literature, magazine ads and articles, radio programs, contemporary social science studies, and more, she builds a convincing case that shows how a bundle of factors—the consumer economy, family life, images of children, education, technology, and children themselves—all interacted to shape a new children's consumer identity. This new identity, Jacobson contends, manifested itself differently according to class and sex. She omits race and ethnicity, concluding that "minority children did not attract national advertisers" (6). Such might not have been the case if Jacobson had examined African American and ethnic publications, but she probably made the correct choice to focus primarily on the prevailing white Anglo culture.

Among the several provocative insights presented in *Raising Consumers* is Jacobson's analysis of the ways that marketers enlisted—perhaps drafted is a more appropriate term—children to reinforce but also challenge prevailing ideologies about the family. In her scheme, middle-class boys played a special role as "heroes of the new consumer age." Advertisers utilized idealized qualities of precocity, loyalty, and mechanical knowhow to valorize boys as dependable consumers whose expertise could influence family spending and counteract the impetuosity of female acquisitiveness. Jacobson seems to take this point too far when she asserts that admen—the gender is central here—"sold" the virtues of the boy consumer as a means of recovering their own identity, but her visual illustrations of how advertisers tried to sell products through boys persuasively support her point that consumerism and a business ethic were not antithetical.

Jacobson's analysis of children's peer and play cultures also enrich her book. These dimensions become especially important in her fascinating chapter on radio, in which Jacobson shows both how advertisers lured children into brand loyalty and peer recognition through membership in special clubs such as Wrigley's Lone Wolf Tribe and acquiring "secret" items such as Little Orphan Annie's Secret Decoder Pin. But also, children's experiences with these ploys exposed them to the deceptions of the consumer world when they discovered that a radio club was not so special and the decoder pin was a cheap piece of plastic. In reaction, says Jacobson, some children subscribed to the *Whatsis*, a tiny Depression-era newspaper "by and for children" that mocked adult pretensions and encouraged kids to assert their own culture.

Both Kapur and Jacobson open important avenues for thought. Their insights into children's *and* adult culture raise questions about generational power and generational conflict. Though Kapur finds some source for optimism in internet users' apparently successful battle against AOL Time Warner's attempt to remove the Harry Potter name from independent web sites, her socialist critique does not give kids enough credit for asserting their own autonomy over their culture. Jacobson, with her perspectives on both the adult world and children's alternative behavior, presents a more nuanced analysis.

Brown University Howard P. Chudacoff

CHICAGO DREAMING: Midwesterners and the City, 1871-1919. By Timothy B. Spears. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2005.

Timothy Spears takes the simple, but profound, proposition that like most American cities in their explosive period of growth, Chicago was a city of immigrants. A place where everyone came from somewhere else, this greatest of Midwestern cities drew seekers of fortune and dreamers of fame from small towns that could excite, but not contain their ambitions. Although we certainly know a great deal about immigrants

from Europe to the city, roused to their long trek by the promise of a better life, we know less about the nearby immigrants from surrounding small towns and cities caught up in the web of cultural influences that Chicago radiated outward. Like their fellow immigrants, the young writers who flocked to the city and contributed to its short, early literary renaissance, were men and women who always hailed from somewhere else. And the literature they produced was often written looking backward and forward, plotted as a narrative of coming to the city, shaken into motion by its possibilities, amazed and appalled at its realities, and forever thinking about the small town America that they left behind.

The subjects of this fine study range from early pioneers like Hoosier George Ade to Richard Wright. What the author calls a "migratory culture" was created in the uncertain, complicated way writers confronted their own journey, their nostalgia for what was left behind (but not abandoned), and the relationship they established with the new city. While many of them treated Chicago as a way station on the further trip to New York and beyond, the experience of going to Chicago and confronting loss and gain, gritty reality, and dreaming, was reproduced through several generations of writers.

This framework allows Spears some important conclusions. As he notes, for example, the "emotional tug-of-war" between status and home that formed part of this migration became a central ingredient in the literary realism of Chicago writers. This reinterpretation suggests other insights into writers such as Theodore Dreiser, Floyd Dell, and Sherwood Anderson, as well as social reformers like Jane Addams. I was particularly struck by the beginning of the book, with its marvelous essays on Chicago's Glessner family and the early writer, George Ade. But there are important insights throughout, into individual writers as well as into the gradual transformation of the Chicago literary community itself. As Spears suggests, this transit to the city played an important part in the development of a modernist style that derived from the community's migratory nature. The estrangement of the writer, so much a part of the modernist persona, reflected this transitory, moody combination of dreaming, nostalgia, and alienation.

Although I wondered on occasion how true this experience might be for any great American literary capital—New York, or perhaps Boston—(I could not help but be struck by Spears' nostalgic closing lines which echo the last image of *Gatsby*, produced by another of America's great peripatetic writers) there is no doubt that seeing Chicago writers as migrants pays hefty benefits. Perhaps one might have wished for fuller engagement with writers like Carl Sandburg or even Dreiser, but that would have required a much longer book. As it stands, *Chicago Dreaming* is immensely suggestive, finely written, and filled with perceptions that suggest new ways of understanding our second city of culture.

University of Maryland James Gilbert

A SINGING AMBIVALENCE: American Immigrants between Old World and New, 1830-1930. By Victor R. Greene. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press. 2004.

Increasingly, historians, and others, have come to understand that musical texts are not simply forms of entertainment, but vehicles of communication. They can provide material for any number of investigations, including but not limited to the feelings of ordinary people. If historians increasingly value what can be learned by drawing upon experience "from below," why then not attune one's antennae to what those individuals are singing or just what material occupies their play list?

Victor R. Green adopts such an approach to the wealth of music created by the average person who belonged to a number of ethnic groups that immigrated to the North American continent over the course of the 100 years circumscribed in his title. He advises that the arts can provide a vibrant barometer for ethnic identity and that the lyrics contained in popular songs can "be the true voice of the masses, especially the articulate lower classes," for "lyrics convey emotions more pointedly and express attitudes more directly than music alone, or either written or oral testimony" (xxi). Songs can be a vehicle for "free messages" that escape the bondage of other media and thereby "help symbolize and hence bond the group" (xxi). In addition, they constitute "valuable evidence of public memory on social conditions and problems" (xxi).

To demonstrate these convictions, Greene draws upon the repertoire and experiences of immigrants from Ireland, Germany, Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, Italy, Poland, Hungary, China, and Mexico. The first three groups constitute "old immigrants"; the next three "new" ones; and the last two "nonwhite peoples." Greene sticks to the secular element of their musical traditions, but does incorporate some works from the popular comic entertainers who accompanied their peers across the sea. This dual approach allows Greene both to clarify how these groups conceived of themselves when they communicated with one another as well as how they chose to define themselves—or some might argue deform themselves—on the stage before mixed audiences.

Greene's work is clear and well organized, carefully if not elegantly written, and enables those new to the fields of either ethnic history or the cultural study of music to familiarize themselves with a wide range of material. However, two elements of his study cobble the results and make for a less than wholly satisfying volume. First, the focus on words alone does not take into account either the context of their recitation or the manner in which audiences assimilated those lyrics in possibly disparate if not contradictory ways. The meaning of the songs, therefore, comes across as somehow transparent, as though the reception of any particular piece would be uniform regardless of the circumstances or the receiver.

Second, the thematic focus of the songs remains remarkably consistent across racial lines. Whatever the person's place of origin, it appears they sang about the dilemma of breaking ties with their homeland; the difficulties that ensued during their journey; and the hurdles that occurred when they endeavored to assimilate to a new society. This renders the material somewhat monotonous, even though Greene does draw attention to the notable idiosyncrasies of some bodies of song, such as the fervent demands for justice in the Mexican repertoire or the particular linguistic battles faced by the Italians. However, leaving aside these issues, Greene's work amply demonstrates how each community's special sorrows found their way into song and that these pieces of music allowed millions of individuals to achieve some perspective upon the difficult and often damaging transition from a familiar universe to an almost altogether alien and inhospitable environment.

BMI Archives — David Sanjek

TREMBLING EARTH: A Cultural History of the Okefenokee Swamp. By Megan Kate Nelson. Athens: University of Georgia Press. 2005.
THIS DELTA, THIS LAND: An Environmental History of the Yazoo-Mississippi Floodplain. By Mikko Saikku. Athens: University of Georgia Press. 2005.

Southern wetlands and floodplains are not yet common settings of environmental histories, but the University of Georgia Press offers two books that adroitly send readers

into this territory. They display the scope of a mature field, from the painstaking ecological attention Saikku brings to the Delta, to the astute cultural analysis Nelson provides of the Okefenokee Swamp. Saikku elaborates "ecohistorical formations" (patterned relationships between humans and the environment) plotted in what he calls "ecohistorical periods" over time. Nelson focuses on what she calls "ecolocal knowledge" to highlight people's different and often conflicting understandings and changes of an environment. Both books claim to be "interdisciplinary," showing how malleable this label is; Saikku amasses data for a comprehensive history, and Nelson offers well-chosen episodes of conflict to open her subject. Both understand that ecologies and human histories are deeply intertwined.

Saikku's deliberate focus is from the ground up. His subject is the Mississippi Delta over the *longue durée*, including geologic time, examining human-induced changes in the landscape to determine if the "original" landscape might plausibly be recovered. The upshot, not surprisingly, is that capitalist changes are ecologically irreversible. The Delta's ecological make-up and complex economic factors at play in its difficult human history of slavery, farm work, logging, flood control, and money-making, carry the book. His ecological verisimilitude is thorough if occasionally dogged. He is least convincing when he ventures out of the "bottomland hardwood forest complex" to puzzle over culture—displaying fragments of Delta blues through culled lyrics, or allowing epigraphs from William Faulkner to stylistically steal the show. The book is an able ecohistorical precedent for other work, particularly, we might expect, after Hurricane Katrina farther downstream.

Nelson's book focuses on the history of human conflict in the Okefenokee Swamp in Georgia. Various ecolocal knowledges coexisted and competed as people used and changed the swamp in different ways. Swamp ecologies were ultimately preserved (as parkland) by the ecolocal knowledge of scientists at the expense of longtime residents, many of whom contributed directly to the research that supported swamp preservation. Nelson has a keen eye for such ironies. Nelson's attention to ecology and hydrology is extensive enough to understand the scope of human efforts in the swamp, though this isn't an ecological historical survey. Of particular interest is Nelson's wonderful account of the swamp as a place people moved through: in warfare (ambushing and fleeing enemies, especially effectively on the part of Seminoles in conflict with American troops), but also in flight from slavery and colonial occupation. The history of a place whose longstanding use was for transit and refuge shifts the lens a little on what or where any "place" is, and what is important to know about it, environmentally and culturally.

Together these books represent a familiar disciplinary range and tension—between history and American studies—at the same time that they extend environmental knowledge about the past to a region where ivory-billed woodpeckers and hurricanes might easily attract broad new curiosity.

University of Wyoming Frieda Knobloch

BRITAIN AND THE AMERICAN SOUTH: From Colonialism to Rock and Roll. Edited by Joseph P. Ward. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press. 2003.

This volume of essays charts Britain's complex and often paradoxical relationship with the Southern states from the Colonial era until the 1950s. Essays cover a wide range of topics including British-Indian relations, religion, trade, law, "Englishness" and Southern cultural identity, British views of the Confederacy, attitudes towards the South on the part of the British political left and images of the South in 1950s British

pop music. As the historian Michael O'Brien notes in his *Afterword*, the ten essays included in this volume reveal an underlying pattern in British-Southern relations—beginning with the Anglophilia that characterized the relationship between the Southern colonies and Britain, and more particularly England, before the 1770s followed by widespread Southern Anglophobia during the seventy years following the War of Independence—paralleling the development of similar British stereotypes of the slave-owning South and Southerners themselves as "lazy, ignorant, violent and cruel" (222). Between the mid-19th and early 20th centuries, however, a sense of representing mutually reinforcing "imperialist racialist cultures" (221) and a gradual acceptance of an "English myth" as an historical grounding for the idea of a "unitary southern culture" (222) began to thaw these frosty relations—particularly between influential members of the British aristocracy and industrial bourgeoisie and Southern upper class plantation owners.

In the wake of Great Britain's loss of Empire after 1945 and the parallel ascendancy of the USA as the world's dominant superpower, British-Southern relations became much more complex and paradoxical. Southerners interest in Britain (and particularly in England and the idea of "Englishness") declined while British interest in the South—for example in the struggle for Civil Rights or in Southern popular music on the part of tens of thousands of youthful British fans of Dixieland jazz, country blues, or Memphis rockabilly—increased and, in the case of music, became a national youth cultural obsession. As the excellent contribution by Brian Ward on images of the American South in 1950s British popular music points out—by the late 1950s a British opinion poll of schoolchildren ranked Elvis Presley "only behind Winston Churchill as the best known public figure" in the country (187)—evidence of the British fascination with Southern-derived musical genres which would produce The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, and plethora of other pop groups that formed the core of the "British invasion" of North American pop music in the mid-1960s.

Although the scholarly caliber of individual essays cannot be faulted, this volume would have benefited from clearer definitions of key terms. This lack of clarity is perhaps most obvious in the rather loose way in which essays employ the idea of Britain and Britishness in their cross-cultural analyses. Several of the essays included in this volume would have benefited from having distinguished between English (or even between Northern and Southern English), Scottish, Irish, and perhaps Welsh perspectives on particular issues—as the politics, economics, and cultural history of each British region often led to a particularly nuanced perspective on the politics, economics, and culture of the American South.

Richmond, The American International University in London Alex Seago

CONTINENTAL CROSSROADS: Remapping U.S.-Mexico Borderlands History. Edited by Samuel Truett and Elliott Young. Durham and London: Duke University Press. 2004.

"The border is the place where the nation continues to be made, but it is also the place where it is unmade" (175)—a valuable insight into recent policy discussions about border militarization and illegal immigration. Truett and Young contend that the important themes of U.S. and Mexican history, which now transcend scholarly debates to affect the post-9/11 political landscape, are best understood in a transnational context. Each contributor to this anthology demonstrates the tension between forces that create "bordered space" between the two nations and those that transnationalize and weaken that space to create hybrid identities, ideologies, and movements. Though this approach is far from new, *Continental Crossroads* ambitiously attempts to blur boundaries of

another kind, inviting historians of the U.S. West, Chicano/as, and Latin America to join anthropologists, literary critics, and cultural studies theorists in an interdisciplinary dialogue.

The ten essays roughly follow the period from the first bursts of Mexican nationalism around 1800 to the legal and cultural enforcement of the border as a barrier by the 1930s. Raul Ramos' piece on the ways that Tejanos in Bexar (San Antonio) negotiated treaties and other peace-keeping strategies with diverse indigenous groups in Texas explores the role of localism in frontier communities. Louise Pubols further shows how local "pre-modern" traditions of power were challenged by, and sometimes withstood, incorporation into larger structures, as in the case of elite Californios who retained their patriarchal authority in Santa Barbara as late as the 1870s by adapting to Anglo-American machine politics. Though implicit at times, the theme of modernism looms large in this collection. Co-editor Elliott Young offers an excellent foray into intellectual history by examining the writings of nascent revolutionary Ignacio Martinez, a type of "Mexican Tocqueville" whose late nineteenth-century observations about U.S. and European imperialism stand as an early critique of industrial "progress" and globalization at the expense of personal, local relationships. Each essay is of fine quality and, taken together, constitute a useful introductory reader to borderlands studies.

Whether they achieve the stated goal of pointing the way to a transnational perspective is another question. Notably absent are essays on the environment, food, music, language, religion (few institutions command more power and loyalty in this regard than the Roman Catholic Church), and other forces that easily jump the border and put national identities on the defensive. Like most anthologies, this delivers a collection of summaries of independently-researched monographs, although its origin in a symposium sponsored by SMU's Clements Center for Southwest Studies gives this book more coherence than most. Despite methodological innovation, the choice of selections reinforces a traditional view of "borderlands." As the editors acknowledge, Mexican communities are now found in Boston, Portland, and Iowa City; where is the scholarship on those places that truly illustrates how borderlands studies has become unbounded from the Southwest? If measured against Truett and Young's intent to reconceptualize understandings of "the border," *Continental Crossroads* is insufficiently daring, but it still represents a positive step in bridging the gap between various fields of inquiry and drawing scholars' attention to a troubled nexus.

Johnson County Community College James N. Leiker

QUEER MIGRATIONS: Sexuality, U.S. Citizenship, and Border Crossings. Edited by Eithne Luibhéid and Lionel Cantú Jr. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 2005.

Among the richest and most interesting areas in queer studies at the moment, international and transnational sexualities holds the possibility of opening up the way we view the social and historical processes whereby differing sexual cultures interact and blend. Such a project is of particular urgency in our period of massive global cultural exchange through mass media, national policy, and especially migration. Lacking in U.S. immigration studies is a careful examination of the interaction of sexuality—and all its identities, meanings, and practices—with the social, political, economic, and historical institutions that provide access to legal immigration, U.S. citizenship, and ethnic community identification within national borders. *Queer Migrations* begins to

fill this hole by asking a range of questions about the experience of queer migrants, their shifting notions about their sexualities in relationship to the U.S. national culture and its institutions, and about the function of U.S. ethnic identities in queer migrants' lives. The collections' authors frame immigration as a delimiting force within the U.S., which powerfully reinforces the national identity. In other words, immigration policy is one of the primary loci of ongoing debates about the meaning of American nationhood. Through policy and practice of excluding queers from the sanctioned immigration process, the United States reinforces a particular kind of heteronormativity fraught with racial and ethnic tensions inherent in immigration policy. Ranging from micro-studies of a single transsexual immigrant's experience, to historical interpretations of U.S. policy, to detailed discussions of particular ethnic groups' ability to assimilate its queer members, the breadth and scope of these essays moves queer scholarship in an ethnically plural society a giant step forward. The only major objection I had in reading through these generally excellent essays was the role of queer theory and cultural theory played in some of the analysis. A few of the essays rely on theoretical claims as normatives to guide their analyses, where the research seems to be conducted to prove the already-known conclusions of the theory. Using queer theory in this way can lead to problematic conclusions not warranted by the evidence at hand, by guiding the researcher to pick and choose among data to meet the requirements of the theory. These essays are at their strongest when the research is guided not by normatives but by descriptive hypotheses; here, the conclusions drawn derive from the evidence and the role of queer theory is as a heuristic to better understand findings. Despite this reservation with some of the methodologies, selections from *Queer Migrations* would make excellent additions to a course on immigration, on queer studies, or even on race and ethnicity.

San Jose State University J. Todd Ormsbee

THE PLAINS SIOUX AND U.S. COLONIALISM: From Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee. By Jeffrey Ostler. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2004.

Tracing Sioux history from the Euro-American invasion of the plains, after Lewis and Clark's exploration at the beginning of the nineteenth century, through the "last stand" of these tribes in the massacre of Wounded Knee in South Dakota in 1890, this compelling book describes the action of the U.S. government and the reaction of the Sioux to the assault on their culture. By using a colonial theory perspective and relying on existing sources and secondary works of a much studied aspect of U.S. colonial expansion, Ostler offers a new opportunity to understand the events that brought to Wounded Knee.

The U.S. government and army are seen as agents of colonialism, while the Sioux tribes' reactions are reconstructed as a continuous attempt at compromising between tradition and acculturation, something other historians and ethnohistorians have already proposed in the past. Part 3 of the volume instead, looks at the Ghost Dance, the suppression of which led to the final decision of gunning down over a hundred Lakotas at Wounded Knee Creek, as an anti-colonial movement. As anthropologists Vittorio Lanternari and Michael Adas, quoted by Ostler himself, theorized in the 1960s and '70s, anti-colonial movements often tried to compromise, with alternate success, between the revival of traditions and the pressure to assimilate imposed by colonial powers. In this perspective, the Sioux were among those unfortunate victims of military decisions that, at times, went well beyond the political ones, even when anti-colonialism manifested itself in a peaceful manner.

"Although some prophets of rebellion—writes the author—advocated armed resistance, others, like Wovoka [the Paiute prophet of the Ghost Dance] looked to spiritual power to overthrow colonial rule" (250). However, Ostler does not discount altogether the ultimate objective of the Ghost Dance. Wovoka, in fact: ". . . recognized the futility of armed resistance to U.S. power and feared that assertions of militancy would provoke a brutal crack down;" rather he hoped for a "cataclysmic event to accomplish this" (249).

The book follows through the historical events that eventually led the Sioux to embrace the Ghost Dance which could be superimposed, to an extent, to existing religious beliefs. Moreover, the author is very effective in describing how the colonial authority imposed on the Indians eventually led them to find alternative ways of resisting U.S. rule after their defeat in war, and later their submission to the "civilizing agents" introduced in the reservations through the application of American Indian policy. First of all, came the break up of the Great Sioux Reservation and then the allotment of Indian land in severalty, both with the aim of breaking up tribal allegiance and appropriate new Indian land.

In all these instances, the policy of the U.S. government was always of a colonial nature. Once the American Indians, after 1871, were deprived of their status as independent nations, they saw themselves constrained by policies that continuously tried to adjust their presence into what was to become United States territory. Along these lines, and in the spirit of the book, one can affirm that this part of U.S. policy was imperialistic to the bone. In fact, not only it aimed at controlling people and "civilizing" them, but had as its final goal the conquest and control of their lands.

Another good example of colonial rule, is the way government emissaries handled the information that trickled through. The much contested agent of Pine Ridge Valentine Mc Gillicuddy, who opposed the Oglala chief Red Cloud because of his lack of collaboration with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and as a "bad example" for his people, decided not to have him arrested from fear of a bad press. "Had Red Cloud been manacled and thrown on a train to a military prison"—writes Ostler—"dozens of reporters would have clamoured for interviews and broadcast Red Cloud's version of events, Mc Gillycuddy would have realized that from New York to San Francisco he would stand accused of being a thief and a tyrant." Very much like what happened to European colonial powers' officials whose mistreatments of natives in the nineteenth century, when reported by liberal journalists in the field, could result at least in judicial inspections.

The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism is another way of looking at the interaction between Native Americans and the U.S. government thanks to the help of a colonial theory approach and within a more general framework of colonial relations (which, by the way, contributes to the deconstruction of the theory of American Exceptionalism), while narrating once again the sad, yet engaging history of the resistance of the Plains Indians to the expansion of the American Frontier.

University of Macerata (Italy) Daniele Fiorentino

OUR SISTERS' KEEPERS: Nineteenth-Century Benevolence Literature by American Women. Edited by Jill Bergman and Debra Bernardi. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press. 2005.

While reading this book, I was continually reminded of the opening scene of *Little Women*, in which Marmee encourages her daughters to give their scant Christmas

breakfast to an even more poverty-stricken family than theirs. In doing so, she intimates, they will gain far more than the transient pleasures of the table. None of the essays in *Our Sisters' Keepers* directly addresses Alcott's classic novel, yet in both medium and message it would fit right into this edited collection of essays about nineteenth-century benevolence literature by American women. Editors Debra Bernardi and Jill Bergman divide the contributions to this volume into two categories: "The Genre of Benevolence" and "Negotiating the Female American Self through Benevolence." Many of the episodes found in *Little Women* fit the models of the benevolence genres that some of the essayists discuss, such as representations of the "deserving poor" (Lori Merish) and the "domesticated economy" (Mary Templin). Perhaps more strikingly, Marmee's hopes that benevolence will shape the very identities of her daughters reflects the negotiations of the female self that other of the essayists discuss in work on the right to privacy (Debra Bernardi) and "motherly benevolence" (Jill Bergman).

Most of the contributors to *Our Sisters' Keepers* focus on specific authors in offering their analysis of American women's benevolence literature. Some of these nineteenth-century authors, like Frances Harper and Jane Addams, will be more familiar to non-specialists than others, like Rebecca Harding Davis and Mary Wilkins Freeman. Most of them made their mark as writers of fiction. All achieved success in their own time, however, and they are certainly appropriate subjects for investigation. It is less clear from these essays whether they considered each other any kind of cohort or felt themselves to be contributing to a particular genre of benevolence writing.

As is often the case with edited collections, the quality of essays is rather uneven. Several of them suffer from a limited engagement with recent historiography on gender and benevolence. Although literary scholars need not succumb to historicism or empiricism unless they so choose, if they do (appropriately) reference history, they should not situate their work in somewhat outdated discussions of status anxiety and social control. Sarah E. Chinn's essay on the Hull-House Labor Museum avoids this methodological flaw and is one of the strongest contributions to the volume as a result.

The fairly broad time period covered by *Our Sisters' Keepers* presents a similar problem for the coherence of the volume, regardless of the quality of the individual essays. With the exception of Monika Elbert's essay on Sarah Orne Jewett and James Salazar's essay on Jane Addams, the crucial (though not teleological) progression of benevolence to philanthropy to social work, with all the attendant connections to the growth of the social sciences, women's professionalization, and the bureaucratization of America, is not considered. Though there is much of interest and value in the book, the sum is not quite equal to the whole of its parts.

Rowan University Melissa R. Klapper

LABORING TO PLAY: Home Entertainment and the Spectacle of Middle-Class Cultural Life, 1859-1920. By Melanie Dawson. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press. 2005.

WALTZ THE HALL: The American Play Party. By Alan L. Spurgeon. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. 2005.

These two books share a single topic—family leisure in 19th and early 20th century America—yet they are totally different in method and purpose. That "play" occurs in both titles merely confirms that the word is ambiguous and ill-defined. Melanie Dawson, Visiting Assistant Professor of English at the College of William and Mary, has written a dense and complex monograph, a revision of her doctoral dissertation at the University

of Pittsburgh, on primarily female middle-class identity as expressed in parlor games, charades, tableaux vivants, and dramatic recitations. Drawing on etiquette and game instruction books and supplementing them with several novels in which the characters engage in these activities, Dawson argues that middle-class women between the 1850s and the 1920s first sought to use parlor games to establish the boundaries of the "middling lifestyles," which included individual achievement, self-control, and egalitarianism. In the Gilded Age, the middling class, having expanded in number, wealth, and self-confidence, began to play games that emphasized style and class solidarity. As the century turned, however, concern over the widening gap between the generations led to an emphasis on historical recitations and pageants.

My brief summary of Professor Dawson's well-researched and vigorously argued book can only begin to suggest what interested readers will find. Her analyses of the parlor activities, close readings of "Blind Man's Bluff," "The Genteel Lady," "The Museum Game," "Slang versus Dictionary," and many tableaux vivants, home theatricals, and recitations (illustrated with reproductions from the game books and magazines) demonstrate the utility of such seemingly trivial relics and open many new avenues for research and teaching about the social and cultural history of the years 1850-1920. Likewise, Dawson offers new and insightful interpretations of stories and novels by Louisa May Alcott, Susan Warner, Charlotte Brontë, William Makepeace Thackeray, Edith Wharton, Willa Cather, Harold Frederic, Sinclair Lewis, and Carol Brink, author of *Caddie Woodlawn*. While her primary interest is in the ways in which the participants in home entertainments performed their game-ascribed roles, Dawson pays some attention to the economics of publishing, changes in domestic architecture, and the growth of fraternal organizations. Her methods are those of a literary and cultural studies scholar, yet she provides a solid base of social history. *Laboring to Play* is interdisciplinary in the best American studies tradition.

Dawson is aware that using leisure to explore a subject as complex as social class is fraught with paradoxes. If parlor games were primarily the provenance of women, how well do these same games represent the identities that middling men were forming in the hurly-burly of late 19th century business and professional life? Without evidence of how often these activities were engaged in or with what intensity, or whether there were regional differences, the reader is left to wonder, as Dawson herself does, if Victorian Americans classified parlor games, charades, tableaux vivants, and recitations in quite the same way as she does in her book. Pushed, as too many young scholars are these days, to give every facet of everyday life a profound political significance, Dawson rambles into the following assertion: "If the situation announced by mid-century allusions to childhood can be read as analogous to the international scene and to U.S. efforts claim to metaphoric adulthood in the global arena, then we see the complexities infusing claims to broadly imagined social and economic maturity" (50). The weakest parts of the book are those on the relation between children's play and adult leisure. In attempting to show how late 19th century historical dramas and recitations sought to build community, Dawson compares the aims of the history pageants to the goals of the "Playground Reform Movement, where parks and other city spaces were set aside for city children's leisure hours, there was an obvious nostalgia for 'a lost, magic space of "real outdoors"' that echoed tensions surrounding the perceived loss of an American frontier, announced by Frederic Jackson Turner in 1893" (195). Let's give poor pilloried Turner a break, the motivation for the playground movement stemmed more from G. Stanley Hall's Darwinian notions of child development and Playground Association

leader Jay B. Nash's belief that whatever it might be, play was not idleness, recreation, amusement, or leisure. Play was children's work and playgrounds were designed for maximum efficiency.

Alan Spurgeon's *Waltz the Hall* is unburdened by heavy theoretical apparatus. Essentially an anthology of about a hundred songs (with musical notation and instructions for movement) recorded from more than fifty informants in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas, Spurgeon's book is prefaced by a sixty-page overview of the play party, an activity between children's ring games and square dancing, primarily for teenagers in religiously fundamentalist rural America in the 19th and early 20th century. "Play" in this context was a euphemism for "dance," an activity forbidden by some Protestant denominations. Though the specifics differed from place to place, most play parties began at dusk and continued to midnight, usually in the fall and early winter. Refreshments were sometimes available, but rowdiness and drinking were forbidden. Unlike square dances, which had a "caller," the participants sang the songs to which they danced and no fiddles or other instruments were permitted. Spurgeon, an associate professor of music at the University of Mississippi, provides a good bibliographical essay and footnotes.

While *Laboring to Play* will appeal to a wider audience than *Waltz the Hall* both are worthwhile contributions to American studies and should be in every research library.

Washington University Bernard Mergen

THE OTHER MISSOURI HISTORY: Populists, Prostitutes, and Regular Folks. Edited by Thomas M. Spencer. Columbia: University of Missouri Press. 2004.

Five years ago *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* launched a review essay series (see, http://www.kshs.org/publicat/history/online.htm) for the purpose of assessing the state of the state's history in light of relatively recent historiographical developments—the rise of the "new" American and western history. The results have been rewarding on many levels. By the time we bring the series to an end sometime in 2007, nearly two-dozen scholars will have contributed essays on that many topics, from gender, family, and race to the environment, agriculture, and urbanization to religion, the arts, and transportation. The contributors have skillfully assessed the existing literature and suggested many areas in need of further study, but it has been gratifying to realize that a great deal of "new" history has already been or is being written.

There will always be a need for more, and the methodologies of the "new" history have been slow to reach some topics on the state and local levels, but we are getting there in Kansas, and as Thomas M. Spencer demonstrates with *The Other Missouri History*, there is much exciting working going on across the border as well. The nine essays in this volume "examine how ordinary Missourians dealt with problems that arose as significant social and economic change took place" (2) during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Two essays, including one by the editor, an associate professor of history at Northwest Missouri State University who examines the "Bald Knobbers" and the "culture of violence in the Ozarks," adeptly deal with race and politics in Reconstruction era Missouri. Two others explore issues of race and organized labor in St. Louis—one during the antebellum period and the other after World War II—and two more deal with agriculture and its problems during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The final three essays have women as their focus: a particular women's club in St. Joseph, women and reform in the early twentieth century, and prostitution in

Kansas City from 1880 to 1930. Like other "practitioners of this 'new' approach to history have discovered" more generally, the scholars whose work is represented in *The Other Missouri History* demonstrate that "the social location of Americans (and Missourians) impact their view of problems and the various proposed solutions" (2).

Populism, for example, which permeated Kansas politics during the 1890s and had a profound impact in the Plains and across the South, simply did not take root in rural northern Missouri, according to historian Michael J. Steiner, "The Failure of Alliance/Populism in Northern Missouri." Show-Me-State farmers fared better in several respects than did many of their neighbors to the north and west, and although election returns and Alliance membership rosters "suggest the foundation for a successful movement" (141), Steiner's careful analysis of the local scene revealed only limited enthusiasm or support for structural reform. It is only through studies of this sort that we can really examine the complexity of individual and/or group motivation and begin to understand why national and even regional generalizations, though useful and necessary, are also often problematic.

Kansas State Historical Society Virgil W. Dean

ORANGE EMPIRE: California and the Fruits of Eden. By Douglas Cazaux Sackman. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2005.

Douglas Cazaux Sackman's *Orange Empire* is a cultural history of the development of California's orange industry. He begins with the creation of the navel orange and its sale as sunshine in a healthful and convenient package, and ends with the New Deal era condemnation of the orange industry as a savage exploiter of labor. He carefully follows the development of the idea of California as the Garden of Eden, with oranges at its center, through the less edenic and more problematic realities of marketing, fumigating, picking, and packaging fruit. The book is perhaps most useful in its collection and interpretation of images from the orange empire. Sackman has brought together a wide range of advertising art depicting fruit, as well as artistic renderings of its place in California culture as well as the culture of health. These images are nicely juxtaposed with Farm Security Administration photographs of laborers and their conditions, particularly Dorothea Lange's citrus camp pictures. The irony of "oranges for health" being produced in the most unhealthy of environments will not be lost on the reader. Sackman focuses on the navel orange, not as a part of nature, but as a creation of those who would exploit it for their own purposes.

Agricultural historians, however, will probably find it somewhat unsatisfying. While the author spends some time on the nuts and bolts of orange breeding, pest control, labor, and marketing, the larger focus is upon the *image* of oranges, pest control, and labor. Visual and literary depictions—or interpretations of the orange—are the focus, which may leave some readers wanting more of a structure upon which to hang Sackman's analysis. Additionally, the narrative is unattached to a larger understanding of rural and agricultural history. For example, the author points out that growers, educators, and reformers attempted to Americanize Mexican and Mexican-American farm laborers, encouraging them to modify their diets, housing, and all other aspects of life to fit the dominant society's ideas of proper producers of healthful fruit. He remarks that reformers would not have pursued the same path with other rural dwellers who happened to be native born, rather than immigrants and racial others. In this, however, the author is incorrect. In the same time period, extension agents and educators were deeply involved

in a movement to reform the countryside, to change the eating habits, the dwellings, and the attitudes of rural Americans, in order to make them more like middle class, urban Americans, with the specific purpose of keeping farm families on the farm. The "Americanization" and class-based re-education of farm peoples was in no way restricted to immigrants, Mexican or otherwise. Oranges, and California, might be better served by being treated as a part of larger trends in agriculture, rather than as a case apart.

In spite of these concerns, *Orange Empire* is an original, readable, and interesting book, and a welcome addition to the somewhat slim literature on California's agricultural history. It should be read side-by-side with Steven Stoll's *The Fruits of Natural Advantage*, and David Vaught's *Cultivating California.*

Iowa State University Pamela Riney-Kehrberg

ZORA NEALE HURSTON AND A HISTORY OF SOUTHERN LIFE. By Tiffany Ruby Patterson. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 2005.

Tiffany Ruby Patterson has taken on an ambitious task. Her intention is to focus on the work of Zora Neale Hurston as a "source of historical knowledge" about the black south during the period from the 1880s to the 1940s.

She believes Hurston is uniquely qualified to present the historical reality of black people during this period, a reality that was not confined to race issues. Hurston, Patterson believes, posited black culture as a defense against racist practices in a way that liberated her from deleterious effects of white control.

The attempt is to "see Hurston and the world she depicted in their historical context." Patterson argues for combining the traditional methodology of historians with Hurston's ethnography to acquire a deeper understanding of African American culture.

In six very clearly and cogently written chapters, she makes a strong case for her method. She is particularly persuasive when she focuses on Hurston's ability to incorporate and present the special nature of African American folk culture.

She contrasts Hurston's imaginative portrait of the south with Richard Wright's horror of Jim Crow. She compares Hurston's home town, Eatonville, to the history of maroon societies and uses maroonage to understand vibrant southern, all-black towns like Eatonville. She is especially insightful when she postulates that Hurston always had a white audience and "had to take that audience into account throughout her life, both in what she said and how she said it." As Zora reported in *Mules and Men*, "got one mind for white folks to see, another for what I know is me." Patterson's goal, she states, is to examine such cultural practice as a form of historical documentation.

This is a very shrewd and rich way to read Hurston, and it offers fresh and new perspectives on almost every page. Of particular note is the way that Hurston embodies both past and present, and how her sympathy for the supernatural gave her insights into the special knowledge that gave country folk special power. Black folks had "practical ways of knowing things," says Patterson, and Hurston's understanding of this fact makes her an "invaluable witness to her era."

This is a very good book, one that will be at the center of future Hurston scholarship. It is well researched and has a comprehensive grasp of Hurston's biography. Subtleties that made Hurston's life so interesting are given full view. As Patterson eloquently puts it, Hurston's work "cast a spotlight on the most sensitive issues of black culture—gender, sexuality, color, hoodoo and violence."

University of Kansas Robert E. Hemenway

DEMOCRATIC HOPE: Pragmatism and the Politics of Truth. By Robert B. Westbrook. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 2005.

In 1991 Robert Westbrook published *John Dewey and American Democracy*, an outstanding intellectual biography of the American pragmatist philosopher. *Democratic Hope* is another excellent book. It is a collection of essays enormously helpful in assessing the significance of a growing interest in classical pragmatism among historians, literary critics, social scientists, and philosophers. In his own assessment Westbrook is concerned to clarify differences between what Peirce, James, and Dewey said and what contemporary neo-pragmatists say they said. In addition he carefully differentiates the consequences of classical pragmatism for democracy from political inferences drawn by recent commentators—even those of philosophers Hilary Putnam and Cheryl Misak for whose work Westbrook has the most affinity. His project is both "to ensure that the genealogy of pragmatism is an honest one, and [to shape] the revival of pragmatism in particular directions, both philosophical and political" (xiv). As an historian Westbrook combines wide-ranging and meticulous scholarship with the calling of a publicly engaged intellectual. In this he is not unlike C. Wright Mills, another pragmatist fellow traveler, from whom Westbrook took for his subtitle the phrase, "the politics of truth" (216).

The book is divided into two parts. The first part, "Pragmatism Old," contains five essays—one on Peirce, one on James, and three on Dewey. The second part, "Pragmatism New," contains four essays. Of these, one is an analysis and critique of the neo-pragmatism of Richard Rorty. Another is devoted to the writings of philosopher/theologian Cornell West. A third essay evaluates the "epistemological justification of democracy" in the philosophical writings of previously mentioned neo-pragmatists Putnam and Misak (9). The sources of Putnam's theory in Dewey's writings are carefully examined as are the Peircean roots of Misak's similar position. Both writers, with Westbrook's endorsement, clarify the political implications of core arguments found in the work of Dewey and Peirce. In so doing, Westbrook argues, they take these arguments in directions never explicitly taken by Dewey and, in the case of Peirce, contrary to his own political views. The fourth and concluding essay, "Educating Citizens," provides both a brief history of the rise and decline of civic education in the United States and a sketch of the kind of education substantive democracy, in the spirit of classical pragmatism, requires.

For Westbrook, the theory of inquiry at the core of classical pragmatism not only justifies robust, deliberative democracy (Putnam), but also radical egalitarianism (Misak). Realizing a stronger, more egalitarian democracy, however, requires pushing liberal democracies in social democratic directions by appropriating notions of "social citizenship" and "social rights" advanced by British sociologist T. H. Marshall in 1949 (172). In recognizing these political implications Westbrook aligns himself with the social democratic politics of Richard Rorty and Cornell West. He differs from Rorty, however, in that the latter simply does not recognize that the pragmatist theory of inquiry has any political valence at all (8-12, 162-63, 188). The sharpest disagreement in the book is between the political implications drawn by Westbrook, Putnam, and Misak, and those drawn by Federal judge, law professor, market liberal, and neo-pragmatist Richard Posner. While Posner considers the pragmatist theory of inquiry valuable for science, political elites, and the practice of law, he argues that the links between inquiry and egalitarian, deliberative democracy are false and utopian. Instead, Posner follows Joseph Schumpeter in advocating democratic elitism where democracy is saved by

requiring natural leaders to compete against each other for the votes of otherwise apathetic and self-interested citizens (189-94).

Lawrence, KS J. Robert Kent

THE DISFRANCHISEMENT MYTH: Poor Whites and Suffrage Restriction in Alabama. By Glenn Feldman. Athens: University of Georgia Press. 2004.

The 1901 campaign to strip the right to vote from African Americans in Alabama, argues Glenn Feldman in this superb monograph, was but one aspect of "a broader . . . turn-of-the-century whitening movement" that burgeoned throughout the south (156). One of this book's virtues is that Feldman manages to maintain his focus on the process of disfranchisement itself, while also revealing how this "whitening" drive distorted every promising economic or political reform in Alabama.

The facts that disfranchisement was accompanied by the most fantastic, paranoid, and obscene manifestations of racism; that such racism spewed forth from all classes—the plain-whites and the planter-industrialist elites, city dwellers, townsfolk, and dirt farmers; and that it came from all sections—Wiregrass, Black Belt, and Hill Country—will probably not astonish the ordinary educated reader. Only the specialists will be caught by surprise. That is because of the gradually tightening hold on historians of a mistaken conclusion that was reached by C. Vann Woodward in 1951; then reinforced by J. Morgan Kousser in his canonical *The Shaping of Southern Politics* in 1974; and finally taken up and radicalized by some southern historians until it crystallized into a dogma. That belief was that because most of the opposition to the disfranchising 1901 constitution came from counties with plain-white majorities, the majority of poor white voters rejected disfranchisement itself. Woodward concluded from white-county election results that poor whites "'turned down flatly'" the disfranchising constitution (3). Kousser reinforced this category mistake by reporting findings based on "*estimates* of vote patterns, not real or actual figures" (4), and one recent historian even argued that the poor whites "'did not seek to exclude blacks from the political process'" (8).

With relentless thoroughness, Feldman shows just how preposterous that myth has become. As he dryly puts it: "Hill Country [plain-white] sentiment in favor of disfranchisement is not hard to come by in the primary sources—only in the secondary ones" (61).

Feldman recounts the progress of disfranchisement from the gubernatorial election of 1900 through the establishment of the whites-only direct primary in 1902. At the center of the story and the analysis is the 1901 constitutional convention, which produced a framing document that enshrined white supremacy in voting. As Feldman shows, however, after voters ratified the constitution the elites wasted no time in disfranchising many poor white voters, as well. But those plain whites, Feldman also argues, by their unequivocal embrace of the myths of race and Reconstruction, were knowingly complicit in their own political demise.

The research is based on Alabama archives great and small. The methodology includes minute analyses of key election results, summarized in twenty-three statistical tables. In developing his argument, the author raises some of the profoundest questions of the historian's craft: questions of method, of ideology, of what constitutes people's "interests," of logic and its relation to the interpretation of data. He does not dwell on such questions, but the reader must. This is an important and deeply depressing study,

and despite its restricted subject matter will become a standard reference on early twentieth-century southern race relations.

Saint Louis University Matthew Mancini

THE PLAYFUL CROWD: Pleasure Places in the Twentieth Century. By Gary S. Cross and John K. Walton. New York: Columbia University Press. 2005.

Gary Cross and John Walton compare four different amusement parks: Coney Island, the British resort Blackpool, Disneyland, and the British heritage museum Beamish. They see Coney Island and Blackpool as sites of "industrial saturnalia," in which early twentieth-century crowds jested with technology, developing a post-Victorian "accommodation to fun" (120). These early amusement parks gradually gave way to the "consumerist saturnalia" of Disneyland and Beamish, which both fulfilled and resisted late twentieth-century consumer culture.

This book's most interesting conclusions lie in its analysis of the class transition from Coney Island to Disneyland. Reformers and Disney planners re-organized the boisterous, sensuous, and working-class crowds of Coney Island, transforming the "carnie" atmosphere into the more decorous, middle-class Disneyland by centering on ideas of "family-friendly fun." The freak shows of Coney Island were "cutesified" into the seven dwarves of Disney through ideas of "family entertainment" (126). Families, and especially children, were repositioned as inherently bourgeois. Disney's families replaced Coney's mobs.

Despite that interesting analysis, the bulk of the book is laden with details which tend to raise more questions than they answer. How did Coney Island's steadily-increasing African-American visitors view Coney's games such as "Kill the Coon"? Issues of race are largely absent from this book about class and leisure. How did laborers at each amusement park view the "playful crowds"—especially laborers such as the 3,800 "Natives" brought to Coney Island for display, or the wet-nurses who were forbidden to eat Coney Island junk food while they cared for the premature babies on display in Dr. Martin Couney's "infant incubators" near the freak shows? This book offers great details which could open up to more analysis.

Other authors have provided better accounts of industry-inspired technologies of commercial pleasure, the early twentieth-century rise in imperialist gaze as mass entertainment, overlaps between science and pleasure, and modern changes in heterosocial adolescent socializing. Cross and Walton focus on class, but even with that focus, it is unclear what evidence can indicate which rides appealed to the working-class and which were more "upmarket," in their term. Class is not monolithic and members of the same class may make very different choices in leisure.

The authors are sympathetic to the pleasure sites whose stories they detail here, especially Beamish, a living history site that recreates a British village of 1825 and 1913. Beamish has been criticized for avoiding depicting the unsavory aspects of industrialization, but Cross and Walton declare that critics fail to understand that popular museums must avoid controversy and, anyway, it would take too many actors to stage a strike. Yet they note that this museum had enough actors to stage a celebration of the winning of the Boer War, a celebration that one hopes was not free from controversy. Instead of comparing Beamish to Disneyland, the authors might more profitably compare Beamish to the U.S. National Historical Park at Lowell, Massachusetts, a museum which manages to present a surprisingly nuanced depiction of industrialization.

That quibble leads to the major problem of the book: why focus with such detail on only these four sites of leisure? This co-written comparison of four amusement parks in the U.S. and U.K. can lead to some interesting insights—for instance, when contrasting the cooperative role of government in Blackpool and the antagonistic role of government at Coney Island—but more often, the juxtaposition seems a bit forced, leading not to a promising transnationalism but a less-helpful flirting with essentialist declarations about the American or British character. The authors correctly acknowledge that the particularities of each site defy easy comparison, but then their book lingers too long on those particularities.

California State University, Fullerton Elaine Lewinnek

LABOR RIGHTS ARE CIVIL RIGHTS: Mexican American Workers in Twentieth Century America. By Zaragosa Vargas. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2005.

As the main title suggests, *Labor Rights Are Civil Rights* argues that the struggles of ethnic Mexicans for better working conditions involved fighting for the basic human rights due citizens and residents alike. Despite its subtitle, the book largely covers union organizing among Mexicans in the United States in a more limited era, from the late twenties through the late forties. Though some will hear echoes of victimization, *Labor Rights* is a powerful reassertion of the Chicano claim that ethnic Mexicans were and remain an exploited minority.

Organized chronologically overall, the six chapters nonetheless overlap since one or two focus on a particular topic, rather than a period—the Congress of Industrial Organizations, for example. Chapter One describes the poor condition of ethnic Mexican labor, "the Salt of the Earth," leading to the tragic refrain of deportation. Two, including a section entitled "Guns, Bayonets, and Clubs," narrates epic strikes under the National Recovery Administration. Three stresses the "Labor Offensive" of the CIO; this chapter has the liveliest narrative, a biography depicting organizer Emma Tenayuca as a working human being, rather than a dry labor statistic. Four presents the International Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers Union, and other "Advocates of Racial Democracy." Five, "The Lie of 'America's Greatest Generation,'" surveys the Mexican-American experience during World War II. Six discusses the progress and "Right-Wing Backlash" of the immediate post-war years (ix-xi). The Introduction summarizes the coming chapters and the Conclusion summarizes the previous chapters, in a repetitious pattern common to labor history. The chapter titles reveal that Vargas pulls no punches, as he provides new and deeper evidence of the plight of workers.

Methodologically, Vargas is at his best when he places statistics in context, especially in a national or international setting. In Chapter One, for example, when the author states the illiteracy rates of Tejanos, he compares them with African Americans and Mexican immigrants. In the last chapter he informs us that Mexican Americans only comprised 15 percent of Mine Mill, an organization often inaccurately called the "Mexican Union." Such comparative figures give us a greater sense of the actual size, exploitation, and impact of ethnic Mexicans in the United States.

In support of his thesis, Vargas does a marvelous job of synthesizing the best secondary sources with newly uncovered primary material—in English. However, there is a lack of Spanish-language and Mexican archival sources. Occasionally, Vargas alludes to labor unions south of the border, such as the Confederación de Trabajadores Mexicanos, but his endnotes regarding this group lead us to archives in the United

States, not Mexico. Though a few works written in English with Spanish titles appear, Spanish-language newspapers are apparently absent. (A bibliography would have made the research easier to assess.) In a field where a transnational perspective is essential, Vargas fails to provide that fully.

On the whole, *Labor Rights* nevertheless updates and deepens our knowledge of its subject, setting a tone that reminds us, in our time of heated debate over immigration, that oppression is not simply a thing of the past.

Southern Methodist University John R. Chávez

MAKING JAZZ FRENCH: Music and Modern Life in Interwar Paris. By Jeffrey H. Jackson. Durham & London: Duke University Press. 2003.

For his social study of the impact of jazz and jazz musicians on Parisian culture in the 1920s and '30s, Jeffrey H. Jackson combed through French-language print sources—newspapers, magazines, jazz and scholarly journals, newsletters, memoirs and biographies, and unpublished papers of the music's early champions Hugues Panassié and Charles Delaunay—as well as a broad swath of secondary sources in French and English. Jackson demonstrates how jazz (alongside the tango and Hawaiian music) was one of several exotic styles to invade Paris's dance halls, and how French audiences and commentators imposed on this new music a range of sometimes conflicting or conflated attitudes: jazz was symbol of incipient Americanization, modernism, and primitivism all at once. American expatriates and wealthy visitors made up a substantial part of the Parisian jazz audience, and décor in local venues often mirrored the same jungle and plantation stereotypes African-American musicians confronted back home. (The failure of some French observers to distinguish between African-Americans and Africans exacerbated the problem.) Jackson also looks at the protectionist policies advocated by French musicians (not for the last time) when they found themselves squeezed out of work by foreign competition.

His chapter on the Hot Club de France—a national and then international confederation of local fan clubs and record collectors, guided by Panassié and Delaunay—must be the fullest discussion in English. (And yet one longs for more detail about the Clubs' internecine squabbles: Panassié and Delaunay were to became bitter critical rivals.) In the mid-1930s, the Hot Clubs, chiefly via its journal *Jazz-Hot*, promoted a still-new view of the music on its way to becoming a bicontinental commonplace and cliché: white (European or American)/sweet/commercial jazz was less pure, powerful, and good than the black (American)/hot/genuine kind, suffused as it was with the melancholy of its oppressed creators.

The author writes in a dry, clear, unjargonized style. He wisely draws on valuable studies such as Chris Goddard's 1979 *Jazz Away from Home*, but Jackson shies away from amusing or sensational anecdotes no matter how pertinent. This is the rare discussion of jazz in interwar Paris that omits mention of clarinetist Sidney Bechet's 1928 sidewalk shootout with another American, in which two bystanders were wounded. (Surely that affected some Parisians' opinion of jazz.) Jackson in his notes chides another scholar for neglecting some primary sources, but he himself leaves a crucial cache unexamined. What, he asks, "did French audiences hear, and what did French musicians play?" (10) For that matter, what did the American musicians in Paris play—what sort of examples did they set? What American records were available? Jackson fails to address any of these questions. Granted, his focus is on reactions to jazz, not the music itself, but it's

useful to have a look at what folks are reacting to, if only as a reality-check. (Imagine a study of French reactions to Picasso that fails to consider a single painting.) One example of how ignoring recorded evidence distorts the picture: in a cross-promotional move, guitarist Django Reinhardt's band was dubbed the Hot Club Quintet. Yet his music bears little resemblance to the Hot Clubs' Armstrong ideal. That Reinhardt's quintessentially Parisian jazz contained pronounced East European (non-African-American, non-French) strains is never acknowledged, let alone examined.

There is much valuable information here for the jazz historian or global sociologist, but one might profitably read Jackson in conjunction with Goddard, or Mark Miller's lively, panoramic, information-packed (and scrupulously documented) *Some Hustling This! Taking Jazz to the World 1914-1929* (Toronto: Mercury Press. 2005), which draws on one more rich vein of information: reports filed by musicians abroad to African-American newspapers.

University of Kansas Kevin Whitehead

THE FIRST RESORT OF KINGS: American Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century. By Richard T. Arndt. Washington, DC: Potomac Books. 2005.

At the beginning of this review I must reveal my own position as a minor player in the world of USIA and cultural diplomacy: during 1994 I was the Scholar-in-Residence in the Division for the Study of the United States, a portion of the "E" Bureau that Richard Arndt so meticulously dissects in his massive study. Since 1977, while on my first Fulbright (itself one of the signal accomplishments of post-World War II cultural diplomacy) I began participating in United States Information Service (USIS)-sponsored events, a series of activities that endured as a priceless part of my career until the dissolution of the United States Information Agency (USIA) in October 1999. My first reaction to *The First Resort of Kings* is that it rings true, both as shop talk and as a recapitulation of the history of twentieth century cultural diplomacy.

More importantly, this study brings to the fore a too-little studied aspect of American history. In the sometimes arcane narration of how Cultural Affairs Officers (CAOs) related to their superiors in Public Affairs, for example, is embedded a vitally important history of the neglect and occasional ostracism within federal bureaucracies of the mechanisms for cultural understanding between the United States and other nations of the world in favor of information. While acknowledging the infusion of propaganda into these efforts—exchanges, programs for visitors, traveling exhibits, etc.—Arndt points out that those who confuse propaganda with cultural diplomacy construct a simplistic view of the world. I agree. In a post-9/11 world, Arndt asserts, true cultural diplomacy, as a form of international education, is more necessary than ever before. I agree again.

My third impression of this book is that it is simply too long. In constructing a history of cultural diplomacy Arndt finds recourse in the founders of the republic, and occasionally retreats even further into history. I am willing to indulge him these preambles because of the details of bureaucratic change, political climate, and even personal commitment that he weaves together, using traditional documents, seminal texts, and personal reminiscences gleaned from his fellow Foreign Service Officers.

There are insights at every level. He gives us the best explanation I have found of the transfer from IIA to USIA in the early 1950s. He has wonderful vignettes of "intellectual CAOs" during the heyday of the USIA. He populates his text with heroes

like Archibald MacLeish and Charles Frankel, bumblers like Nelson Rockefeller, and villains like Charles Wick. His description of the three cultures of cultural diplomacy—USIA culture, CU culture, and field culture—is spot on, in my experience, although I would add political appointees as a fourth, rather than as a separate species to be excoriated, as Arndt does. His plan for the rehabilitation of cultural diplomacy deserves a wide audience.

As one would expect in a book of more than 550 pages, there are inaccuracies. Arndt's account of *The Family of Man*, which I have investigated in some detail in my own work, is wrong in some particulars, but correct in overall shape. I am willing to overlook this slippage, and there are, no doubt, others, because of the unique insight that this book offers into a form of diplomacy that, I hope, has not been consigned to history.

University of Wyoming Eric J. Sandeen

TUNES FOR 'TOONS: Music and the Hollywood Cartoon. By Daniel Goldmark. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 2005.

Since the release in 1990 of the best-selling compact disc, *The Carl Stalling Project*, a compendium of cartoon music by Warner Bros.' most prolific and popular cartoon composer, public and academic interest in cartoon music has acquired a hitherto denied credibility. Daniel Goldmark is one of the leading young scholars in the field, and his *Tunes for 'Toons: Music and the Hollywood Cartoon* continues the historical and aesthetic investigations begun in his earlier *The Cartoon Music Book*. At the core of his discussion is a debate sparked by Theodor Adorno regarding the consequences of the so-called "culture industry's" commodification of the arts, particularly music. Adorno frankly despised what he charged was the resulting cultural dilution and degredation of cultural expression. A counter presumption, one held most potently by Walt Disney, holds that the media's popularization and dissemination of the art gains them a wider audience (and perhaps an appreciation) never before possible.

Bringing the debate into sharp focus is the exposure to young viewers of cartoons the canon of classical music, grand opera, jazz, and popular songs. Author Goldmark, who claims to be one of "countless Americans [who] attribute their first conscious memory of the classical repertoire to cartoons" (107), admits that the use of music in cartoons renders its composers anonymous and chops their music into a "stockpot" of melodies. At the same time, however, he also insists "music in cartoons can inspire audiences to learn more about the composers" (159) just as it did for him.

Tunes for 'Toons encompasses the decades of so-called Classical Hollywood, the 1930s through the early 1960s, and the work of the most prominent animation studios of the day, Disney, Warner Bros., MGM, Fleischer, Walter Lantz. Bringing the Adorno debate into focus are important chapters revealing cartoons as potent sites for the contesting energies of popular and classical music, the aesthetic and the Philistine, the pure and the tainted. Warner Bros.' "What's Opera Doc" and "Rhapsody Rabbit" exploit popular songs and operatic arias (statistics reveal that tunes from Richard Wagner's operas led the pack) in their hilariously satiric lampoons of cultural pretentions. Fleischer's "I'll Be Glad When You're Dead, You Rascal You" and Warner's "Coal Black and de Sebben Dwarfs" infuse faux jazz stylings into their racist extensions of the minstrel show tradition. Working in all these genres and styles are Hollywood's two preeminent cartoon composers, Carl Stalling at Warner Bros. and Scott Bradley at MGM.

While the casual viewer/listener at first hearing might not discern any substantial differences in their cartoon music, Goldmark's closer investigation reveals that Stalling embodied Adorno's worst fears. After coming to Warner Bros. in the mid-1930s, after working as a theater organist in Kansas City and a soundtrack composer for Walt Disney, he became known as the great eclectic, a "postmodernist" in his polyglot assemblies of classical and popular tunes, culled from Warner's vast collection of copyrighted music, performed by a large orchestra, and relegated to the antics of Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Yosemite Sam, Road Runner, and Wile E. Coyote. In author Goldmark's view, these cartoons are "valuable historical documents" that provide "a unique view of popular culture" and "a place to comment on ideas and fads of the time and even an outlet for social critique" (43).

Scott Bradley, on the other hand, the only composer to work on the MGM cartoons from the 1930s to the 1950s (most notably the "Tom and Jerry" series), embodies Adorno's higher ambitions: he relied less heavily on quoting familiar music, used a smaller orchestra, and composed original scores that were surprisingly modern in their dissonance, contrapuntal strategies, and violent effects. Unlike the workmanlike Stalling, Bradley saw artistic potentials for cartoon music and publicly expressed a fervent hope that modem masters such as Copland, Britten, and Shostakovich would take an interest in cartoon music.

Although author Goldmark is a serious scholar, the light-hearted nature of the cartoons themselves can't help but leaven the discussion. I can't help but wonder if even Adorno himself might have smiled at Bugs Bunny in tails performing Liszt's "Second Hungarian Rhapsody" and Elmer Fudd declaiming "Kill the Wabbit" to the tune of Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyrie."

University of Kansas John C. Tibbetts

DR. SEUSS: American Icon. By Philip Nel. New York: Continuum. 2004.

During six decades of public life, Theodor Seuss Geisel's talent as an artist paved the way for multiple occupations, including stints as a corporate advertiser and a war propagandist, as well a lucrative career authoring and illustrating over seventy children's books. Seuss's ability to appeal to a mass American audience explains both his popularity and his vulnerability to critical attack by the literary establishment. In this meticulously researched and engaging text, Philip Nel argues that Seuss's willingness to speak truth to power—even from his position as a member of the cultural elite—characterizes the finest examples of his oeuvre, including *The Sneetches*, *The Lorax*, and *Horton Hears a Who!*

According to Nel, Seuss's status as a cartoon-illustrator freed him up to experiment with style and language and to "ignore the critical consensus" that might have stifled his originality (88). Unlike conventional author/illustrators, Seuss challenged his audience by purposefully creating tension between words and images, effectively calling into question the very medium in which he was working. The fact that Seuss's preferred literary mode was nonsense verse further widened the gulf between his work and that of his contemporaries. Pointing to his iconoclastic nature, Nel links Seuss with the twentieth-century *avant-garde*, noting that both wished to engage directly with their audience to stimulate thought. Prior to the seventies, many educators and librarians reacted quite negatively to Seuss's iconoclastic style, in part because of the subversive content of many of his stories (the valorization of anarchy found in *The Cat in the Hat*, for instance)

and in part because of Seuss's reliance on anapestic meter, a form most frequently used in the limerick and most likely to be termed "doggerel" by critics (20). Of course, the fact that children responded positively to these features of Seuss's texts is significant. Nel notes that Seuss's refusal to condescend to children or to pander to them with garden-variety prose and illustration resulted in his overwhelming popularity—a popularity based upon children's sophisticated understanding of the complexity of language and imagery, the power of irony, and the pleasure that one can derive from questioning established ideas.

In addition to detailing Seuss's skill as a draughtsman and writer, Nel considers how Seuss's work as a wartime political cartoonist for the New York newspaper *PM* influenced his subsequent foray into children's literature. Like most of his contemporaries, Seuss created highly stereotypical renditions of the Japanese in his political cartoons; clearly, he participated in the Pearl Harbor hysteria that led to the internment of hundreds of thousands of U.S. citizens of Japanese descent. However, during the postwar era, Seuss became increasingly reflective regarding stereotyping. His visit to Japan in 1953 may have provided the inspiration for *Horton Hears a Who!*, a paean to acceptance of difference. As Nel observes, while Seuss knowingly participated in the "moral education of children," he hoped to guide them "to become thoughtful citizens who would, in turn, build a better and more just society" (61).

The remainder of Nel's text concerns Seuss's legacy as a commercial and ideological force. The chapter on the "Disneyfication of Dr. Seuss" includes a valuable primer in copyright law—he convoluted system of trademark and property rights that has influenced the manner in which Seuss's texts have been marketed since his death in 1991. Nel also considers how political pundits of every persuasion have utilized Seuss's recognizable poetic style to further their agendas. The popular Cat in the Hat figure, for instance, was simultaneously referenced by detractors and defenders of President Clinton during his impeachment. In the absence of the actual Theodor Geisel, who would undoubtedly have weighed in on the political struggles of the Clinton era, a new generation of political satirists took advantage of what Nel terms the "ambiguous" nature of Seuss's most identifiable creation—he slippery Cat in the Hat.

Nel's claim that Seuss was an American icon rests on the assertion that "in America, the iconoclast is iconic. Americans of many backgrounds are inclined to imagine or to align themselves with rebels, the underdog, or the outsider" (193). Of course, Dr. Seuss's iconoclasm came wrapped in a populist form, a theme that extends throughout Nel's very well conceived text. With its focus on Seuss's aesthetics, politics, and legacy in American cultural life, *Dr. Seuss: American Icon* should appeal to Americanists and to children's literature scholars alike.

Western Michigan University Gwen Athene Tarbox

SHOOTING FROM THE HIP: Photography, Masculinity, and Postwar America. By Patricia Vettel-Becker. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 2005.

Wide in scope, this book presents a provocative take on postwar American photography. Perhaps most intriguing is Vettel-Becker's departure from anything close to the canon. Rather Vettel-Becker attempts to analyze a very broad range of photographic practices that occurred between 1945 and 1959 in terms of the "crisis in masculinity" that American servicemen faced upon their return to a peacetime homeland.

This is a thoroughly researched and documented text, with 45 pages of notes out of the book's 200 pages. There are in total only 37 figures, which speaks to the book's

focus. This is not a discussion of images. It is instead a thorough and original exposition and analysis of the institutions and professional realms that collectively constituted postwar American photography. The kind of photography exhibited in galleries and museums exists on the periphery of the book, in line with the author's consideration of it as relatively insignificant. Instead Vettel-Becker concerns herself with a seemingly mixed bag of activities. Taken together, they allow her to address photography as a phenomenon and as one of the primary constituents of postwar visual culture. Canonical figures, like the photographer Ansel Adams and the curator/historian Beaumont Newhall, play minor roles in her story. Pop culture is more her focus.

In chapter one, for example, she explores the construction of amateur and hobbyist photography, turning to gag cartoons and texts in popular photography magazines as her primary sources. Rather than dismiss as drivel what was published there, she reads it as telling salvos in the postwar battle of the sexes. She uses quips about the amateur photographer's home darkroom as an exclusively male domain and of the role of wife as the photographer's assistant as evidence of the gendered construction of photographic practice. These magazines drift far from the conventional sources for art-historical research, and it is easy to see why few prior scholars have delved into them. But Vittel-Becker uses them well, arguing that the coherence of photography as a social, institutional, and visual phenomenon is well represented in them. Although even Adams and Newhall making brief appearances in their pages, most readers did not consider themselves artists and never expected to be recognized as such.

In the chapters that follow Vettel-Becker similarly explores issues of gender and masculinity in the realms of combat photography, street photography, fashion and pin-up photography, and sports photography.

The book is thoughtful and well-written. Although derived from an art history dissertation, its approach will fit more comfortably with scholars of American studies than with traditional art historians. In taking in images and practitioners both inside and outside the canon, the book can be variously thrilling or frustrating, depending upon one's point of view. I find some of the chapters, in their choice of subject but not in their ideas, a bit off from the center of the discussion I would like to read.

University of Kansas John Pultz

THE GRASINSKI GIRLS: The Choices They Had and the Choices They Made. By Mary Patrice Erdmans with the Grasinski Girls. Athens: Ohio University Press. 2004.

In *The Grasinski Girls*, sociologist Mary Patrice Erdmans focuses on the lives of five Polish American women—her mother and her mother's four sisters—and constructs a feminist genealogy even if none of the women in her study identify themselves as such (neither does the majority of American women). Like the protagonists in Paule Marshall's 1983 autobiographical essay, "From the Poets in the Kitchen," the Girls express their creativity and power in the private spaces of their kitchens because the public sphere affords them little aside from a meager wage. Erdmans' book echoes Marshall's story, even if the women they describe share nothing except for gender. The Grasinski Girls are not immigrants; they are white, and belong to a stable working or middle class. Yet the power and control they have is also wielded only in private—in their living rooms, gardens, and kitchens. Erdmans empowers the protagonists of her study by asking the readers to reconfigure the way we think of private and public identities. "We . . . think of resistance as public," she writes, "we give much less attention

to resistance in the private sphere because it is less visible" (214). Like Robert Orsi in *Thank You, St. Jude: Women's Devotion to the Patron Saint of Hopeless Causes* (1998), Erdmans tells the Girls' stories through their own voices and represents them not as victims, but as individuals creating their fate through the choices they are given. They are the subjects of her study simultaneously as they participate in its production: they edited their interview transcripts as well as the final manuscript.

Erdmans suggests that white ethnic working class female voices not be grouped with those of white middle class women or of women of color. Grouping them with the former ignores their position as economically and educationally disadvantaged, while grouping them with the latter omits the ways in which they benefit from the privileges of whiteness. As the Grasinski Girls' cultural marker, their Polishness emerges as an American construction cobbled over a few generations of immigrant descendants. By the time of the Girls' adulthood, it no longer marks them as "other" in a society split along binary racial lines. They reap the privileges of whiteness even while gender and class continue to limit their life-choices. By looking into working class women's private, domestic lives, Erdmans shows an unusual perspective on the spaces where they forge their identities while they intermittently enter the public world of paid employment.

At times, her writing is almost lyrical and often painfully personal. But her familial relationship with her subjects does not prevent Erdmans from staying the course of her sociological analysis of how race, gender, ethnicity, class, and religion shape the Girls' lives. Closeness to her subjects also allows her a unique entrée into some of their most private spaces, an entrée that is rarely afforded academics. Like Marshall in her essay, in describing the Grasinski Girls and allowing us to hear their voices, Erdmans pays homage to a generation of working women who inspired her to become a feminist scholar.

University of Michigan Justyna M. Pas

AMERICAN COLD WAR CULTURE. Edited by Douglas Field. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 2005.

Anthologies are not expected to have the coherent shape that an individual author can impose on a book, and the editors of collective works are lucky if commissioned pieces can at least provide a satisfyingly similar level of quality. The nine essays that Douglas Field has summoned from a trans-Atlantic group of scholars—about evenly divided between Britons and Americans—are intended to share a concern with the intersection of anti-Communist politics and popular culture in the late 1940s and the 1950s. Most of the contributors do enhance—at least tangentially—the historical appreciation of an era that is at once depressingly familiar and tantalizingly elusive, both sadly restrictive and poised for revolt. Allen Ginsberg's "Howl," after all, exploded into the avant-garde atmosphere even before Joe McCarthy succeeded in drinking himself to death. But how to strike the right retrospective balance is tricky, and *American Cold War Culture* is more fragmentary than cohesive. Its chief virtue is to have defied its own title: arts and letters in the 1950s were much richer than merely a reflection of the Cold War. The chief defect of Field's anthology, however, is that, whatever else American culture was, no meaningful pattern emerges.

Perhaps the most common trope is the argument by analogy. For example, Jacqueline Foertsch reads the way popular magazines warned parents of the danger of polio. It could strike the most secure refuges of the American family—the home, the school, the

playground—even as Communism itself was a mysterious infection from which no one was truly safe, and reached epidemic proportions in the postwar era. Robert J. Corber offers a keen analysis of *All About Eve* (1950), catching resemblances between the portrayal of the young actress Eve Harrington (Anne Baxter), whose lesbianism is not overt, and the citizen whose Communist inclinations are too subtle to be easily detected. (The parallel is only suggestive, however; nor was the homophobia that is the subtext invented circa 1950.) Field himself tries something similar to Corber's approach in decoding James Baldwin's second novel. *Giovanni's Room* (1956) is far more explicit than was director Joseph Mankiewicz in exploring homosexual impulses. But when such an orientation is not visible, Field argues, detection remains a problem corresponding to the challenge of identifying political subversives.

Baldwin's novel lacks any politics, which is why Hugh Stevens can come closer to the entanglement of citizenship and culture in examining Robert Lowell's confessional poetry of the 1950s and 1960s. Stevens exposes something of the poet's anguish in confronting the paralysis of will, the isolateness that would soon compel such figures to partake of the action and passion of resistance to the war in Vietnam. Churchill's "iron curtain" speech was delivered in the same year that Disney released *Song of the South* (1946); they have nothing else in common. Yet Catherine Gunther Kodat cleverly shows how a movie inspired by the tales of Uncle Remus could establish the most retrograde point around which white racial attitudes could cohere; so embarrassing did the film become that it cannot be released on videocassette or DVD. The absurd antebellum nostalgia of *Song of the South* almost necessarily produced its antidote, in the form of the "white Negro" that would subvert all that the Disney movie intended to sentimentalize. The face of the Fifties is therefore Janus's.

Brandeis University Stephen J. Whitfield

VISUAL HABITS: Nuns, Feminism, and American Postwar Popular Culture. By Rebecca Sullivan. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 2005.

The upheaval and extraordinary social changes that took place in the 1950s and 1960s did not exclude Catholic nuns, at least that is what Rebecca Sullivan argues in *Visual Habits: Nuns, Feminism, and American Postwar Popular Culture.* In an introduction and six chapters, Sullivan illustrates the changing roles of Catholic women religious, their expectations of femininity and feminism, and the ways in which the media portrayed such changes through films, television, and magazines.

With the 1950s and 1960s as her decades of primary concern, Sullivan shows how in the immediate postwar period, nuns represented an alternative for women who refused either limited employment options or pressure to enter into heterosexual marriage and motherhood. By the end of the 1960s, however, nuns were often perceived as highly educated stalwarts of the Catholic Church in hospitals, on the streets, at schools, and throughout social reform movements. Especially after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), they were at the forefront of organizing educational and spiritual youth programs. They even took their music directly to the public and to popular variety shows such as *The Ed Sullivan Show* and *Sing Along with Mitch.* Sullivan's discussion of *The Flying Nun*, *Lilies of the Field*, and other visual media that made nun stories popular is convincing. Unfortunately, she misses a ripe opportunity to highlight an irony that *The Sound of Music*, the nun film often regarded as best-loved, is a story in which the main character's religious career fails to advance beyond problematic postulant. Nonetheless,

Sullivan shows that the popularity of nuns in television and films—there were approximately fifteen films about nuns during this twenty-year period—and their portrayal as adventurous and heroic reflected mainstream women's liberation. At the same time, their religious habits and vigorous guarding of their chastity served as possible limits to the radical potential of liberation, and thus appealed to those who were nervous about social upheaval. The increased public attention they received, combined with their own demand for individuality, represented a shift that made Catholicism seem more accessible and democratic to a public that would help maintain membership in congregations and also vocations until the 1970s.

Early in her study, Sullivan is quick to tell her readers that unfamiliar names such as Sister Jacqueline Grennan or Sister Mary Joel Read ought to appear alongside unmistakable feminists such as Betty Friedan or Gloria Steinem in the annals of women's history, and she points to increasing public activism as evidence of nuns' involvement in women's rights, as well as social justice and the modernization of religion. While the study succeeds in showing that nuns were visible not only as religious representatives of the Catholic Church but as agents of social change, there are still questions about their interplay with feminist activities. If Sullivan's claim that nuns became a "figurehead for pre-feminist independence" holds, it would have been worth explaining their own diversity of experiences within the shifting patterns of the women's rights movement (222).

Although at times, nuns seemed to represent the antithesis to feminism and sexual liberation of the 1960s, as a group they came to demonstrate how difficult it was for any woman during the post-war decades to be simultaneously intellectual, professional, spiritual, and sexually independent. They did not represent a lack of desirability, Sullivan suggests. But rather, it was their own complexity (rather than their simplicity) that appealed to the public. Their complex social desires resonated with lay people, who wanted "greater spiritual authenticity, meaningful feminine heroics, or a public sense of personalism carried out through social justice activism" (219). In the end, *Visual Habits* provides a much-needed analysis of women religious and their changing perceptions in a broader society.

University of Kansas Kim Warren

NAKED BARBIES, WARRIOR JOES, & OTHER FORMS OF VISIBLE GENDER. By Jeannie Banks Thomas. Champaign: University of Illinois Press. 2003.

Naked Barbies is a rich but peculiar book, not unlike Barbie herself, I suppose—the big-money doll (who has her own fleet of cars) with the wildly distorted anatomy (and no nipples) introduced to toyland in 1959 by Mattel. Both Barbie and her "action-figure" cousin, G.I. Joe, have been subjected to endless scrutiny over the past dozen years, as academic Baby Boomers have seized upon the playthings of their youth to account for every malady of contemporary American culture. Barbies have been accused of fostering anorexia among young girls, or worse—a deep and abiding interest in clothes. When a talking Barbie once had the temerity to opine that "Math is tough" (I agree!), her declaration was taken as proof that girls who play with fashion dolls will grow up to be idiots. Likewise, little boys who play with action figures (or wrench the heads off their sisters' Barbies) are assumed to be killers in the making. And so forth.

Well, Jeannie Banks Thomas is not intent on blaming Barbie, Ken, and their cohort for our failure to achieve world peace. But in a series of chapters on male and female

cemetery statues, yard statues of geese, and Barbies and Joes, she does pursue the notion that life is rigidly gendered, from the toys of our collective childhood to the cement geese of our old age, and how that division into he and she is expressed in various artifacts, legends, and practices. I am not sure that her observations are always helpful. While it is true, for example, that allegorical females in cheesecloth vastly outnumber male monuments (soldiers, even golfers) in the realm of tombstone art, it is also true that since antiquity, women have been the official mourners in most cultures. Hence the sobbing goddesses. If there are few women represented as captains of industry on their own grave markers, well, there haven't yet been many lady execs of an age to require elaborate burial provisions (which have become less showy over the past several decades, in any case). Similarly, I am at a loss to know what we can deduce from the predominance of lady geese among the nation's plentiful yard ornaments—except for the fact that their clothes (Yes. There are goose bikinis!) are made or purchased by the same women who were driven mad as girls by Barbie's extensive wardrobe.

What makes this book worth reading, in the end, is not any coherent thesis but the author's fascinating folkloric investigations of the ways in which people put her objects of study to use in a variety of symbolic ways. Pages are given over to transcriptions of an hilarious "blog" on hypothetical Barbies, including a "Grad School Barbie" who comes with a pair of grubby jeans and a "Go Screw Yourself" t-shirt. There is a wonderful interview with the owners of a Colorado ranch where the peripheral fence has become a fetishistic shrine to the shoe (I have also seen bra fences recently, adorned with contributions from semi-intoxicated motorists leaving nearby bars). And some fascinating chats with designers of goose-wear for sale on the Internet. It is the human level of detail in the book that saves *Naked Barbies, Warrior Joes, & Other Forms of Visible Gender* from being another feminist rant on the awfulness of the "male gaze." Anyone interested in how Americans make do-it-yourself art out of their lawns and cemetery plots and playthings can profit from time spent among the headless, naked Barbies barefoot parents always seem to step on in the dark when answering a 2 A.M. cry for another drink of water.

University of Minnesota Karal Ann Marling

FORGOTTEN TRIBES: Unrecognized Indians and the Federal Acknowledgment Process. By Mark Edwin Miller. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 2004.

In *Forgotten Tribes*, Mark Miller has convincingly analyzed the federal acknowledgment process—the process by which unrecognized Indian tribes gain acknowledgment from the federal government—and shown it to be complex, contentious, politicized, and potentially alienating. None of this critique will surprise many of the tribal groups that attempt to achieve acknowledgment by approaching the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), nor will it surprise scholars in the fields of anthropology, history, and political science who study the process. However, Miller's exhaustive historical work, thorough interviews, and persuasive analysis all serve to document the troubles with acknowledgment in a powerful, and potentially enlightening, way.

Miller's book investigates the struggle for recognition of four groups: the Pascua Yaqui, the Death Valley Timbisha Shoshones, the United Houma Nation, and the Tiguas. He combines archival research with interviews of tribal leaders, politicians, and administrators at the Branch of Acknowledgment (BAR), located within BIA.

Miller's chapter on Pascua Yaqui history and politics is truly the jewel of the book. The Pascua Yaqui gained federal acknowledgment by bypassing the Bureau of Indian

Affairs (BIA) and successfully petitioning Congress for a recognition bill in 1978. Miller illuminates the dangers and opportunities present in an attempt to bypass the BIA, and the chapter shows quite effectively how (and perhaps why) the legislative route has been foreclosed for many subsequent tribal attempts.

Chapter 4, which chronicles the successful recognition bid of the Death Valley Timbisha Shoshone, is likewise rich in sources and insights, though it mines territory a bit more familiar to scholars of acknowledgment processes. Perhaps the most valuable part of this chapter, and the subsequent one investigating the United Houma's failure to achieve recognition, lies in Miller's excellent analysis of several of the other petitions decided by the BAR. These two chapters highlight the subjective nature of BAR decision making, and the vague language governing recognition policies.

This comparison, along with Miller's closing to the chapter on Tiguas recognition, regarding the increasing difficulty tribes face in gaining acknowledgment since the growth of Indian gaming spawned by the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (1988), provide compelling proof and context for his concluding remarks. He writes, ". . . it is extremely doubtful that federal officials will ever accept the testimony of unacknowledged peoples at face value. Because of the benefits involved, it also seems certain that groups will continue to undergo the often demeaning process to secure what they feel is their birthright as indigenous peoples on their native soil" (266).

The conclusion may sound like a radical indictment of government indifference, yet Miller has taken a measured tone throughout the book, and the power of his research support his claims.

I enthusiastically recommend this book for anthropologists interested in tribal peoples and indigenous politics, historians interested in the late 1900s, political scientists investigating bureaucratic decision-making as well as state and local governments, and anyone interested in American Indian politics, culture, and survival.

California State University, Long Beach Renee Ann Cramer

AMERICAN HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY HOLLYWOOD FILM. By Trevor B. McCrisken and Andrew Pepper. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. 2005.

As British university lecturers Trevor McCrisken and Andrew Pepper point out in their text *American History and Contemporary Hollywood Film*, Hollywood's relationship to contemporary or historical events has been spotty at best. At crucial moments, it either marched lock stepped with the powers that be, took a benign and romantic view of contemporary events, or remained silent. The earlier moguls feared losing their place at the table and/or held politically conservative views, hence their support of the blacklist during the McCarthy witch hunt era and their contribution to the paranoia of the Cold War era. Rarely did Hollywood movies lead the charge for new perceptions. Thus, while Hollywood fiddled, the nation burned.

Despite a changing of the guard (Sony in lieu of Selznick; Coca-Cola replacing Cohn), Hollywood remains beholden to the same values: the box office governs all and playing to the lowest common denominator is the rule of thumb. Nonetheless, McCrisken and Pepper see a ray of hope in the movies produced in the time frame that falls under their purview: movies made after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and prior to 9/11. Divided into seven chapters, their text looks at how Hollywood (i.e. movies produced or distributed under the studio system) deals with events from the American Revolution

to the Civil Rights era and finally post Cold War history. Borrowing from Kenneth Cameron similarly titled tome, *America on Film: Hollywood and American History* (New York: Continuum, 1997), they argue that the best Hollywood movie "must allow for argument. . . . must . . . admit its opposite. . . . must prove, or at least, persuasively present its own ideas" (5). Slim pickings indeed.

According to this thesis, the "best" movies are those that ask the viewer to "critically engage with their perceptions of the past"; in turn, the "worst" are those that encourage viewers to "feel—rather than think" with a "falsely . . . inclusive desire to represent everyone's point of view" (11). While the authors rightly cast aspersions on those movies that ignore unpleasant facts in order to present what they term a "benign meta-narrative of American history" (7)—a phrase they overuse to the point of redundancy—such as Mel Gibson's *The Patriot*, their arguments for and against most of the movies in question seem a forgone conclusion. Would anyone really argue that *Pearl Harbor* offers more insight into war than *The Thin Red Line*? Or that *Missisippi Burning* turns the facts of the real life murder of three civil rights workers into anything more than a feel-good pot boiler, complete with misleading information about the FBI's role in that case? Or that *Three Kings* comes to grips with the complexity of heroism far more than *Black Hawk Down*? I doubt it.

Despite their attempt to muddy the waters and on occasion not appear biased in favor of certain darlings of the liberal side of Hollywood, e.g. taking Spike Lee to task over *Malcolm X*'s lack of "a distinctive African-American identity" (168) or accusing Steven Spielberg of being a closet conservative in his movies, their argument does not take into account the aesthetics of movie making. Movies, after all, are not documentaries. The "best" movies in terms of their argument do not necessarily make for the "best" movies in terms of works of art. Stone's *JFK* is a case in point. In one of the few movies that they examine at length without burying themselves under a mind numbing mound of other people's points of view—the text at times reads like a freshman research paper with the writers wary of saying anything that cannot be supported by someone else, even if it is a minor criticism about which no one would argue—the authors go to some lengths to praise its multiple points of view, ambiguity and open-endedness. Still, one would be hard pressed to call it a better movie than Stone's *Platoon*, of which they are less fond because of what they see as Stone's "recuperative agenda"(137). A movie that is complex, if not confused, because it has not resolved its issues is not *ipso facto* better than one that resolves its concerns.

Given the overall simplistic nature of this text, it is not difficult to guess where they will land with more recent movies released after the text was written like *Jarhead* (certainly bad) or *Syriana* (definitely good) and that's the flaw of their text. It's too pat. Like the movies it questions, the argument "must . . . admit its opposite. . . . [it] must prove, or at least, persuasively present its own ideas." And this one fails to do so.

University of California, Santa Barbara Mashey Bernstein

LATE THOUGHTS ON AN OLD WAR: The Legacy of Vietnam. By Philip D. Beidler. Athens: University of Georgia Press. 2004.

The Vietnam War has occupied a larger and more influential part of the American psyche for a longer period of time than any of our conflicts except the Civil War and the American Revolution. And just when it seems like the natural effects of the passage of time might lead to lowered role of "Vietnam" in our national consciousness, along

comes President Bush, Iraq, and another long, inconclusive war with ambiguous and controversial origins and an indeterminate outcome that virtually demands comparison with Vietnam. Americans can't seem to let go of the Vietnam War. Since the beginning of American combat operations in Vietnam, Americans have written nearly five thousand books about Vietnam, an average of one every three days or so for more than four decades. In spite of all that, we also can't seem to face honestly and come to grips with what we did there, to many thousands of young Americans but even more to millions of Vietnamese.

There are, obviously, many different kinds of books about Vietnam. This one is not particularly novel or unusual. Philip Beidler is a professor of early American literature. He was also a platoon leader in Vietnam, and the literary and cultural criticism of the war has been one of his main academic interests. This book consists of a dozen essays on diverse aspects of the Vietnam War that combine personal memories, reflections, and experiences with scholarly and historical analysis to create a remarkably effective examination of the relationship between the Vietnam War and American culture.

Among the merely "good" chapters from *Late Thoughts* are essays on "The Music of the Nam," the movie *Platoon* (Beidler mostly liked it), the contemporary pulp fiction industry associated with the more lurid and extreme aspects of the war, William Calley and My Lai, and a tribute to poet and conscientious objector John Balaban. Parts of this book are better than just good, however. It's difficult to use the term "sublime" in a straightforward, unironic manner in this day and age, but some of Beidler's writing at least gets close to that. He has an excellent account of the everyday language of everyday soldiers in Vietnam, a solid essay on the problem of race both in Vietnam and in post-Vietnam American society, and comes as close as anyone to capturing the continuing, mind-boggling, and finally obscene obtuseness of Robert McNamara on the war. A short, nine page piece titled "Solatium," the term for a largely token and symbolic payment that the U.S. made to the families of South Vietnamese civilians who were accidentally killed by U.S. forces (typically $35 for adults, $15 for children, plus a couple cartons of cigarettes and a few toiletry items) is moving and telling beyond easy explanation.

Simply put, this unpretentious and underrated book is the best thing on Vietnam that I have read in a decade, and one of the best books of its kind on Vietnam, period. You won't fully understand what the U.S. is doing in Iraq today without understanding what we did in Vietnam, and this book is a perfect place to start. Read it and weep. Then do something.

Wayne State College Kent Blaser

CULTURES IN ORBIT: Satellites and the Televisual. By Lisa Parks. Durham and London: Duke University Press. 2005.

Lisa Parks brings together television and cultural studies with science and technology studies and studies in globalization in an ambitious and groundbreaking contribution to the study of converging media technologies. Through a nuanced and comprehensive analysis of satellite television, Parks manages to interrogate and reconceptualize the (actual and potential) uses of both satellites and television as they are coming together and reconfiguring each other's meaning, practices, and power. While satellites, as Parks reminds us, structure the "global imaginary, the socioeconomic order, and the tissue of everyday experience across the planet," the satellite itself has been "missing in action, lying at the threshold of everyday visibility and critical attention"

(7). *Cultures in Orbit* exposes the expanding range of contexts in which satellites have been used (from broadcasting, to the military, to archeology, and to astronomy) attempting to "wrestle" the satellite "out of the orbit of its real agencies" (13) and into the orbit of critical visibility. Parks focuses primarily on how these uses of satellites have expanded and modified television, and in doing so, she moves the conceptualization of television "out of its proper place, beyond the nation, the broadcasting institution, and the home" (13) to consider its relationship to military strategy and scientific knowledge.

Satellite television is, Parks shows us, both a site of technological convergence and a technology of knowledge (an epistemological system whose practices structure the way in which the world becomes intelligible to us). The book holds under scrutiny the practices, uses, and audiovisual formats of satellite television on five sites, offered as five case studies: the first live international satellite television program *Our World* (1967); the programming and distribution practices of Imparja TV, an Aboriginal satellite television network; the military use of satellite sensing to monitor the "trouble spot" of Bosnia and the circulation of these military satellite images on the news; the use of satellite remote sensing in excavating Cleopatra's Palace in Alexandria, Egypt; and the uses of satellites in astronomical observations.

Parks is particularly concerned with how the different forms of satellite TV have been "used by states, scientists, and broadcasters to disembody vision and construct seemingly omniscient and objective structures of seeing and knowing the world, or worldviews" (14). Of crucial importance to this reader is that *Cultures in Orbit* not only exposes and analyzes these uses of satellite television by the industrial West; it also shows us that satellite television can be used by "subordinated social formations, artists and activists" (168). From the extensive analysis of the uses of satellite television by Imparja television to the compelling conceptualization of a strategy of critical witnessing (and her own performance of witnessing the satellite images of the mass graves in Srebenica, Bosnia) and to the discussion of creative/activist projects in the book's conclusion, Parks shows us how these alternate uses do and should take place.

Michigan State University Andaluna Borcila

STEAL THIS MUSIC: How Intellectual Property Law Affects Musical Creativity. By Joanna Demers. Athens: University of Georgia Press. 2006.

Recently, scholars of intellectual property law and critical information studies have published a series of books, discussing the threat posed to cultural production and creativity by the rapid expansion of copyright and trademark laws. These books rely on legal classifications to determine their subject matter and range across numerous genres and disciplines in their analysis. Consequently, these books tend to overlook subtle distinctions between genres and cultural forms in their analysis. Eschewing the panoramic view of these texts, Joanna Demers offers a concise, but thorough analysis of how intellectual property law has struggled to define and regulate music. Drawing on cultural studies, popular culture, and musicology, Demers provides a fascinating account of how law shapes music and, in turn, music responds to those regulations. Divided into four chapters, the book explores the conceptual difficulties in imposing copyright on music due to its performative nature, the frequent use of allusion in composition, the effect of arrangements and transcriptions on a song's meaning, and the use of sampling in avant garde collage and hip hop. The book concludes with a discussion of how contemporary musicians and the recording industry produce music by making calculated

decisions about the possible. *Steal this Music* provides a wealth of historical and contemporary examples to demonstrate how musical composition and performance has been and will likely continue to be shaped by intellectual property law.

Demer's book argues that recent changes to copyright "inhibit artists and musicians from creating new material through the transformation of pre-existing works" (13). Demers begins by providing a concise overview of intellectual property law's application to music. This overview expands on the existing scholarly literature because it views music as the primary object of analysis, not copyright. In other words, Demers offers a richly textured and nuanced discussion of how lawyers and courts have historically struggled to accommodate copyright law to the strategies and attitudes adopted by various ethnic, racial, and classed groups in composing and performing music. The strength of her blending of historical and cultural studies approaches is that she can identify how high and low culture affected one another even if legal discourse rarely acknowledged it. Over the book's course, she slowly examines more recent practices, especially in avant-garde collage and hip hop. By juxtaposing the legal obstacles faced by both types of musicians and composers, Demers demonstrates that recent copyright legislation does not appear to benefit those who write and perform the music, only the industry that produces and distributes their recordings. In particular, *Steal this Music* provides a compelling argument that mass culture, especially as produced by the culture industries, must comport with intellectual property law even if popular or elite culture increasingly operates at the margins of those laws. After developing the history of musical allusion and copying, Demers explores the frequently proposed solution to the current intellectual property morass: compulsory licensing of samples. Because she has quite rightly distinguished between popular and mass culture uses and interests of sampled music, Demers argues that the production industry would never support the legislation and a compulsory licensing scheme would unintentionally alter the very meaning of sample-based or collage music within popular culture.

Steal this Music is a text that could work equally well in both the introductory undergraduate American Studies classroom and a graduate seminar. The text can speak to the novice who is just beginning the interdisciplinary study of American culture and to the advanced student who wants to map the relationships between cultural production and legal discourse. The book's relative brevity forced the author to omit discussion of the political and social factors that shaped post-civil rights era African American culture and hip hop music. Although the past ten years have seen tremendous scholarly interest in hip hop music, this book does not engage with that scholarship or explore how race or class affect how intellectual property law is applied to particular musical genres or artists. Similarly, the book fails to explore how such outlaw compositional or performative strategies might vary in their meaning depending on whether they are deployed in avant-garde collage and hip hop. Nonetheless, the book offers a timely analysis of musical creation within the current intellectual property regime.

Drury University Richard Schur

THE *SEXUAL* ORGANIZATION OF THE CITY. Edited by Edward O. Laumann, Stephen Ellingson, Jenna Mahay, Anthony Paik, and Yoosik Youm. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2004.

Sex is a topic de jour for Americans. A sequel to *The Social Organization of Sexuality* (1995) that peeped into "who does what with whom, how often, and why" (40), this companion, Chicago School inspired volume proposes twelve voyeuristic chapters that

expose *The Sexual Organization of the City*. The corpus consists of four parts: theory and data, the structure of urban sexual markets, the sexual and social consequences of sexual marketplaces, and institutional responses and silences. Individual chapters offer a wealth of information on the relationship between sexuality and city life, culture, organizations, religion, gender, race/ethnicity, and family. They hold promise for sociology, public health, social work, and lesbian/gay studies, among other areas.

Allegiant to the urban planning of the empirical case, the editors marshal a wealth of data—a probability sample of 2,114 face-to-face household surveys and 160 key-informant interviews—to investigate the "cultural economy" of urban sexuality. They compare *local* meanings and practices of partner selection and relationship development, ranging from swinging singles to family formation, across four Chicago neighborhoods: one on the north side that includes a visible gay population, a Southside African American neighborhood, and two Westside enclaves, one home to Mexican immigrants and the other racially/ethnically diverse though predominantly Puerto Rican. These four cases help answer the question: "How is . . . sexual partnering organized within local settings, . . . and what are the consequences of the resultant sexual relationships?" (6).

To develop the argument that "meeting and mating are fundamentally local processes" (40) that are internally organized by neighborhood, the editors deploy a metaphor and model of "sex markets" and "sexual marketplaces." The former is a broad spatial and cultural milieu within which individuals organize their sexual strategies (i.e., the four neighborhoods), whereas the latter is a more specific venue where one can meet potential partners (e.g., bars, public parks, etc.). Sensitive to its atomistic, utilitarian assumptions, the sexologists embed into this otherwise common economic approach four moderators: social networks, physical space, sexual culture, and institutions. Unfortunately, the contributors do not fully embrace the potential of precisely those themes—rape and forced sex—that can refine the prototypical characteristics of the market/marketplace metaphor. They acknowledge that such examples do "not fit comfortably with the idea of autonomous, voluntary market participation" and are transparent about not offering an "explicit theory of the role of force in markets" (32-33).

Chicagoan's sexual choices are best characterized as "bounded individualism" situated within local sex markets. Strategies are "neither wholly autonomous nor wholly independent." The result is "choice within constraints" (356). Sex is neither a frenetic free-for-all (in the economists' world of total individualism) nor repressively regulated (as in Foucault's world of total institutional control).

Notably missing from the book is the role of the Internet in organizing urban sexuality. Nevertheless, the editors have captured "the diversity of sexual expression in urban life" (58) and conclude that "the pluralism of American society also extends to sexuality" (358). This book surely offers something of more lasting pleasure than an analytic one-night stand.

Northwestern University Amin Ghaziani

LA LUCHA POR CUBA: Religion and Politics on the Streets of Miami. By Miguel A. de la Torre. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2003.

La Lucha por Cuba offers a useful insider's view of the extremities of political passion among Cuban exiles in Miami. The author equates the collective demonizing of Fidel Castro (and Cubans who have remained with him) with a religious movement. He weaves this analysis with discussions of Cuban history, culture, and social conventions,

all of which infuse the community with hyper-nationalist sentiments, extreme radical action, and a distinctive sense of theater. The so-called saga of Elian Gonzalez, the young white Cuban boy rescued off the coast of south Florida in 1999, frames this argument, offering both a case in point and a singular defining moment.

Reconstructing the events of the rescue and semi-deification of Elian offers a lens through which to view the many layers of Cuban exile politics in Florida and the United States. The author's focus on religion as culture and politics, as well as a spiritual anchor for displaced Cubans, makes this rendering into an interesting ethnographic account of the internal structure of Cuban Miami. He assembles an array of interesting facts and thoughtful interpretations; the account is very reflexive, nostalgic but unusually critical. He writes at a distance, from Michigan, where the dangers of dissent are lessened. Extremism and a history of violent repression are two recurrent themes that he explores in his book. He also focuses particular attention on gender and race, and the construction of white super-masculinity that he believes distorts and drives Cuban ethnicity in the United States. Reflecting on nearly 50 years of exile and the generational layers of Cuban American aspirations, the book nicely examines the probable future of Cuban identity in Miami and the United States.

Although this is a very readable and informative book, it does have some shortcomings worthy of note. Santeria is insufficiently addressed, given that this book is primarily about religion. Although associated with Afro-Cubans, Santeria in the United States is dominated by white Cubans, both as leaders and practitioners. The extent to which it draws adherents from all classes, including very pious Catholics, deserves greater attention and explanation. To his credit, the author devotes considerable discussion to the topic of race, and to the Jim Crow context in which the Cuban exiles in Miami originally settled. His discussion lacks substance, however, and does not adequately explore the contradictions of Cuban racism. Although he mentions the importance of race in stigmatizing Mariel Cubans, he does not discuss relations between black and white Cubans in either Cuba or Miami. His examples focus mainly on relations with black Americans. Considerably more attention is devoted to gender disparities and homo-phobia, which he credits with the more extreme and irrational elements of Cuban social thought. In this regard, his analysis seems overly pessimistic and deterministic, or perhaps too psychoanalytic to explain such broad phenomena.

In sum, this is a very interesting, accessible, and unusually critical account of the recent cultural history of Cubans in the United States.

University of South Florida Susan Greenbaum

CRIP THEORY: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability. By Robert McRuer. New York: New York University Press. 2006.

Robert McRuer established himself in gay and lesbian studies during the 1990s and added disability studies to his priorities near the end of that decade. *Crip Theory*, the third and most ambitious disability studies text in Michael Bérubé's Cultural Front series, confirms McRuer's stature in two fields of vital interdisciplinary work on difference. Though McRuer does not address American studies specifically, his book should enrich that field in many ways.

Crip theory is about radical revision of what it means to come out as disabled, and is more concerned with creating emancipatory "public cultures we might yet inhabit" than with greater degrees of accessibility and agency in a normalizing neoliberal society

(35). Skilled in the uses of figurative language, McRuer partakes of transgressive traditions embodied in the Wry Crips Disabled Women's Theatre (founded 1985 in San Francisco) and in the work of disability studies leaders like Nancy Mairs, who writes about life with multiple sclerosis and relishes the assertive power of calling herself a "cripple."

Acts of coming out are as important to McRuer's definition of crip theory as they are to people who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and disabled. For McRuer these self-definitions are connected to and in conflict with coming out as a crip theorist, which initiates a "contestatory relationship to disability studies and identity" (35). Using the productive tension between LGBT studies and queer theory as an example, McRuer wants something similar for crip theory and disability studies. Although he does not repudiate claims to disabled identities he is not satisfied with their current constructions among academics and activists. With his metaphor of crip theory as "a curb cut into disability studies, and into critical theory more generally," McRuer captures the confrontational, ambitious character of his project (35).

Crip Theory's grounding in critical theory and cultural studies is solid and innovative and creates a reference frame with space for new exploration. Those who share McRuer's influences—a diverse group including Judith Butler, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Michel Foucault, and Raymond Williams, among others—will find *Crip Theory* useful and challenging. Lennard Davis and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, whose disability studies achievements have yet to make comparable impacts in American studies, also get a boost from McRuer, but not an uncritical one.

Working hard to illustrate crip theory's potential, McRuer reads from and against a range of cultural texts whose variety will be welcome in American studies. He is as effective discussing his relationship with his partner Joseph, an "undocumented" Brazilian immigrant diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, as he is exposing disability discrimination at the 2004 World Social Forum, an anti-globalization conference. Less successful moments include a section on the late performance artist Bob Flanagan, whose significance is obvious to McRuer but not to the reader, partly because of difficulty in rendering Flanagan's work in prose, but also because McRuer does not sufficiently explain Flanagan as a crip theory representative. The passage is one of several in *Crip Theory* that read like sketches of future extended treatments of their subjects. Readers may be as frustrated with McRuer's desire to visit so many cultural sites without adequately exploring them.

Los Angeles is one location, or set of locations, where McRuer excels as a crip theorist. Joining Mike Davis as an incisive observer of that city, McRuer uses part of his introduction to critique normalization of disability and gay male identity in Hollywood cinema (1997's *As Good as it Gets*) and goes further in "Coming Out Crip: Malibu is Burning." McRuer was wise to make this his first chapter. A primer in crip theory, its topics include homeless people, gang members (with fascinating focus on the Crips and Bloods organizations), and people who claim but do not have HIV-positive status (McRuer among them).

Crip theory has been in process at least since 2003, when McRuer co-edited a special issue of *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies* titled *Desiring Disability: Queer Theory meets Disability Studies*. But as McRuer notes, his is the first book with crip theory at its center—if it is appropriate to use the word "center" in relation to ideas whose "authorship . . . is various, multiple, diffuse, contradictory, and contested" (216, n2). Perhaps it is best to take "Coming out Crip" as a *provisional* center for a book about decentering identities, critical theories, and political activism.

There are conflicts between McRuer's task of making crip theory accessible to readers and his discussion of its variations in ways that can be disorienting. McRuer manages to divide crip theory into five interrelated areas, but not without strain (71-72). One area is especially compelling even though it lacks clarity—crip theory as a way of mapping a "disabled world," which McRuer envisions as "possible and desirable," and where crips and queers attack compulsory heterosexuality and able-bodiedness from multiple subject positions inside and outside the academy (71). More than once, McRuer praises "activist and artistic venues" as major sites where crip theory is put into action, urging academics to follow suit (34, 51).

Despite the formal problems of his decentering agenda, McRuer is consistent and resolute in affirming cultural and social responsibilities of crip theorists. This unifying element is the main reason why American studies needs *Crip Theory*. McRuer's book embodies and expands commitment to social movements that George Lipsitz mandates for American studies "in a moment of danger." McRuer knows and shows that the danger is local, global, political, professional, and personal. His trenchant yet hopeful vision sometimes lacks coherence but is never short of energy in recognizing "radical liberationist" possibilities of crip theory and practice (163).

University of Kansas Ray Pence