

Book Reviews

<i>A Noble Fight: African American Freemasonry and the Struggle for Democracy in America.</i> By Corey D. B. Walker. Reviewed by Jacob Dorman.	83
<i>Dorothy West's Paradise: A Biography of Class and Color.</i> By Cherene M. Sherrard-Johnson. Reviewed by Zakiya R. Adair.	86
<i>Inventing the Egghead: The Battle over Brainpower in American Culture.</i> By Aaron Lecklider. Reviewed by Lynne Adrian.	87
<i>Flyover Lives: A Memoir.</i> By Diane Johnson. Reviewed by Ferdâ Asya.	88
<i>The Children's Table: Childhood Studies and the Humanities.</i> Edited by Anna Mae Duane. Reviewed by Meredith A. Bak.	90
<i>It's All a Kind of Magic: The Young Ken Kesey.</i> By Rick Dodgson. Reviewed by Dawson Barrett.	91
<i>Living Faith: Everyday Religion and Mothers in Poverty.</i> By Susan Crawford Sullivan. Reviewed by Rebecca Barrett-Fox.	92
<i>Comic Book Crime: Truth, Justice, and the American Way.</i> By Nickie D. Phillips and Staci Strobl. Reviewed by Sarah Boslaugh.	93
<i>Why We Left: Untold Stories and Songs of America's First Immigrants.</i> By Joanna Brooks. Reviewed by James I. Deutsch.	94
<i>Red Apple: Communism and McCarthyism in Cold War New York.</i> By Phillip Deery. Reviewed by Bernard F. Dick.	95
<i>Our Aesthetic Categories: Zany, Cute, Interesting.</i> By Sianne Ngai. Reviewed by Douglas Dowland.	96
<i>America's First Adventure in China: Trade, Treaties, Opium, and Salvation.</i> By John R. Haddad. Reviewed by Joe Eaton.	97
<i>Men's College Athletics and the Politics of Racial Equality: Five Pioneer Stories of Black Manliness, White Citizenship, and American Democracy.</i> By Gregory J. Kaliss. Reviewed by Anthony O. Edmonds.	98
<i>Katherine and R. J. Reynolds: Partners of Fortune in the Making of the New South.</i> By Michele Gillespie. Reviewed by Glenn Feldman.	99
<i>Hidden Chicano Cinema: Film Dramas in the Borderlands.</i> By A. Gabriel Meléndez. Reviewed by Crescencio López González.	100
<i>Then Sings My Soul: The Culture of Southern Gospel Singing.</i> By Douglas Harrison. Reviewed by Jared Griffin.	101

<i>The Red Land to the South: American Indian Writers and Indigenous Mexico.</i> By James H. Cox. Reviewed by Geoff Hamilton.	103
<i>Mad Men, Mad World: Sex, Politics, Style and the 1960s.</i> Edited by Lauren M. E. Goodlad, Lilya Kaganovsky, and Robert A. Rushing. Reviewed by Rebecca Hill.	104
<i>Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks: The Vietnam Antiwar Movement as Myth and Memory.</i> By Penny Lewis. Reviewed by Richard L. Hughes.	105
<i>Geronimo.</i> By Robert M. Utley. Reviewed by Sarah Keyes.	106
<i>Chasing Newsroom Diversity: From Jim Crow to Affirmative Action.</i> By Gwyneth Mellinger. Reviewed by Hellen S. Lee.	107
<i>Eslanda: The Large and Unconventional Life of Mrs. Paul Robeson.</i> By Barbara Ransby. Reviewed by Jared Leighton.	108
<i>Lifestyle Politics and Radical Activism.</i> By Laura Portwood-Stacer. Reviewed by John Lennon.	109
<i>War, Genocide, and Justice: Cambodian American Memory Works.</i> By Cathy J. Schlund-Vials. Reviewed by Jeehyun Lim.	110
<i>Sounding Like a No-No: Queer Sounds & Eccentric Acts in the Post-Soul Era.</i> By Francesca T. Royster. Reviewed by Fiona I. B. Ngô.	111
<i>The Signifying Eye: Seeing Faulkner's Art.</i> By Candace Waid. Reviewed by Travis Nygard.	112
<i>Puro Arte: Filipinos on the Stages of Empire.</i> By Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns. Reviewed by Emmanuel Raymundo.	113
<i>On-Demand Culture: Digital Delivery and the Future of Movies.</i> By Chuck Tryon. Reviewed by Chris Richardson.	115
<i>Bright Light City: Las Vegas in Popular Culture.</i> By Larry Gragg. Reviewed by Mary Rizzo.	116
<i>Unfinished Stories: The Narrative Photography of Hansel Mieth and Marion Palfi.</i> By Janet Zandy. Reviewed by Sean Singer.	117
<i>Celibacies: American Modernism and Sexual Life.</i> By Benjamin Kahan. Reviewed by Aristi Trendel.	118
<i>"Building Like Moses with Jacobs in Mind": Contemporary Planning in New York City.</i> By Scott Larson. Reviewed by Andrew Wasserman.	119
<i>Theatrical Liberalism: Jews and Popular Entertainment in America.</i> By Andrea Most. Reviewed by Megan E. Williams.	120
<i>Remembering the Forgotten War: The Enduring Legacies of the U.S.–Mexican War.</i> By Michael Scott Van Wagenen. Reviewed by J. A. Zumoff.	121

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

Reviews

A NOBLE FIGHT: African American Freemasonry and the Struggle for Democracy in America. By Corey D. B. Walker. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 2008.

Corey D. B. Walker begins his book with a reference to poet and polymath James Weldon Johnson, who once referred to his initiation into “the freemasonry of the race” to describe his entry into “the best class of colored people” in Jacksonville, Florida. With roots in the Revolutionary War era, African American freemasonry has long been one of the backbones of African American society, to the point where its exclusive, privately controlled networks could not only describe Masonic lodges, but also, in Johnson’s formulation, could describe the exclusive social networks that African Americans developed amongst themselves in a variety of realms. Whether metaphorically or literally, freemasonry delineated a set of passwords and rituals that guarded Black-controlled, Black-defined spheres and facilitated a range of community- and identity-building activities. As one might imagine, the range of functions that Masonic spaces enabled has been diverse and profound. By exploring African American freemasonry, scholars in the last decade have been able to explore Black masculinity, Black community structures, and the Black public sphere as resistance to Black oppression in material and ideational terms in the more than two centuries since a Barbadian-born soldier named Prince Hall started the first all-Black lodge on American soil. Walker’s book is an authoritative and innovative contribution to our understanding of freemasonry, giving credence to Lawrence Levine’s 1977 prediction that “when their role is finally studied with the care it demands, I suspect it will become evident that they played a subversive part.”¹

Scholars of European freemasonry have long posited that the Masonic brotherhood—which at times included women and in other cases evolved women’s affiliates—served as a kind of laboratory for democracy, modeling democratic practices and training its members in the arts of debate, voting, and citizenship in

societies where the franchise was limited or nonexistent. By spreading the gospel of democracy and the skills needed to enact democratic citizenship, freemasonry was a crucial part of developing a public sphere in royalist European countries and in speeding the demise of the absolute rule of royals.² In the last decade, scholars of Black freemasonry have demonstrated that freemasonry served an analogous function among African Americans, given implicit and explicit disenfranchisement for most of U.S. history. Corey D. B. Walker has written the fullest treatment of the role of freemasonry in training African Americans in the arts of democratic citizenship thus far, “rethinking the connections between the cognitive processes and cultural practices of voluntary associations,” as he puts it (4). For Walker, as for other scholars of European and American freemasonry, the brotherhood does not reflect the logics and practices of citizenship in the larger society as much as it provides a critique that helps provoke the expansion of democracy.³

Walker splits his text into two historical moments: the Revolutionary War era and postemancipation Charlottesville, Virginia. In the first moment, he is interested especially in what he calls the “African diasporic zone of cultural contact” with freemasonry, utilizing theories of cultural formation that recognize that although freemasonry resonated with African secret societies, asymmetries of power in the Atlantic world meant that such traditions met on a very uneven playing field that privileged European cultures and institutions. In the second moment, he illuminates the struggles for the franchise in an era of Black disenfranchisement, demonstrating that the Black public sphere, and debates about democracy, rights, and citizenship, extend deep into the associational life of Black communities, in realms that have not often been included in accounts of Black politics or Black civic engagement outside of the growing body of recent Black Masonic studies. The author argues “for a critical understanding of the culture and language of Freemasonry as a novel political space for interrogating the problems, prospects, and possibilities of the democratic project, thereby reinvigorating our attention to how material formations can reveal—both conceptually and methodologically—new insights into the struggles and contests that lie at the heart of democracy in America” (16).

Walker’s first chapter is a bracing intervention in the theory of democratic participation. He contends that traditional theories of democracy tend to homogenize its experience and practice, which flies in the face of the historical experience of democracy and its limitations in America and creates a “spectral economy” of paradoxes in the system of practices that compose American democracy. This notion of paradox of unfreedom built into the very conception and practice of democratic freedoms builds on conceptions of paradox in the work of scholars such as Edmund Morgan, George Fredrickson, and Eric Foner. But Walker takes this discussion in an interesting new direction by responding to de Toqueville’s classic *Democracy in America* with a theory he calls *A/Democracy*, by which he posits that “marginal political actors, while creative and relatively autonomous, work within a ‘horizon of possibility’” of limited, precluded options.

A second chapter gives a thorough history of freemasonry and places African American freemasonry within the Atlantic World in the Age of Revolution. Black

masonic lodges were heterotopias of sorts that converged a cacophony of great “geographic complexity, cognitive heterogeneity, and fragmented experiences” (17). African American masons signified on the already-signified symbols of freemasonry, creating “a political complex consisting of critical oppositional cultural practices that facilitate the development of a political project aimed at articulating an African American presence within the emerging democratic order of the United States” (17).

Chapter three reads Gabriel’s *Rebellion* in the light of the coded meanings of freemasonry, and then interprets Martin Delaney’s nineteenth-century novel *Blake, or the Huts of America* as an extended commentary on citizenship and the nation using the symbols, ritual, imagery, and language of freemasonry, effectively arguing that Masonry allows fresh insights into these well-known episodes and figures and provides a crucial set of contexts for understanding African American critical discourses on citizenship and the nation.

In the remaining chapters, Walker turns his attention to his case study of postemancipation Charlottesville, Virginia. In chapter four, “A New Political Reality,” the author explores the creation of a Masonic political imaginary and political ideology that critiqued efforts to disenfranchise Blacks after the hard-won gains of Reconstruction and asserted the Black claim to political subjectivity as an “ethico-political citizen.” This conception “disrupts the abstract, autonomous individual-citizen in forcing the political recognition of others on the basis of a universal notion of humanity” (19).

Chapter five takes the reader inside African American freemasonry for a thickly described analysis of secret Masonic ritual, showing how Masons turned their symbols and rituals into political discourse. “Inevitably,” the author writes, “African American Freemasonry was part of a larger political strategy—what can be termed ‘the politics of culture’—that employed various cultural formations in an ever-expanding arsenal of political weapons designed to aid African Americans in articulating their discontent with a political system that marginalized their political choices and opportunities” (178).

Scholars of the Civil Rights movement have long ago demonstrated that Black churches provided crucial support and organizational infrastructure for the Civil Rights movement—as well as indifference and outright opposition. What Walker and other scholars of African American associational life are showing is that no matter the merits of the formulation of the “long Civil Rights Movement,” scholars ought to pay attention to the crucial role of freemasonry and other associations outside of churches when they seek to narrate the community structures that provided opportunities for resistance to slavery, disenfranchisement, and segregation, as well as the articulation of Black values, Black historical consciousness, Black separatism, and Black pride. There is a case to be made that when Black masons won a Supreme Court case in 1912 and the Black Shriners (a non-Masonic organization whose members are Masons) won a similar case in 1929, Black fraternal organizations pioneered the strategy of litigation that Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP legal team perfecting in winning so many landmark court cases after World War II. As Walker writes, freemasonry does not fit neatly into political categories predicated on notions of political economy that foreground the public sphere and materialist

assumptions of resistance and the political. Rather, freemasonry's political interventions are more infrapolitical, a political site "where the struggle for democracy in America is waged in veiled language and masked in ritual performance" (223). Walker's is a welcome intervention that can serve as a model for other scholars within and without of African American Studies theorizing political struggle and learning to see layers of political meaning outside of their most obvious and public settings.

Endnotes

1. Lawrence Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 268. The first studies of Prince Hall Freemasonry focused not on politics, gender, or religion but on its bourgeois aspects. See William Alan Muraskin, *Middle-Class Blacks in a White Society: Prince Hall Freemasonry in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975) and Loretta J. Williams, *Black Freemasonry and Middle-Class Realities* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1980).

2. Margaret C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth Century Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); for a US analogue, see Steven C. Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730–1840* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

3. Joanna Brooks, "Prince Hall, Freemasonry, and Genealogy," *African American Review* 34 (Summer, 2000), 197–216; Martin Summers, *Manliness and Its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900–1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Chernoh Sesay, "Freemasons of Color: Prince Hall, Revolutionary Black Boston, and the Origins of Black Freemasonry, 1770–1807" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 2006); Theda Skocpol, Ariane Liazos, and Marshall Ganz, *What a Mighty Power We Can Be: African American Fraternal Groups and the Struggle for Racial Equality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Stephen Kantrowitz, "Intended for the Better Government of Man": The Political History of African American Freemasonry in the Era of Emancipation," *The Journal of American History* 96 no. 4 (March 2010): 1001–1026.

Jacob Dorman

University of Kansas

DOROTHY WEST'S PARADISE: A Biography of Class and Color. By Cherene M. Sherrard-Johnson. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. 2012.

Cherene Sherrard-Johnson's book carefully documents the life and work of Harlem Renaissance writer Dorothy West. Most illuminating is Sherrard-Johnson's excavation of Dorothy West's interviews and how Sherrard-Johnson reads Dorothy West's class politics and lifelong struggles with intra-race colorism. In the introduction, Sherrard-Johnson states that her book is not a traditional biography (1) and it isn't, which is a good thing because in using West's full archive (interviews, personal writing, novels) to explore the varied experiences of a distinct group of African Americans and the cultural geography of Oak Bluffs, MA, Sherrard-Johnson's book not only offers an insightful and carefully researched biography of Dorothy West but it also demonstrates the ways race, class, and gender help to shape experience.

In chapter one, Sherrard-Johnson looks at how West "preserved and invents the social, historical, and racial geography of Oak Bluffs" (8). Sherrard-Johnson does this by tracing the many versions of Oak Bluffs as it appears in West's interviews, and then compares those versions with West's writing of Oak Bluffs. Sherrard-Johnson's analysis of the class politics of the small group of African Americans who lived in Oak Bluffs illuminates the inherent bourgeois aspirations of the island's black residents. Sherrard-Johnson writes, "A major attraction to the island was that it fulfilled

the desire for a space where race could become secondary to class” (38). Chapter two examines West’s girlhood and the importance of West’s mother to West’s artistic life. Sherrard-Johnson teases out West’s re-creation of her mother in her fictional work and in her autobiographical writing. Additionally, Sherrard-Johnson examines West’s fictional creation of an elite black east coast and identifies it as myth making. In Chapter three, Sherrard-Johnson moves from West’s early childhood to West’s formative years in Harlem in the 1920s. Sherrard-Johnson devotes a significant amount of chapter three detailing West’s relationships with established Harlem Renaissance figures like Zora Neal Hurston, Langston Hughes, and Wallace Thurman. An illuminating part of chapter three is Sherrard-Johnson’s contention that “the boundaries between middle and working class, between gay and straight, have long been muddled in the black community” (68). Sherrard-Johnson convincingly argues that the representation of sex and intimacy in West’s stories is directly connected to West’s class background and that West’s association and proximity to bohemian artists, writers, and intellectuals placed her in an alternatively radical black and bi-sexual space. Chapter four explores West’s short but personally impactful year abroad in Russia. Sherrard-Johnson pieces together West’s experience by looking at personal letters and three of West’s publications that were directly based on West’s stay in Russia. In Chapter five, Sherrard-Johnson details West’s editorial pursuits and the temporary sideline of her own work during her term as editor of the black literary journal *Challenge*. This chapter provides an insightful snapshot of West’s professional life and her relationship with coeditor Marian Minus. Chapter six focuses on the writing, reception, and criticism of West’s *The Living is Easy* (1948). Chapter seven examines West’s literary aims with her newspaper column, *Vineyard Gazette*. In Chapter eight, Sherrard-Johnson examines how West’s final novel *The Wedding* (1995) was transformed into a television miniseries.

Sherrard-Johnson’s book is more than a biography of class and color; it is also about the unique location and cultural geography of Oak Bluffs. Sherrard-Johnson’s feminist reading of the varied archival material offers an illuminating analysis of the ways black women writers negotiated race, class, and gender. Additionally, Sherrard-Johnson’s book offers an intimate and valuable look at the complex relationships between some of the most heralded artists, writers, and intellectuals of the Harlem Renaissance.

Zakiya R. Adair

University of Missouri

INVENTING THE EGGHEAD: The Battle over Brainpower in American Culture.
By Aaron Lecklider. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 2013.

In a sense, there are two differing aspects to Lecklider’s book. On the one hand, he is making a grand argument in which he explores “representations of intelligence in twentieth-century American culture,” particularly popular culture (4). He views this as a crucial project because “rethinking the history of brainpower in American culture as the history of an organic intellectual tradition forces us to rethink narratives that diminish the voices of ordinary women and men in intellectual conversations,” (226)

and that popular culture is the crucial site of contestation because “the relationship between intelligence and social power informed the emerging popular culture of the twentieth century” (225). Lecklider argues that from 1900 until the 1950s, popular culture presented an ever-widening range of definitions of intelligence embodied in a range of Americans, always inflected by differences around race, class, and gender. This is key for his larger argument that the intellectual historians of the 1960s, including Richard Hofstadter with *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (1963) and Christopher Lasch with *The New Radicalism in America* (1965), were fundamentally misconstruing the role of the intellectual because they were arguing against the characterization of the intellectual as “the egghead,” which was a construct of the late 1950s with a decided right-wing slant and that “bracketed off intellect from the brainpower of ordinary women and men and divorces intelligence from working-class cultural politics” (222). The intellectual these thinkers were defending was, then, only one variation on the theme.

This is an interesting and provocative argument that can in fact lead to a rethinking of many questions in American intellectual and cultural history. While the arch of this larger argument is visible in the introduction and epilogue, it is not always as directly connected to the close readings of a variety of evidence that make up the central chapters of the work. Here Lecklider includes material as various as the Chautauqua circuit, scientific displays at Coney Island, the portrayal of Albert Einstein in the American press, and popular songs about college students in the 1920s. He develops his arguments about the possession of brainpower by ordinary men and women through examinations of the Bryn Mawr Summer School for women workers, the underlying agreement of DuBois and Booker T. Washington that “the surest way to achieve racial equality was by promoting brainpower,” and close reading of works of the Harlem Renaissance (95–96). In the 1930s, he considers WPA library posters, the reception of Roosevelt’s Brain Trust, and proletarian literature. Fears of intellectuals reemerge, and are focused entirely on men, in the postwar period, particularly around the “Atomic City” of Oak Ridge, TN.

Most of these close readings are sturdy; though I think recent scholarship has indicated that Chicago’s Bronzeville was seen more as the center of African American culture in the 1930s than was Harlem. The very breadth of the scope works against closely aligning the examples with the larger argument. However, *Inventing the Egghead* opens myriad questions that can and should be explored in more depth making more direct connections between individual developments and the overarching scope of twentieth-century American intellectual life.

Lynne Adrian

University of Alabama

FLYOVER LIVES: A Memoir. By Diane Johnson. New York: Viking. 2014.

Describing the arrival of Diane Johnson’s ancestors from Europe to the Midwest, tracing her passage from childhood through adolescence to adulthood, and revealing glimpses of the incidents that led to her current transatlantic personal and professional life, *Flyover Lives* consists of the elements of history, autobiography, and travel.

“Americans are naïve and indifferent to history” (3), the remark made by Johnson’s French hostess, fueled her curiosity about her family history, and she discovered in the papers of her great-great grandmother Catherine Anne Perkins Martin that in 1711 her forefathers, the brothers René and François Cossé, had been captured by the English on board a ship en route to Canada. Subsequently, René Cossé (Ranna Cossitt) remained in Connecticut, refusing to be sent to Montreal in exchange for the English prisoners of the French taken during the Anglo-French rivalry over Canada. In 1820, Catherine’s mother Anne Cossitt, Ranna’s great granddaughter and Johnson’s great-great-great grandmother, married a man called Meyrick and went to the Midwest, which Johnson identifies as the “flyover country.”

Depicting personal, familial, and social history with an episodic plot, Diane Johnson’s memoir calls to mind *A Backward Glance* (1934), the autobiography of Edith Wharton, another fin de siècle American writer in Paris. Unlike her literary predecessor’s transatlantic residence, however, that of Johnson resulted from her second husband’s professional obligation rather than her own preference. Different from those of the earlier writer too, Johnson’s recollections reveal an unexceptional childhood. Her father, a high school principal, and her mother, an art teacher, used to be “great readers” (49), who introduced the classics to their daughter at home and in Carnegie Library in Moline, the author’s hometown.

All along, Johnson maintains an unassuming attitude to her distinctive accomplishments. In contrast to Sylvia Plath, who poignantly imparted in her novel *The Bell Jar* (1963) her internship at *Mademoiselle* magazine in New York in summer 1953, Johnson nearly mutes her attainment of a similar position at this magazine in the same summer. This script-writer of Stanley Kubrick’s well-acclaimed movie *The Shining* neither magnifies her collaboration with the distinguished Hollywood directors Mike Nichols, Francis Ford Coppola, Sydney Pollack, and Volker Schlöndorff, nor dwells on her long-established literary career. She even plays down the successful filming of her novel *Le Divorce* by James Ivory.

Johnson names Uncle Bill as her favorite relative and emphasizes the hardships endured by her ancestral aunt Catherine’s husband, Dr. Eleazer Martin, while searching for a suitable place to practice his medical profession, which also happens to be the profession of Johnson’s brother and husband. Even so, she considers such tasks of women as canning, quilting, and painting more fascinating, albeit less challenging. Indeed, Johnson emerges as a veritable feminist, as she claims, “like any nice woman I am a feminist” (122), not only for probing her maternal lineage for her roots, but also for plucking the courage after her divorce from her first husband in 1968 and taking her four little children with her to London to do research and write in the British Museum.

Ferdâ Asya

Bloomsburg University

THE CHILDREN'S TABLE: Childhood Studies and the Humanities. Edited by Anna Mae Duane. Athens: University of Georgia Press. 2013.

Linking scholarship across disciplines, time periods, and methods, *The Children's Table* convincingly argues for the importance of a multidisciplinary approach in childhood studies, demonstrating how humanist perspectives and methods animate and, at times, construct child-related concerns in the sciences and social sciences.

The first section, "Questioning the Autonomous Subject and Individual Rights," concerns the figure of the child as a subject caught among competing (often contradictory) social, legal, and ideological systems. Essays focus on issues such as child-centered jurisprudence, juveniles within the justice system, applications of critical race theory to childhood studies, childhood in history and during the Civil War, and explorations of "childist" ethics. Vitally, the section demonstrates the importance of overcoming a central division within childhood studies, reconciling the divide in childhood studies scholarship between "real" and "rhetorical" children, arguing that a more comprehensive understanding of children's subjectivity is gained through a multifaceted perspective.

Section two, "Recalibrating the Work of Discipline," explores a series of physical and discursive educational structures that position children within broader networks of power. Addressing the insistence of education in antebellum literature, sentimental education in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), and architectural spaces for children in post-war England, the section investigates the disciplinary work of educational institutions and their capacity to mold children into future citizens.

Section three, "Childhood Studies and the Queer Subject," considers childhood studies and queer studies in tandem. Here too, the authors assert the importance of a queer studies perspective in bridging a gap between the biological child and the child as social construction. Contributions explore queer and gender-nonconforming children in literature and the intersection of childhood studies and adoption studies, all of which highlight ways of understanding identities and social units outside of binary oppositions and not solely based on genealogy or biology.

The final section, "Childhood Studies: Theory, Practice, Pasts, and Futures," argues that focusing on the child enables reconsiderations of history writ large, and explores how this line of inquiry might inform contemporary pedagogical practices in the field of childhood studies. Continuing to resolve the figures of the "real" and "imagined" child, authors explore how childhood is embodied and performed, how archival research can animate and reconstruct childhood, and the necessity of troubling traditionally rigid disciplinary boundaries when training the next generation of scholars in this new field.

The book mobilizes an extensive theoretical network to provide grounding and justification of its project. Individual authors draw upon diverse scholarly traditions, including foundational texts in childhood studies written before the field was known as such. Individually, many essays return to the book's overall aims, referencing other pieces throughout the volume, and each section is prefaced with introductory remarks that frame the core concerns to follow. Such an addition helpfully orients the

reader, and may be necessary, given the breadth of the material. *The Children's Table* represents a substantial contribution to the field of childhood studies by outlining the political and ethical stakes of humanist inquiry in relation to work on childhood in the sciences and social sciences that has too often been regarded as holding exclusive political purchase. Foregrounding childhood studies' multidisciplinary, it presents the compelling argument for considering the concerns and epistemologies of individual areas not in contention with one another, but as overlapping parts of a larger whole to which the humanities make an essential contribution.

Meredith A. Bak

Franklin & Marshall College

IT'S ALL A KIND OF MAGIC: The Young Ken Kesey. By Rick Dodgson. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. 2013.

Rick Dodgson's account of the early life of Ken Kesey presents the *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962) author (and counterculture icon) as a bold, arrogant, and chauvinistic young man. Kesey identified closely with Hollywood rebels Marlon Brando and James Dean. He was a talented wrestler (and even tried out for the Olympic team), and he was a popular member of his fraternity at the University of Oregon. At parties and in graduate school courses, Kesey insisted on being the center of attention, and, in Dodgson's words, "either you could decide to like . . . his alpha male personality, or you could let him irritate the hell out of you" (166). The irritated included many of Kesey's neighbors, classmates, and instructors, often with good reason.

But Dodgson also captures Kesey's undeniable talent as a writer and performer. He traces Kesey's early fascination with magic, acting, and writing for his school newspapers. He also touches on Kesey's many unsuccessful attempts to find work in Hollywood, and, in one of the most fascinating accounts in the book, discusses the failure of the Kirk Douglas–led Broadway adaptation of *Cuckoo's Nest*. Having sold the rights, Kesey also forfeited royalties from subsequent theatrical interpretations and the award-winning film version, starring Jack Nicholson.

Strangely, Dodgson focuses very little on *Cuckoo's Nest* or Kesey's follow-up *Sometimes a Great Notion* (1964). Even more surprisingly, he says very little about the Sixties counterculture itself. The book ends, anticlimactically, just before Kesey's famous, drug-infused 1964 road trip with the Merry Pranksters, but Dodgson never fully explains the trip's historical significance. Much of the book centers on Kesey's life in the hip Perry Lane neighborhood of Menlo Park, California—complete with psychedelic drugs, free love, and occasional interactions with the Grateful Dead, Joan Baez, and Neal Cassady. Aside from a history of psychedelics, however, the wider cultural implications of the moment are almost entirely ignored.

There are other shortcomings, as well. Dodgson writes using a variety of clichés, colloquialisms, and hyperboles, and the book sometimes reads like a 1930s radio drama. Dodgson also awkwardly refers to Ken and Faye Kesey as "Kesey and Faye," and he uses the 1968 Columbia University strike to illustrate fraternity politics in Oregon more than a decade earlier. Most egregiously, rather than take Kesey to

task or explore the changing values of the period, Dodgson defends Kesey against accusations of racism and sexism (the former included performances in blackface), offering weakly, “Kesey was never a racist at heart” (53).

Despite these missteps, the book is clearly a labor of love, and the energy that Dodgson brings to the project is admirable. The book likely suffers from Faye Kesey and “prankster” Ken Babb’s decisions to deny Dodgson access to the unpublished manuscripts that he used for his original doctoral dissertation. In the end, *It’s All a Kind of Magic* should still be a fun read for Kesey fans, but it misses an opportunity to make a more substantial intervention.

Dawson Barrett

Del Mar College

LIVING FAITH: Everyday Religion and Mothers in Poverty. By Susan Crawford Sullivan. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2011.

In late 2012, *The New York Times* followed the family of Dasani, one of New York City’s increasing number of homeless children. Mayor Michael Bloomberg explained entrenched poverty like Dasani’s to *Politiker*, “This kid was dealt a bad hand. I don’t know quite why. That’s just the way God works. Sometimes some of us are lucky and some of us are not.”

Bloomberg’s comments angered those who blame rising inequality, welfare reform that moved many mothers into severe poverty, limited jobs, and structural racism—but not the Divine—for poverty. But, according to Susan Crawford Sullivan’s *Living Faith: Everyday Religion and Mothers in Poverty*, Bloomberg might have accurately captured poor mothers’ own explanations for their poverty: God, according to many of the forty-five Boston women Sullivan interviewed, is working in their poverty, though they would disagree with Bloomberg’s implication that their suffering is inexplicable. Sullivan explores the topic with compassion and concision in her book, which has won prizes from the American Sociological Association and the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.

Despite the moral language aimed at poor women, few of Sullivan’s respondents attended church, where many judged themselves to be unfit to attend or feared, rightly, as some of the pastors Sullivan interviewed noted, others’ judgment (181). Yet 80% of them identified religion as personally important, and they engaged religion in their personal lives, through prayer, reading, and other practices. Importantly, they believed that God was actively intervening in their lives for their long-term benefit, even if God’s ways were mysterious or even painful. Through their trials, they believed that God was present and that they were experiencing hardships for a purpose; indeed, writes Sullivan, they are living in “an overall plan orchestrated by God with the women’s greater well-being in mind” (145). On a more practical level, their spiritual lives allowed them to live with hope and renewed strength for dealing with chaotic lives, increasing resilience and agency. Further, they saw themselves as acting on opportunities God provided. Sullivan makes a compelling case that, at least for some women, personal religiosity makes meaning out of a demeaning experience while also motivating action.

This sense of partnering with God, though, invites women to believe that “they have not tried hard enough and thus have disappointed God” or, more commonly, blame other welfare recipients for using welfare services (77). Such shaming reveals their acceptance of the (non-Biblical) claim that “God helps those who help themselves.” Indeed, nearly all accept the dominant narrative that those in poverty are at fault for their poverty, for poor people “particularly embrace the notion that hard work by self-reliant individuals yields economic success” (72). As Sullivan suggests, “[P]oor mothers’ cultural religious repertoire most often reflects the adoption of an American ideal of self-sufficiency” (53). At the same time that they are surrounded by messages that invalidate their worth as citizens, mothers, and believers, the respondents recognized the need for the government, not churches, to alleviate poverty. In this way, though these women argued that poverty is often the result of personal moral failings, they also understood poverty as a social problem to be addressed at a larger level.

Sullivan’s work reminds scholars of the work needed on the lived religions of the poor, women, and people of color. Sullivan’s work will surely be frequently invoked by scholars working at these intersections.

Rebecca Barrett-Fox

Arkansas State University

COMIC BOOK CRIME: Truth, Justice, and the American Way. By Nickie D. Phillips and Staci Strobl. New York: New York University Press. 2013.

The most important factor in writing a survey of any subject is choosing which works to consider in your survey. This step (in my other life as a statistician, we’d call it drawing the sample) often has more influence on the conclusions of the survey than any analysis performed by the author, because only those works judged worthy of consideration can influence the survey’s outcome. And, as we say in statistics, biased samples are likely to yield biased results.

One way to deal with this dilemma is exemplified by the approach taken in *Comic Book Crime: Truth, Justice, and the American Way*, written by Nickie D. Phillips and Staci Strobl. Phillips and Strobl analyzed a purposive sample of approximately 200 comic books published from 2001 to 2010 in the U.S., chosen with reference to three measures of value: sales, critical acclaim, and importance as identified by members of the comic book community (much more detail about their method is supplied in *Comic Book Crime*).

Comic Book Crime is one of those rare books that is both academically respectable and accessible to the general reader. After a brief history of crime and justice in American comic books, Phillips and Strobl shift their focus to how crime has been portrayed in American comics following 9/11. Individual chapters are devoted to specific topics, including terrorism and xenophobia (with ample treatment of the portrayal of Arabs in comics), apocalyptic narratives, villains, heroes, gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, types of justice, and the recurring popularity of statements of retributive sentiment, although retribution is seldom carried out, in either the comics or real life.

Every chapter is organized around a few themes, the explication of which is well supported by analysis of specific comics as well as references to the critical literature and analogies drawn between the world of the comics and “the real world” (or at least what we believe to be the real world). For instance, the chapter on gender and sexual orientation notes that news reports mainly cover violent and sensational crimes (a minority of all crimes), and that crime victims mentioned in the news are most often white women (a minority of all victims—in fact, young minority men are much more likely to be the victims of violent crime). Similarly, Phillips and Strobl argue, in the comic book world women exist primarily as real or potential victims, in need of protection or rescue by the hypermasculine heroes. You could say that comics simply draw on stereotypes already present in our culture, but Phillips and Strobl argue that as cultural objects comic books also participate in the construction of gender expectations.

Phillips and Strobl have not only read a lot more comics than you have, they have thought about them deeply, and related them to contemporary social concerns. *Comic Book Crime* is definitely worth reading, both for those interested in its subject, and as a model of how to approach thematic surveys of popular culture.

Sarah Boslaugh

Kennesaw State University

WHY WE LEFT: Untold Stories and Songs of America’s First Immigrants. By Joanna Brooks. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 2013.

Folklorists have long studied the ballad (defined as a folksong that tells a story), but much of the scholarship has leaned towards either literary interpretations that explore ballad variation and classification or performative interpretations that examine singing styles and music. From an American Studies perspective, some of the more notable contributions have analyzed the ballads (or *corridos*) found along the border with Mexico that celebrate outlaws such as Gregorio Cortez, escapes from *la migra* while crossing into the United States, and even a sub-genre known as *narcocorridos*. But relatively few scholars have used the ballad tradition to address historical and social questions about the peopling of America by immigrants from the British Isles.

Joanna Brooks’s *Why We Left* is therefore a most welcome addition to ballad scholarship, thanks to her discerning analysis of four Anglo-American ballads that were collected by such notable folklorists as Alan Lomax, Arthur Kyle Davis, Jr., Duncan Emrich, and Maud Karpeles between 1932 and 1950. A professor of English and Comparative Literature at San Diego State University, Brooks is descended from seventeenth-century British immigrants who arrived in America as indentured servants, and eventually found places of their own. Brooks argues convincingly that many of the ballads sung by other descendants of Anglo-American immigrants may offer clues into why their ancestors left.

For instance, on a basic level, the ballad “Edward” tells the story of a man who has killed his younger brother for cutting down a tree, and then flees in shame by ship to America. In Brooks’s hands, however, the ballad not only “points to the role of environmental destruction, particularly deforestation, in the displacement and

outmigration of hundreds of thousands of peasant English” (53), but also to the way in which the new settlers “set bounds, imposed borders, and instituted a rational system of land appropriation, doing unto indigenous American people what had been done unto them in the centuries before” (74).

Brooks demonstrates similar insights with three more ballads: “The Two Sisters,” another tale of sibling rivalry, in which two sisters fight over a luxurious beaver hat, leading to the murder of the youngest; “The Golden Vanity,” which tells of a young sailor who single-handedly sinks an enemy ship, but then is denied the reward promised by his captain and finally left to drown at sea; and “The House Carpenter,” in which a young woman abandons her husband and children in England, only to drown when the ship sailing to her lover in America strikes a rock and sinks.

Missing from the book—albeit for understandable reasons of economy—is a music CD that would have allowed readers to hear the extraordinary singers of the ballads themselves—Davy Crockett Ward and Horton Barker from Virginia, Bascom Lamar Lunsford from North Carolina, and Attie Crane from Tennessee—all vividly described by Brooks. Fortunately, similar recordings can be found online through the English Broadside Ballad Archive at the University of California Santa Barbara, the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, and even YouTube. Reading *Why We Left* in tandem with hearing the ballads is delightful.

James I. Deutsch

Smithsonian Institution

RED APPLE: Communism and McCarthyism in Cold War New York. By Phillip Deery. New York: Fordham University Press. 2014.

Among the many dark pages in American history are the late 1940s and early 1950s, when two committees—the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) and later Senator Joseph McCarthy’s—ran roughshod over civil liberties, destroyed or derailed careers, drove some into exile, and others to an early grave. Restricting himself to New York, Deery has written a documentary-like overview of the period, acting as a historian with a conscience who humanizes the victims without canonizing them. None of them would have even wanted a nimbus. The New Yorkers were a diverse group, not all of whom were Communists. Helen Reid Bryan, a fifty-ish Quaker, was not. As administrative secretary of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee (JAFRC), which HUAC considered a Communist front, she refused to surrender the committee’s records and was sentenced to three months imprisonment. JAFRC chair, Dr. Edward K. Barsky, was also targeted; it did not help that he provided medical aid to the Abraham Lincoln Brigade during the Spanish Civil War. For his humanitarianism, he was sentenced to six months, serving five. Howard Fast, then a committed Communist, watched his career take a nose dive, when his novel, *Citizen Tom Paine* (1943), was banned in New York secondary schools. Writing jobs dried up, and his radicalism reduced him to a polemicist. Only after Nikita Krushchev revealed the extent of Stalin’s crimes in 1956 did Fast leave the Party. Nor was academe exempt from the witch hunt. Lyman Bradley, chair of New York

University's German Department and JAFRC treasurer, was given a three-month sentence. Ironically, he was not a Communist but stood by what he thought were his rights. Edwin Burgum, who was a Communist and an NYU professor with extensive publications, was terminated. His wife, unable to deal with the pressure, committed suicide. The Russian composer, Dimitri Shostakovich, is treated as a New Yorker because Stalin sent him to the 1949 Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace, known as the Waldorf Conference, where he was greeted by a picketer with a "SHOSTAKOVICH! JUMP THRU THE WINDOW!" sign. It was bad enough that in Russia he was accused of composing music that smacked of bourgeois formalism and had to apologize for deviating from Socialist Realism, which was another way of saying music that was purely Soviet and not exportable to the West; or simply, inferior music. Finally, there was the lawyer, O. John Rogge, who sought a middle ground between anti-Communism and Stalinism, defending both JAFRC and David Greenglass, who named his sister and brother-in-law, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, as Communist agents. Sadly, Rogge discovered there was no middle ground. By setting his case histories against a Cold War background, Deery has written one of the best accounts of the period that Dalton Trumbo called "the time of the toad." Toads are harmless; toadies are not.

Bernard F. Dick

Fairleigh Dickinson University–Teaneck

OUR AESTHETIC CATEGORIES: Zany, Cute, Interesting. By Sianne Ngai. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 2012.

For Sianne Ngai, the "zany," the "cute," and the "interesting" are aesthetic categories which demonstrate "how aesthetic experience has been transformed by the hypercommodified, information-saturated, performance-driven conditions of late capitalism" (1). That these are "aesthetic" categories is part of Ngai's point: traditional aesthetic theory has neglected these categories because they seem to be the opposite of the serious, contemplative stance such theory encourages. Ngai's approach is therefore two-fold: to show how these categories can be read as aesthetic theory; and to show how important they are to our understanding of contemporary culture.

There is a lot of work that takes place within these seemingly minor categories. The cute, Ngai argues, is an "uncanny reversal" that triggers both empathy and aversion (87). To regard something as cute is to diminish it, often turning an object into its opposite. Cuteness is therefore paradoxical, as cute objects often seduce us into believing that their cuteness can be grasped and manipulated. The "interesting," Ngai posits, is a "calm, if not necessarily weak, affective intensity whose minimalism is somehow understood to secure its link to ratiocinative cognition and to lubricate the formation of social ties" (113). People are brought together by what they find to be mutually interesting, which makes "'serious' subcultural groups cohere in the first place" (172). As such, to say that something—someone—is interesting is almost an invitation, a way of beginning to build a community. The "zany" "speaks to a politically ambiguous erosion of the distinction between playing and working" (188). The "zany" figure often puts the emotional intensity of play to work, and in doing

so, shrinks the distinction between work and play. The manic, frantic extremes that zany characters engage in are “not just funny but angry,” an indication of a precarious world which never truly stops working (218).

Ngai’s range is encyclopedic: while such range is insightful, the book often feels unrestrained as Ngai attempts to negotiate the entire history of modern and postmodern aesthetic theory while simultaneously performing contemporary cultural criticism. The result is a voluminous prose style which not all will have the patience to peruse. But for those who are interested in what traditional aesthetic theory has slighted as marginal, and for those who are interested in the aesthetics of contemporary culture, *Our Aesthetic Categories* is worthy reading.

Douglas Dowland

Ohio Northern University

AMERICA’S FIRST ADVENTURE IN CHINA: Trade, Treaties, Opium, and Salvation. By John R. Haddad. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 2013.

In his *America’s First Adventure in China: Trade, Treaties, Opium, and Salvation*, John R. Haddad succinctly traces Americans’ first experiences in China, from the voyage of the *Empress of China* in 1784 to diplomat Anson Burlingame’s death in 1870.

Haddad masterfully tells of early American dreams of striking it rich in China. John Ledyard’s plans for selling American furs in China seemed too risky. An alternative venture—selling American ginseng in China—floundered quickly as American ships brought too much of the desired good, flooding the market. American religious Millennialism brought the evangelical fervor of ambitious missionaries to Sino-American relations. Haddad shows that the greatest impact of evangelical encounters was felt in other fields, most notably medicine and linguistic/cultural exchange. As Haddad explains, by the late 1830s, all Americans in China had come to define themselves in relation to the opium trade, either as participants (the moneyed aristocracy) or as critics (the moral aristocracy). Ironically, even Americans who opposed the trade benefited from the opening of China by the British in the First Opium War.

Haddad proves that early American ventures in China should not be understood as mere miniature versions of British diplomacy. Absent the framework of the bureaucratic structures and military protection given British subjects, Americans in China found their own (American) way. Haddad succinctly connects the thoughts and actions of Americans in China to their kindred at home. Early American trade with China expressed the new republic’s increasingly democratic and decentralized qualities, with 600 American ships visiting China between 1784 and 1814. While no company was able to monopolize the China trade, Thomas Perkin’s Perkins and Company offered a prime example of Yankee systematic business organization. Anson Burlingame’s mission to China was infused with the moral imperatives forged in the American struggle against slavery, cooperation with China being the equivalence of the anti-slavery cause for Burlingame. Burlingame’s Treaty, like the Fourteenth Amendment, was meant to promote equality.

Haddad delineates Caleb Cushing's success in bringing a greater international stature to American China diplomacy. In his chapter on "Centrifugal Force: The Spread of People, Goods, Capital, and Ideas", Haddad skillfully blends the good with the bad, noting both the mutual advantages gained by Sino-American exchanges as well as the negative consequences. His chapter on the Taiping Rebellion traces the amazing stories of American involvement in the bloodiest civil war in history.

America's First Adventure in China is erudite yet delightful to read. Haddad gives the reader dozens of well-told historical vignettes linked around central themes, most notably the connections between Americans' actions in China and intellectual currents at home. While one might have hoped for even more Chinese perspectives on early Sino-American relations, readers gain a thorough understanding of both the novelties of the early encounters between Americans and Chinese and the factors involved in the relative maturation of Sino-American affairs by the middle of the nineteenth century.

Joe Eaton

National Chengchi University, Taiwan

MEN'S COLLEGE ATHLETICS AND THE POLITICS OF RACIAL EQUALITY: Five Pioneer Stories of Black Manliness, White Citizenship, and American Democracy. By Gregory J. Kaliss. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 2012.

A number of historians of African Americans and American sports have used biography as a lens through which to view their topic. Some, like Randy Roberts in his biographies of Jack Johnson and Joe Louis, focus on single individuals. Others, like David K. Wiggins (ed.) in *Out of the Shadows* (2006), bring together several briefer biographical studies of different athletes by a number of experts in the field. Gregory Kaliss, a Research Associate in American Studies at Franklin and Marshall College, adopts a third variation of this approach by discussing several black athletes who played roles in integrating college athletics.

Kaliss's analysis spans the years between 1915 and 1973, with specific chapters on Paul Robeson at Rutgers; Kenny Washington, Jackie Robinson, and Woody Strode at UCLA; Wilt Chamberlain at Kansas; and Charlie Scott at North Carolina. He concludes with an analysis of the integration of Alabama's football team by John Mitchell and Wilbur Jackson, including a lengthy discussion of Coach Bear Bryant's role.

At the outset, Kaliss asserts that his study differs significantly from other accounts of these athletes and integration because his emphasis "is less on what individual athletes and coaches *did* and more on what people *said* about their actions and performances" (4). To this end, his major sources are local newspapers, both mainstream "white" and African American.

At the risk of oversimplifying this complex and nuanced study, Kaliss clearly shows that there were significant regional and chronological variations in the reactions to integration. More importantly, "there were competing models of sports as a blueprint for how [racial] equality might be achieved" (5).

Generally speaking, the "white" media did not see integration of sports program as a path to wider national integration. However, integration of sports programs were

roughly positive, assuming that African American athletes behaved themselves—and, of course, helped teams win. The black press, on the other hand, for most of this time period, enthusiastically trumpeted integration in college sports as a transferable social change that could encourage a wider arena for racial equality beyond athletic fields. This enthusiasm became more problematic among many African American commentators in the 1960s and 1970s who saw the limitations in college sports as a broader model. Indeed, some specifically worried that integration would have a negative impact on historically black institutions of higher education, while giving false hopes to young African Americans.

By and large, Kaliss makes his case convincingly, although much of what he contends is nothing new to most sports historians. Also, he sometimes simply stretches credulity when he tries to tease out of sources meanings that simply aren't there. For example, he discusses a photograph in a Tuscaloosa, Alabama, newspaper in 1971 in which white running back Johnny Musso and African American defensive lineman John Mitchell are talking to three African American young boys, reportedly urging them to "stay in school." While the photograph seemingly represents racial harmony and good will, Kaliss adds a layer of meaning when he notes that Musso is standing behind a seated Mitchell, with his white hand resting on the shoulders of Mitchell and one of the youths. The "image," Kaliss suggests, "portrayed a paternalistic message" since the white athlete "stood in a position of authority, benevolently guiding the proceedings"—clearly an example of paternalism (166). Such over-reaching mars an otherwise interesting and useful addition to the field of sports and race in America.

Anthony O. Edmonds

Ball State University

KATHERINE AND R. J. REYNOLDS: *Partners of Fortune in the Making of the New South*. By Michele Gillespie. Athens: University of Georgia Press. 2012.

This is a deeply researched, finely detailed, double biography of Katherine and R. J. Reynolds, husband and wife duo of Reynolds Tobacco fame. In biographer Michele Gillespie's skilled hands, the reader learns much about the Reynoldses, their separate and joint rise to fame and fortune, and their lives, both public and private. Above all, Gillespie succeeds in bringing cousin Kate—thirty years R. J.'s junior—in from the shadows and grants her just due in the success of Reynolds Tobacco without denigrating the legendary R. J. R. That Katherine's role has "been omitted . . . should not surprise us," Gillespie tells us, for there has been "little room for powerful women in virtually any of the iconic self-made man stories" that have permeated the "national imagination" (8–9).

The book, really, is a model of moderation and choosing the middle ground. Again and again, on virtually every possible front, Gillespie presents a judicious and centrist interpretation of the lives, acts, decisions, and effects of the power couple. "Neither" W. J. Cash nor C. Vann Woodward "got it quite right" Gillespie tells us (4). Reynolds was not one of Woodward's proto-typical "New Men," making his way in Horatio Alger-style; nor was he completely the favored scion of old and wealthy planters who simply shifted to industry from agriculture as New South opportuni-

ties presented themselves. He was something of both. He had “plenty of brains and talent” but he was “also the beneficiary of a powerful system of social capital” (7).

And so on. R. J. was neither completely dependent on Katherine nor independently the financial genius. He had already made several fortunes before marrying, but the precocious Kate—profoundly influenced by her father—played a vital role in encouraging R. J. to take risks that paid off spectacularly. Katherine was neither an iconoclastic and obsessed financier who rejected tradition and home, nor was she completely tied to the gender roles of her time and place. “In her own way, she was a feminist,” Gillespie asserts, and led R. J. to novel vistas in philanthropy and social reform (9). R. J. was a devoted husband who adored Katherine, but he had been a sexually adventurous bachelor who was even rumored to have engaged in interracial dalliances. R. J. was no racial liberal, and he profited immensely from the dirt-cheap labor that white supremacy meant in the South, yet he was not a rabid racist either. He had elements of the far-seeing, creative, entrepreneurial genius who spun North Carolina’s golden-leafed tobacco into gold, but could also play the pragmatic manager if events demanded. He was a man of the people but, in time, he learned to live the high-life of the super-wealthy; Katherine took the lead in this as well. R. J. was an affable guy but he made his fortune from a cancerous weed that has caused the deaths of an estimated one billion people; a lethal weed that both he and his wife forbade their children to smoke.

We may question mildly the author’s contention that Katherine and R. J. were “two relatively ordinary people”, or R.J.’s purported humility (8). After all, he spoke of himself in the third person and as R. J. R.—no less—to a friend when weighing competition or cooperation with Buck Duke’s massive Tobacco Trust: “I don’t intend to be swallowed. Buck Duke will find out he has met his equal, but I am fighting him now from the inside. You will never see the day when R.J.R. will eat out of Buck Duke’s hands. . . . [I]f any swallowing is done R.J.R. will do the swallowing. Buck tries to swallow me he will have the belly-ache . . . of his life” (113).

All in all, this is a deeply researched, richly detailed, skillfully-told narrative of two lives, as intertwined and separate as the golden-leafed weed that made them both fantastically wealthy and prodigiously philanthropic and socially aware.

Glenn Feldman

University of Alabama at Birmingham

HIDDEN CHICANO CINEMA: Film Dramas in the Borderlands. By A. Gabriel Meléndez. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. 2013.

In *Hidden Chicano Cinema*, Meléndez reveals how the Southwest imaginary was constructed through film and photography as a continuation of the mentality and ideology of Manifest Destiny. Utilizing Edward Hall’s theory of proxemics, together with Fatimah Tobing Rony’s concept of “the experience of the Third Eye,” the author analyzes how filmmakers and photographers fabricated the borderlands for popular consumption, and thus, embedded in the consciousness of the American public a dichotomy of the colonist versus the natives. In careful detail, the analysis centers on the colonial gaze that is taking place in front of the camera as well as

the events occurring behind the scenes, focusing on how natives were reproduced and portrayed through the spectacle of dramatized sociocultural scenes. The text is divided into eight chapters, providing an overview of the development of image and filmmaking of the communities residing alongside the borderlands, particularly in the state of New Mexico.

According to Meléndez, the early films were funded by State institutions, which were interested in the monetization of the landscape of the borderlands as a tourist's frontier for adventurers and explorers. Some of the foundational films that helped shape a memory of conquest of the Southwest are: *The Rattlesnake, A Psychical Species* (1913), *Martyrs of the Alamo or the Birth of Texas* (1915), and *Adventures in Kid Karson Land* (1917). Meléndez's narration and detailed analysis of these and other films helps the reader understand how cultural encounters were manufactured and propagated for general American consumption, producing an idealized imaginary of nationhood. One particular narrative thoroughly examined is the fictionalized photographs of the Penitente Brotherhood, a Catholic sect whose members practiced self-flagellation, performed the crucifixion during Holy Week, and who are portrayed as barbarians for touristic purposes. This in-depth investigation highlights the consequences that filmmaking had in the perception of the Borderland's communities. Subsequently, these visual cultural documentations began to shift with the "aesthetically conscious" (82) photographs of Russell Lee and John Collier, whose work "was meant to sensitize the public at large and to change public policy" (83).

Through the films *And Now, Miguel* (1953), *Salt of the Earth* (1954), *Giant* (1956), and *Red Sky at Morning* (1971), the author contextualizes the representations of Mexican Americans during the Cold War, paying particular attention to issues of political, racial, and social struggles. Although Anglo Americans continue to play the central protagonist role, these particular films were scripted to produce a domestic political message, and show how subaltern communities should challenge structures of class and social privilege. This message impacted the lives of future filmmakers, such as Moctesuma Esparza and Luis Valdez, who participated in and documented the Chicano Civil Rights Movement. These new voices not only contested the mainstream discourse in public media, but began producing their own message and realities. After the Chicano Movement, image-makers found their subjects of inquiry in the everyday experiences and realities of borderland individuals, creating realistic images of the Southwest. As new forms of expression are presently being created, Meléndez's analytical investigation stands as a serious contribution to the scholarship of Borderlands film studies.

Crescencio López González

Utah State University

THEN SINGS MY SOUL: The Culture of Southern Gospel Singing. By Douglas Harrison. Chicago: University of Illinois Press. 2012.

In the interdisciplinary study *Then Sings My Soul*, Douglas Harrison opens cultural studies scholarship to southern gospel music culture (SGM). Seeing SGM as a network of "cultural practices" (24), Harrison understands SGM as a Janus-faced

commitment to consecrate ecumenical beliefs within individualized conversion experiences, and to fuse nostalgia with eschatology. Through this flexibility, American evangelicals have discovered a medium where they paradoxically become relativists with “antimodern religious traditions that notionally believe in timeless, unchanging absolutes” (3). Such paradox reveals theological and psychological contradictions, creating much room to appropriate SGM religiously, politically, existentially, and sexually.

Harrison begins by establishing the psychodynamics of SGM identity. Harrison argues that SGM allows evangelicals to employ a “modern method of identity formation” to “reinforce (their) antimodern worldview” (29). Though Harrison does not explain “antimodern worldview,” he does articulate the core of this evangelical identity, primarily their attitudes toward theodicy: how do Christians cope with suffering and remain faithful? SGM allows evangelicals to address such anxiety phenomenologically through music.

Harrison then turns to SGM’s historical roots, critiquing SGM’s “cultural kinship” (90). Though SGM recognizes James D. Vaughan, a successful SGM publisher in the early 1900s, as its founder, Harrison argues for Aldine S. Kieffer, a Confederate soldier-turned-publisher, as SGM’s “father.” Recuperating from the angst of losing the war, Kieffer turned to writing nostalgic (antebellum) lyrics and teaching the shape-note method of music literacy (the basis for SGM quartets) around the South. This history, though, has been lost to a modernized SGM that prefers Vaughan’s symbolic piety as SGM became increasingly ribbed by scandals in the 1960s and 1970s.

Next, Harrison synthesizes the tension between SGM piety and popularity in his chapter on the “Gaitherization” of SGM. Harrison observes that Bill Gaither’s “patriarchal religious emotionalism” signals the culminating point of SGM because through Gaither (SGM’s “pope”) SGM’s “cultural adhesive” becomes a heaven-as-pastoral nostalgia (118). As evangelicals are increasingly “fractious,” Gaither “binds them to an idealized vision of the past” where Christians “indemnify” each other, conveyed through musical dramas of Christian virtue (115).

But even if Gaither culminates SGM history, he does not resolve SGM’s paradoxes. Harrison analyzes these paradoxes by arguing that SGM is “indebted to a fundamentally queer aesthetic” (140). Identifying the diva and drag motifs (e.g., Vestal Goodman), negotiation of “misfits” (e.g., the Mylon LeFevre scandal), and aesthetically similar theatrics, Harrison observes the likeness of “coming out” experiences and soteriological epiphanies.

While Harrison’s historicizing is captivating, his earlier chapters are sprinkled with tangential examples, and as a whole bears minor gaps, the greatest of which is that “modern” is never clarified: in some cases, meaning relativism; or nineteenth-century industrial/technological revolutions; or urbanization and demographic diversity; or political and cultural liberalism. Other notable gaps are commentaries of SGM instrumentation, SGM in American music culture at-large, humor and parody, and other non-WASP audiences. Harrison does speak to SGM’s audience-specific rhetoric, which is the study’s most valuable contribution. Writing with a smooth, light, and self-aware style, Harrison builds a rich history and provides nuanced insight to an

overlooked component of modern culture, giving critical music studies and southern studies several new avenues of inquiry.

Jared Griffin

Kodiak College, University of Alaska Anchorage

THE RED LAND TO THE SOUTH: American Indian Writers and Indigenous Mexico. By James H. Cox. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 2012.

Cox's study examines "American Indian literature between 1920 and 1960, particularly novels, histories, and plays about Mexico and indigenous Mexican peoples, cultures, and histories" as a means of filling in a prominent gap in accounts of twentieth-century Native American literature (1). His chapters focus on Todd Downing's series of mystery/detective novels set in Mexico, along with that author's non-fiction history of indigenous Mexico, *The Mexican Earth* (2005); Rollie Lynn Riggs' two plays about indigenous revolt in Mexico, *A World Elsewhere* (1935) and *The Year of Pilár* (1938); D'Arcy McNickle's novel *The Runner in the Sun* (1954), set in the pre-Hispanic Southwest; and—as a means of looking at the legacy of the forty-year period which is this study's central concern—Gerald Vizenor's and Leslie Marmon Silko's quincennial works and the relevance to them of a "return to Mexico." For these authors, Cox argues, Mexico—with its promise of "indigenous strength, cultural cohesion, and potentially transformative political power" (5)—models a range of alluring possibilities for socio-political revolution both at home and abroad, as well as the reconfiguration of transnational identities and the imagination of a so-called Greater Indian Territory.

Cox offers rich contextual frames for the individual works he considers, placing them in relation to a range of interpretations of Mexican history and claims to indigenous solidarity, as well as to his chosen authors' personal relationship with tribal, American, and international politics. The study's five main chapters offer comprehensive assessments of extant scholarship in the field (and, of course, its deficiencies). Cox clearly demonstrates the imaginative power of Mexico during a neglected period of Native American literary history and convincingly argues—against a now well-entrenched convention—for continuities between that period and the succeeding civil rights and renaissance eras. Differences in tribal, American, and Mexican attitudes toward definitions of indigenous status, the potential of revolutionary violence, and the basis for indigenous allegiances are expertly assessed throughout the study, as are the various philosophical and political intersections between his focal authors and prominent cultural figures (most notably, Will Rogers, whose career as a diplomat receives extended treatment). Among the most important contributions here is the recovery of the (incisive but largely forgotten) work of Downing, whose novels, and their narratives of contemporary indigeneity, were commercially successful in the 1930s and 1940s but have received very little critical interest, and whose history of Mexico startlingly anticipates much of the revisionary non-fiction of the renaissance era.

The Red Land to the South represents a significant contribution to recent transnational studies of Mexico, and it persuasively makes the case that the four decades

of literary history it considers are, indeed, “more literarily and politically robust than conventional American Indian literary history tells us” (203).

Geoff Hamilton

York University, Canada

MAD MEN, MAD WORLD: Sex, Politics, Style and the 1960s. Edited by Lauren M. E. Goodlad, Lilya Kaganovsky, and Robert A. Rushing. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 2013.

The most recent collection generated from a conference at the University of Illinois Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory, *Mad Men, Mad World* covers mostly the first four seasons of the television show, which is now in its seventh and final season. The unit’s weblog, Kritik (unitcrit.blogspot.com) currently recapping Season 7, now includes a header explaining that it is “in collaboration with the publication” of the book. The decision to publish before the series conclusion means that critics’ judgments about the ultimate meaning of the show may be defied by *Mad Men*’s as-yet unseen narrative resolution. However, set in media res, *Mad Men, Mad World* can be read as the academic version of a tie-in, a companion to the show’s final seasons and a guidebook to the *Mad*-blogosphere—but it may require a second edition.

Editors Goodlad, Kaganovsky and Rushing argue that *Mad Men* is a “ground-breaking approach to period drama” that has “altered the vision of the 1960s and of pastness itself” (2) as well as a strategically anachronistic representation of advertising that enables audiences to “explore the moral quandaries of a corrupting world”(15). Taking issue with Mark Greif’s dismissal of the show as an exercise in “Now We Know Better,” *Mad Men, Mad World*’s essayists offer more complex arguments about what the 1960s mean in the present and how historical fiction works in general (Greif, “You’ll Love the Way it Makes You Feel,” *London Review of Books*, October 23, 2008). The deliberateness of the show’s producers makes *Mad Men* an excellent focal point for analysis that includes images, fashion, and architecture. Its critical reception allows authors to discuss the values of elite taste in the present; its approach to advertising throws the importance of television as the ultimate medium of consumption into high relief.

In addition to connecting the series to the history of advertising, *Mad Men, Mad World* addresses the relationship of *Mad Men* to films and novels from the 1950s and 1960s and to television history. More so than the blog-originated *Mad Men Unbuttoned* by Natasha Vargas Cooper (2010), it probes inter-textual references for their larger cultural significance regarding race, gender, sexuality, and capitalism, and connects these to contemporary scholarship on television and advertising. The book is divided into three sections. The first, “Mad Worlds,” includes essays about *Mad Men*’s representation of history *qua* history as well as of specific issues such as civil rights and abortion. The second section, “Mad Aesthetics,” concerns the meaning and uses of style and image for *Mad Men* and its marketers, fans, and advertisers, while essays in the third section “Made Men” meditate on what the show says about identity. *Mad Men, Mad World* would work for courses introducing more general topics: television criticism, cultural studies, and historical fiction.

While the authors generally find much to admire in *Mad Men*, several essays are highly critical. Kent Ono argues that despite being self-reflective about race, *Mad Men* “unnecessarily and objectionably produces the irrelevance” of non-white characters in a way that mirrors the racism it seeks to critique (306). Jeremy Varon and Clarence Lang note the absence of representations of characters engaged in Sixties social movements, with Lang arguing that the show “naturalizes a Black quietude that did not actually exist” in the North and Varon pointing out that marginal characters who are engaged in social protest or counter-culture are portrayed as cynical or shallow, so that the narrative remains “captive to the condition it diagnoses” (258). *Mad Men* is, the editors have convincingly shown, a vexed reckoning with how we got to where we are now. In contrast to “Now We Know Better,” these critics might find *Mad Men*’s perspective is more accurately described as “*Plus ça change. . .*”

Rebecca Hill
Kennesaw State University

HARDHATS, HIPPIES, AND HAWKS: The Vietnam Antiwar Movement as Myth and Memory. By Penny Lewis. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 2013.

In May 1970, construction workers in New York City clashed with antiwar protesters in an incident that quickly came to symbolize an apparent chasm between an antiwar movement dominated by privileged students and an American working class characterized as conservative supporters of the war in Vietnam. In *Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks*, historical sociologist Penny Lewis constructs a powerful and “submerged counternarrative” that emphasizes a much more diverse working class that ultimately played a key role in opposing the war (7). Marshalling substantial social science data, Lewis argues that American workers, especially when one broadens the notion of the working class beyond union leadership and white males who worked in manufacturing, were consistently less supportive of the war than elites. Even numerous unions condemned the so-called “hardhat” demonstrations within weeks and, by 1971, the leadership of organized labor increasingly followed their rank and file members in opposing what one group identified as a “Rich Man’s War and a Poor Man’s Fight” (113).

For Lewis, the antiwar movement became a multiclass and multiracial effort that included students, GIs, veterans, and civil rights activists from organizations such as SNCC and the Chicano Moratorium whose perceptions of the war stemmed, at least in part, from the varied perspectives of their working class communities. Using movement-relevant theory to place opponents of the war within their perceived social context, Lewis explores how many American workers experienced the antiwar movement from what Lewis calls the “borderline between feeling and protest” (14). Resisting caricatures of both antiwar hippies and “hardhat hawks,” most American workers shared the sentiments, if not many of the tactics and goals, of the antiwar movement while often distrusting its organizations and leadership (16). If images dominate our collective memory of the movement, Lewis offers provocative alternatives such as former SDS members providing food to striking General Electric workers in 1970, the varied resistance of antiwar soldiers in Southeast Asia, and the

efforts of predominantly working-class members of the Vietnam Veterans against the War (VVAW) in the years after the largest antiwar rallies.

Lewis concedes the role, both intentional and unintentional, of middle-class activists in limiting the growth and direction of the movement in its early years as well as the significant efforts of conservatives such as Richard Nixon in exploiting the image of the hardhat conservative. Consequently, the author aims to complicate rather than dismiss entirely the conventional narrative. Unfortunately, considering the centrality of masculinity in framing dominant yet increasingly contested assumptions about both work and military service in postwar America, the author also fails to explore the role of gender in shaping the popular narratives of the period or our subsequent collective memory. Regardless, Lewis, inspired as much by the recent Occupy Wall Street movement as opposition to the Vietnam War, succeeds in unearthing evidence of a usable past for today's social activists—a vibrant and diverse American working class capable of solidarity and transcending both “organizational borders” and American political culture to challenge domestic and foreign policy (13).

Richard L. Hughes

Illinois State University

GERONIMO. By Robert M. Utley. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 2012.

In the case of *Geronimo*, the newest book by Robert Utley, the stature of the author is perhaps only minimally eclipsed by that of his subject. Utley, a long-practicing western historian and veteran of the National Park Service, has added another engaging volume to an admirable corpus. In this latest work, a biography of Chiricahua Apache leader Geronimo, Utley sets out to identify “the real person beneath the legend” (x).

In so doing, Utley seeks to correct previous works of academic and public history that have, as he puts it, “obscured” the complexity behind the legend (268). Although the extent to which one can identify the “reality” of an individual is debatable, Utley successfully traces Geronimo's days from his childhood in the Southwest, to his armed resistance to American and Mexican forces, to his eventual death at Fort Sill in Oklahoma. Organized chronologically, each chapter treats a clearly demarcated episode of Geronimo's life such as “Apache Youth” and “Geronimo's Second Break-out.” Although Utley's focus is Geronimo the individual, he excels at describing the military strategies and maneuvers of both the Apache writ large as well as the United States and Mexican armies. With a keen attention to detail and campaign strategy, Utley adds contingency and suspense to a sweeping period of military campaigns and diplomatic negotiations amongst a triad of groups battling for control of the Southwest. Utley's contention that Geronimo's actions were less central to Apache politics than that of contemporary Apache leaders is utterly convincing. Moreover, Utley successfully humanizes the man behind the legend, showcasing Geronimo the individual, warts and all.

Utley's conclusion, however, raises a host of intriguing questions that he chose not to consider. While Utley's stated goal is to uncover the “real” Geronimo, he missed the opportunity to analyze the phenomenon of Geronimo the celebrity. Geronimo

himself seems to have actively shaped his fame. For instance, Geronimo not only permitted the photographer C. S. Fly to enter his camp and photograph himself and his family during negotiations with General George Crook but also seems to have directed the composition of some of these images (156). *Geronimo* could have been a timely and substantive contribution to the existing scholarship on celebrity and fame, including works by Leo Braudy and David Blake. At the very least, Utley hints at a Geronimo who was an expert at self-promotion, a central feature of nineteenth-century United States culture. Although he died a prisoner of the United States government, he had already captured the attention of the American public. Geronimo's greatest success and significance may very well be his fame.

Geronimo will engage both historians, particularly of the American West and American Indian History, as well as members of the general public. It is a compelling, well-written portrait of a man who continues to captivate the American public.

Sarah Keyes
University of California, Berkeley

CHASING NEWSROOM DIVERSITY: From Jim Crow to Affirmative Action. By Gwyneth Mellinger. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 2013.

Gwyneth Mellinger spares no quarter in her extensive examination of pervasive racism within the field of journalism. Drawing extensively upon an impressive array of materials, including the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) conference proceedings, ASNE Board meeting minutes, the *ASNE Bulletin* (later the *American Editor*), archival materials, and personal interviews; Mellinger weaves the history of decades-long struggles to diversify newsrooms across the United States to include people of color, women, and gays and lesbians. Adding depth and focus to the crucial scholarship about the broader American press by Carolyn Martindale, Roland Wolseley, Pamela Newkirk, and Patrick Washburn, among others, Mellinger turns her attention specifically to the ASNE as the crux of the journalism industry at large.

By tracing ASNE's overt racism and its neutral-on-its-face policies that denied access to African American editors of the 1950s, to the Civil Rights and women's movements of the 1960s and 1970s, to the anti-Affirmative Action climate of the 1990s, and to the contemporary moment, Mellinger weaves a story of repeated failures to overcome racial barriers and of embattled efforts of women and gay and lesbian journalists and editors to gain access to and recognition in the industry. While she tracks the racial, gender, and sexual battles largely separately in the beginning, she brings the various threads of resistance to bigotry together in the second half of her book. By laying out each group's separate goals and how, at times, they work against each other instead of together in their common goal of social justice in the journalistic field, she points out the irony of "minority" journalists and editors pitting against each other when she writes, "A diversity effort that allows one marginalized cohort to insist on the exclusion of another is simply not sustainable as a movement for social justice" (156).

One of Mellinger's most valuable moves is that she makes clear that the initial efforts to integrate the field were led by African American editors and later aided by their white counterparts. Even as she is uncompromising in shedding light on the deep-seated racism that African American editors faced in the ASNE, from Louis Martin and John Sengstacke to Albert Fitzpatrick and Jay Harris to Robert and Nancy Hicks Maynard; Mellinger practices the best of journalism—being fair and balanced—by also including influential white ASNE Presidents who joined the struggle beginning in the late 1970s, such as Eugene Patterson, John Quinn, Richard Smyser, and John Siegenthaler.

Limiting the scope of the project to the ASNE allows Mellinger to bring into high relief the biases of racialized, gendered, and sexualized power dynamics within journalism, but at other times seems a bit too focused as important details that she includes—such as the large numbers of the attendees at the first UNITY conference—suggest that the diversity project was gaining momentum outside of the cabal of the ASNE leadership. Perhaps she is setting the groundwork to follow up on this well-written, astutely organized, and exhaustively researched book.

Hellen S. Lee

California State University, Sacramento

ESLANDA: The Large and Unconventional Life of Mrs. Paul Robeson. By Barbara Ransby. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 2013.

Having written a highly regarded biography of Ella Baker, Barbara Ransby has turned her attention to Eslanda “Essie” Goode Robeson. While acknowledging Eslanda’s identity as Mrs. Paul Robeson from the outset, Ransby seeks to highlight Eslanda’s role as an important political activist in her own right. The author follows the chronological course of Robeson’s life, seeking to highlight key themes and place her subject in historical context. Throughout this journey, Ransby emphasizes Eslanda Robeson’s commitment to confronting racism, ending colonialism, supporting socialism and communism, and advocating for women.

Because Ransby has sought to write a political biography, much of the narrative focuses on Eslanda Robeson’s life from her thirties onward, when she began to develop a greater political consciousness. Through her work on a doctoral degree in anthropology, travels to Africa, connections to activist women, and continued correspondence with important global political figures, Eslanda Robeson articulated an internationalist vision of the black freedom struggle and class struggle and a nascent intersectional theory of black feminism.

In the postwar years, Robeson began to make some of her most important contributions, completing her book *African Journey* (1946) and becoming a member of the Council on African Affairs. She also became an advocate for women, challenging their exclusion from positions of leadership. Much of Robeson’s activism came through scholarship and journalism. Ransby writes, “[Eslanda] sought to research, understand, and write about changing global realities not as a disinterested scholar or an ostensibly impartial reporter, but as a passionate and engaged historical actor, a scholar-activist, and a radical writer trying to both uncover the truth and influence

the future” (205). In the course of recounting Eslanda Robeson’s political life, Ransby acknowledges the difficulties of explaining some of Robeson’s decisions, particularly her unwavering support of the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China.

The relationship between Paul and Eslanda no doubt remains an important one. While Ransby seeks to extricate Eslanda from Paul’s shadow, she also points to the important role Eslanda played in advancing his career, sometimes at the expense of her own, and how the title Mrs. Paul Robeson gave her access to people who otherwise may not have acknowledged her. Because their marriage became strained by Paul’s infidelities, the two came to an agreement to have a non-monogamous relationship and often spent extended periods apart, living “parallel but gently overlapping lives” (142). Consequently, Ransby places greater emphasis on Eslanda and Paul as political allies.

Ransby has a great deal of source material to draw from as her subject “lived a well-preserved life” (8). Bringing together these materials, which are housed in a variety of locations around the globe, Ransby has produced a well-researched political biography. It would be interesting to see the author explore Eslanda Robeson’s gender analysis and comparative global perspective in greater depth to make a stronger case for her subject’s significance as a black internationalist and early theorizer of feminist intersectionality. Still, Ransby has done an excellent job providing a detailed account of Eslanda Robeson’s life and times.

Jared Leighton

University of Nebraska–Lincoln

LIFESTYLE POLITICS AND RADICAL ACTIVISM. By Laura Portwood-Stacer. New York: Bloomsbury. 2013.

In anarchist studies (and informal conversations), there are often heated debates regarding the role of lifestyle in contemporary US anarchism. While some see lifestyle as a manifestation of the practical everyday cultural work of political resistance intimately interconnected within a larger anarchist project, others discount it out-of-hand as misguided, self-aggrandizing theater. The debates easily become ideological shouting matches as both sides create much noise but offer no clear pathways to navigate toward an understanding of the state of US anarchism in the twenty-first century. Into this fray enters Laura Portwood-Stacer’s timely and resourceful mediation that bridges these two vantage points by examining the context surrounding lifestyle. Taking the everyday lives of anarchists seriously but without romanticizing them, *Lifestyle Politics and Radical Activism* offers a lucid examination of both the possibilities and limitations of anarchists attempting to enact their political ideologies within their quotidian lives.

Portwood’s most significant contribution is that she situates lifestyle anarchism within the current historical-cultural conditions of neoliberalism that capitalizes on radical tendencies by framing them as individualistic and consumerist choices. Instead of easily equating lifestyle with neoliberalism (which many scholars do), Portwood investigates this relationship by using “strategic ethnography” to interview radicals who are struggling with the fact that to live an anarchist lifestyle inherently involves

ethical compromise. But this struggle is articulated by the interviewees as they attempt to understand their lifestyles within a broader anarchist framework and as a direct response to living within a neoliberal state. While these choices do not, perhaps, offer a comprehensive response to the macropolitical systems in play in the US, they are also not merely a naïve false consciousness; lifestyleism represents a vision of the radical anarchist project that is being tested out, with all of its warts and contradictions plainly in view. Portwood takes these responses and her own observations and frames them within a lucid theoretical discussion of the postmodern condition, emphasizing the performativity of political dissent. Concentrating on enactments of sexuality to self-identity to personal consumption practices, Portwood underlines the fact that anarchism (like most contemporary social movements) is fluidly defined and operates squarely within the cultural sphere. This understanding of anarchism, the author points out, is not something that should be ignored nor romantically elevated but dealt with evenly and head-on.

How specifically these microscopic lifestyle interventions interact within the larger milieu of radical struggle is not the focus of Portwood's examination. Her work is more foundational, trying to clear the room of the shouters who speak of the "chasm" between the two camps. Instead, she states a clear starting point for future scholarly work: Lifestyle activism is a set of tactics that can be incorporated into a radical political anarchist strategy. It is a basic thesis that shows how much work there is to do in the field of radical politics, but one that needs to be heard clearly before more work can be done.

John Lennon

University of South Florida

WAR, GENOCIDE, AND JUSTICE: Cambodian American Memory Work.
By Cathy J. Schlund-Vials. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 2012.

A compelling exploration of how Cambodian American writers and artists grapple with the legacy of the Khmer Rouge, Cathy Schlund-Vials's *War, Genocide, and Justice: Cambodian American Memory Work* exists at the intersections of several fields: Asian American Studies, American Studies, Cold War Studies, and Southeast Asian Studies. She draws on several strands of ongoing critical conversations in these fields to challenge dominant accounts of remembering the Cambodian genocide and to deftly make a case for why we need to attend to the outpouring of creative works from Cambodian Americans. A pointed aim of the study is to bring into high relief what Schlund-Vials calls "the Cambodian Syndrome, a transnational set of amnesiac politics revealed through hegemonic modes of public policy and memory," especially in light of how Cambodia becomes an example of justifying U.S. military interventions in U.S. foreign policy's rhetoric of humanitarianism, so frequently reiterated in the war on terror after 9/11 (13).

True to her promise, Schlund-Vials shows throughout the book the limits of humanitarianism, as it is employed by state actors on both sides of the Pacific, in effecting substantial justice for the victims of genocide. Using a range of cultural objects, Schlund-Vials shows that each act of remembering the Cambodian genocide involves

an act of forgetting and that we need to tune into the cultural politics of memory to start to understand the legacy of the Cambodian genocide. The chapter on “atrocities tourism,” for example, demonstrates how the denouncement of the Khmer Rouge itself is embroiled in a complex struggle for power and representation in Southeast Asia. For example, the designation of Tuol Sleng prison and the Choeung Ek killing field as sites of memorialization by the government of the People’s Republic of Kampuchea is an act motivated by the Vietnamese political interest in creating a “useable past” to construct their own narrative of the Cambodian genocide that distinguishes “Khmer Rouge totalitarianism from Vietnamese socialism” (13, 31). Such political motivation, Schlund-Vials suggests, results in memorialization and prosecution that “privileg[e] perpetrator over victim and criminality over reparation,” a tendency that persists in the UN/Cambodian War Crimes Tribunal and the atrocities tourism of contemporary Cambodia according to the author (57). Popular U.S. representations of the Cambodian genocide such as the journalist Sydney Schanberg’s *The Death and Life of Dith Pran* (1975) and Roland Joffé’s film, *The Killing Fields* (1984), also come under Schlund-Vials’s critical scrutiny as she shows how the liberal humanitarianism of these accounts entail a “cold war apologetics” which emphasize absolution of American guilt and humanitarian resolutions at the expense of reparative justice for Cambodian subjects (77). Against such state-oriented and popular representations of the Cambodian genocide, Schlund-Vials presents what she calls “Cambodian American memory work” as an alternative account that allows Cambodians to set the terms of remembering the genocide. Socheata Poey’s *New Year Baby* (2006), for example, resists any easy apology or resolution and instead foregrounds the subject position of Cambodian Americans as ideally placed to “[chart] the bifurcated legacies of U.S. imperialism and Khmer Rouge authoritarianism” (113). Such assessment appears throughout Schlund-Vials’s analysis of the Cambodian American cultural production in the book as she limns a distinctive transnational Cambodian American aesthetics and politics in the memoirs of Loung Ung, Chanrithy Him, the hip-hop music of praCh, and the poems of Anida Yoeu Ali. As a study that intervenes in the production of knowledge on Cold War U.S. interventions in Southeast Asia, *War, Genocide, and Justice* exemplifies the potential of the transnational turn in American Studies and the cultural turn in Cold War Studies.

Jeehyun Lim

Denison University

SOUNDING LIKE A NO-NO: Queer Sounds & Eccentric Acts in the Post-Soul Era.
By Francesca T. Royster. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 2013.

In *Sounding Like a No-No*, Francesca T. Royster provides a theoretically and socially grounded reading of the politics of Post-Soul. Chronologically, Post-Soul follows the Civil Rights Movement. The reformation of black cultural production in this moment acted as a response to the victories of the Civil Rights Movement, which allow new forms of expression for some, but also as a response to the imagination of a unified black body during the Civil Rights Movement, which could be

confining for others. At the heart of Royster's argument is the useful term "Post-Soul eccentric." Royster situates Post-Soul eccentricity within and against a history of black struggle, survival, and creativity, as well as scholarly fields that take up black aesthetic production, social justice, and feminist studies. The term, sometimes synonymous with queer, quare, freaky, and/or funky, inspires Royster's readings of artists who push the social and cultural boundaries of gender and sexuality, often as ameliorative to the strictures of black respectability. In doing so, Royster effectively expands the conversation around the possibilities of Post-Soul black aesthetic practices to understand how the reformation of boundaries of gender and sexuality shaped new sounds and visions of blackness. Royster's nuanced reading of the production of blackness balances her desire to understand creativity, her love of music, and the joy that it can bring, with the ways that cultural production are always already tied to ideas and institutions like "community" and entertainment industries. In this way, Royster retains a love and appreciation of music without losing an awareness of where the limits of cultural production lie within lives simultaneously produced by institutions. In this way, her work fits within a scholarly genealogy marked out by Daphne Brooks, Farah Jasmine Griffin, and Fred Moten.

Royster's chapters explore the works of Eartha Kitt, Stevie Wonder, P-Funk, Michael Jackson, Grace Jones, Meshell Ndegeocello, and Janelle Monáe. In the chapters, she focuses on the power of music to move its listeners and to re-organize bodies and their meanings. She writes, "The best moments in music force us to think about our bodies, moments, and gestures as socially politicized, scrutinized, and shaped. Music questions the boundaries of the body itself. Such powerful moments in music bring to light the ways that all of our bodies are potentially 'quare,' producing meanings and pleasures in excess of our immediate understanding" (65). Here the influence of both E. Patrick Johnson's work on "quareness" and José Muñoz's "disidentifications" come to the fore, where the power of performance to change social meanings and realities becomes the focus of her queer readings of performances. One of my favorite parts of the book comes in the chapter on P-Funk and Parliament, where Royster convincingly argues that George Clinton and his bands' performances of funkiness and silliness provided an alternative to the heteronormative masculinities of the Black Arts and Black Power Movements. In this section Royster uses a compelling mix of sources to read Clinton and company's music, costuming, and performances with and against ideas of Black Nationalism, community, and corporate entertainment. Overall, Royster's obvious love of music and her intelligence in combining social history with feminist music criticism make this book a lively and worthwhile read.

Fiona I. B. Ngô

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

THE SIGNIFYING EYE: Seeing Faulkner's Art. By Candace Waid. Athens: The University of Georgia Press. 2013.

The strength of this book is that it is a synthesis of thinking about how William Faulkner engaged with visual culture. That said, this book is hard to summarize,

as it is not an exposition of a single argument. It is, rather, an exploration of the significance of Faulkner's writing by an established scholar, Candace Waid, whose ideas are many, acumen is great, and breadth of knowledge is undisputed. What she has presented to us is a conceptually rich, but difficult, book. It assumes that the reader is familiar with the canons of modern English literature and avant-garde art, as well as discourses about modernism and modernity. It will thus be of interest primarily to Faulkner specialists and scholars of visual studies. The book could be used in a graduate-level seminar, but it would be a stretch for most undergraduates to understand it.

She explains that the book provides "a return to the shock" that early readers of Faulkner's writing, like Robert Penn Warren, experienced when they encountered imagery mixed with text (18). She then further notes that Faulkner's writing "has refused the Balkanization common to literary studies because his work itself insists on the charismatic relationships between and among race, sexuality, gender, region, religion, community, class, and animals. . . . *The Signifying Eye* is concerned with all these subjects, but its vision locates the experimental quality of Faulkner's fiction as a visually rendered, synesthetic prose that speaks both through and in the physicality of the word as image" (18). What made the book especially interesting to this reviewer was the 36 black and white illustrations and 8 color plates.

Sometimes the connections between images and writing in this book are direct. It, for example, includes reproductions of ink drawings by Faulkner in the style of the late nineteenth-century illustrator Aubrey Beardsley, made for *The Marionettes: A Play in One Act* (1920). Waid argues that "these illustrations reveal a strange but ultimately recognizable psychic iconography, a visual vocabulary that sharpens the experimental edge to much of his fiction" (17). Such images are pleasurable to look at, as they feature stylized flowers, beautiful women, and peacocks. At other times the visual comparisons in the book are implicit and playful. For example, she includes a heading "'Sad Young [White] Man on a Train' or the United States of Incest" (67–71). This is a reference to a painting by Marcel Duchamp, *Sad Young Man on a Train*, (1911–1912), which she reproduces but does not discuss overtly. The painting thus subtly informs our mindset while reading. She also interrogates how Faulkner interspersed symbols into lines of texts, such as the picture of an eye in *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), the outline of a coffin in *As I Lay Dying* (1930), and a delta in "Delta Autumn" (1942). The book is ultimately united by the fact that she is dedicated to the approach of reading Faulkner's novels closely, and contextualizing them within a visual framework.

Travis Nygard

Ripon College

PURO ARTE: Filipinos on the Stages of Empire. By Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns. New York: New York University Press. 2013.

Puro arte, the word, describes the "labor of overacting, histrionics, playfulness and purely over the top dramatics." *Puro Arte*, Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns' thoughtful examination of its deployment (and cited as a 2013 Outstanding

Book in Cultural Studies by the Association of Asian American Studies), is “a way of approaching the Filipino/a performing body at key moments in U.S.-Philippines imperial relations.” *Puro Arte*, then, theatrizes and historicizes *puro arte*. Filipinos pose a challenge for theater. The possibilities for theater’s conceit of transformation is troubled when its actors are a group of people who are often understood as forgotten, invisible or misrecognized. Spanning the twentieth century, *Puro Arte* broadens the stage in which the Filipina/o body is displayed and acts out in an admirable attempt to depict how these figures transcend history’s shadow.

The opening chapter, “Which Way to the Philippines? United Stages of Empire,” examines the dramatization of Filipino-American relations during the years leading to, during, and immediately after the Spanish-American War. Chapter two locates dance taxi halls as the site for the acting out of white male anxieties about labor displacement by Filipinos in the 1920s and 1930s. The third chapter, “Coup de Theater: The Drama of Martial Law,” is focused on dramatizations of Marcos’ dictatorial rule through the works of Sining Bayan (“Theater of the People”) and the first production of Jessica Hagedorn’s *Dogeaters* (1990) in the Philippines. The fourth chapter, “How in the Light of One Night Did We Come So Far?” looks at *Miss Saigon* (2000), Filipino actors, and the genre of the mega-musical as the intersection of frayed colonial histories involving Vietnam, France, and the U.S.

Expanding what constitutes the stages of performance, *Puro Arte* is not constrained by physical, national or disciplinary walls. Not only is the mythical fourth wall broken down, disciplinary walls are breached. When the colored curtain is pulled back, what is revealed is the Third World, the Global South, or the diaspora that make up how contemporary history is understood. Duped by Americans whom they thought were their allies against the Spanish but who turned out to be their colonizers, the Philippines is a country of false starts and multiple potential beginnings. This is evident in Cory Aquino’s 1986 “People Power” that overthrew Marcos and resurfaced in 2001 as “People Power 2” when Joseph Estrada was toppled by Gloria Arroyo who, now, languishes under house arrest in a military hospital with charges of electoral fraud and theft. On the surface, this is the recycling of struggles between the masses and the elites or the elites and the even more elites or dynastic turf wars under the guise of “democracy” (popular, cacique, or otherwise). Underneath the regularity of the people’s call to and for power is the desire for a just political system that has yet to find its proper voice or appropriate body. In the meantime, all it has is its ability to act out or to embody *puro arte* as a way to fight back. Until then, we also have *Puro Arte*, Lucy Mae San Pablo Burn’s book, that is foregrounded in deeply observed historical context and a well-measured assessment of culture and politics imbued with thoughtful and caring sentiment. *Puro Arte* is an important study not only for those with interest in theater studies but important for students and scholars of ethnic studies, postcolonial theory, and Asian American history.

Emmanuel Raymundo

Tulane University

ON-DEMAND CULTURE: Digital Delivery and the Future of Movies. By Chuck Tryon. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. 2013.

Most of us have had a moment recently, perhaps while surfing Netflix, scrolling through YouTube, or popping in a Blu-ray disc, when we realized the sheer speed and volume of films available to us today and thought, “Wow.” If you lived through Betamax, Laserdiscs, and VHS cassettes, it’s clear how different American film culture has become. No one has considered this change more than Chuck Tryon. His new monograph, *On-Demand Culture: Digital Delivery and the Future of Movies*, a follow-up to *Reinventing Cinema: Movies in the Age of Media Convergence* (2009), presents a rich compendium of those “wow” moments.

Many film critics and media scholars have casually considered such changes. *On-Demand Culture* is one of the few texts to provide the critical context and analysis necessary to understand them. Tryon acknowledges that “given that new technologies and movie distribution strategies emerge almost daily, the pace of change invariably seems to surpass the ability to research and document those changes” (vii). He reminds us, however, that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) approved television subscription services as early as 1968. Soon after, consumers began paying to screen sports events and other spectacles in their homes. It wasn’t long before HBO and other specialty channels appeared. Thus, many current trends are simply hyperextensions of much earlier practices in American culture. Consequently, the subtitle of the text is a bit of a misnomer (this is much less about “the future” of movies than their recent past).

On-Demand Culture explores how technological advances and economic imperatives have brought films to our computers, living rooms, and cell phones. Tryon avoids both the technological sublime that many enthusiasts fall into as well as the despair of film buffs lamenting lost times. Instead, he demonstrates how changes in distribution have, in many ways, worked to restrict Americans’ viewing habits while simultaneously promising unending video streams and entertainment choices. Tryon examines landmark events such as James Cameron’s *Avatar* (2009) and its impact on 3D cinema and consumer consumption. From there, he investigates elements of our digital culture such as social media’s role in hyping films and targeting specialty audiences, crowdsourcing websites’ assistance with funding independent films as well as big-name productions, and, finally, the changes that many film festivals are undergoing as they shed their fixed sense of place and introduce streaming features that allow audiences around the world to experience virtual screenings.

Tyron’s analysis is a welcome addition to the field and well worth reading. The book’s only noticeable shortcoming is its lack of an overarching theoretical framework. While snippets appear from the usual suspects—Castells, Deleuze, Foucault, Marx—there is no sustained application of theory to help readers understand the logic behind of the changes we’re experiencing and how they function politically, socially, and philosophically. Instead, Tryon concludes with the somewhat lame assertion that “although media conglomerates are playing a major role in shaping these changes, consumers will also play a vital role” (180). We must therefore “remain attentive”

to these transformations. These statements feel more like interludes in his research than conclusions. Perhaps he plans to create a trilogy following his first two books, which would explain why I felt there ought to have been a “*To Be Continued*” at the end of his text. Either way, I look forward to see where he takes this research as American film culture continues its rapid transformation.

Chris Richardson

Young Harris College

BRIGHT LIGHT CITY: Las Vegas in Popular Culture. By Larry Gragg. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas. 2013.

As historian Larry Gragg notes in *Bright Light City: Las Vegas in Popular Culture*, writers view Las Vegas through their preconceptions, describing it as everything from the dank epitome of American capitalism to a democratic space of self-invention. As this suggests, Vegas is more than a city: it is a magic mirror in which Americans have understood our nation and ourselves. Befitting such a place, novelists, filmmakers, and journalists have repeatedly used Las Vegas in their work. Gragg examines these hundreds of images to understand its “extraordinary appeal” (5).

Trained as a historian of colonial and Revolutionary America, Gragg brings an appealing passion to his topic. He argues that these multiple representations shape the experiences of visitors, though there is little analysis of reception. Arranged around themes such as “images of gambling” and “images of luxury,” Gragg weaves the city’s history into discussion of the cultural images. His best chapters utilize archival sources to show how town leaders constructed its image. Decades before Caesar’s Palace, officials wooed tourists with spurious history, like the Helldorado, an annual festival of the frontier past begun in 1935. A few years later, “the chamber of commerce urged residents to wear Western clothing because the frontier theme indeed was attracting more tourists” (35). However, there is little in the remainder of the book carrying this thread because, as Gragg mentions, he is writing another book on the role of developers and others.

Colorful stories of Frank Sinatra driving a golf cart through a window and Bugsy Siegel’s death pepper the chapters, which otherwise chronicle the images he has found. However, the lack of critical analysis begins to weigh the book down. His chapter on images of women in Las Vegas, for example, begins by discussing how the city came to be known for quickie divorces in part because Ria Gable, Clark Gable’s wife, went there to happily wait out the residency requirement before divorcing him. But after this anecdote that shows how elite women had agency in determining their sexual relationships, the rest of the chapter argues that all cultural representations of women in Las Vegas simply objectified them. Certainly this can be said for most cultural representations of women, but Gragg ignores opportunities for deeper analysis of race and gender, as when he skips over a quote from a travel columnist that mentioned meeting “a buxom lass of doubtful color” (166) or when he puts his discussion of images of elderly women gamblers into another chapter. Race is another problematically unexamined topic. The African-American experience in

Vegas is mentioned only in a short section near the end of the book while Latinos, Native Americans, and Asians are mainly ignored.

The book's strength is its breadth—the sheer amount of material that Gragg has accumulated in his search for representations of Las Vegas is impressive. However, this ends up giving the book an episodic quality, as numerous examples are catalogued to support each of his themes, but none are examined with serious depth, making it seem as if all images were equally important.

Mary Rizzo

Rutgers University–Camden

UNFINISHED STORIES: The Narrative Photography of Hansel Mieth and Marion Palfi. By Janet Zandy. Rochester, NY: RIT Press. 2013.

Janet Zandy's *Unfinished Stories: The Narrative Photography of Hansel Mieth and Marion Palfi* is an exciting and thoughtful text that recovers the biographies and perspectives of two significant, yet little-remembered social documentary photographers. Mieth (1909–1988) and Palfi (1907–1978) were both German immigrants who devoted their lives to documenting and witnessing. Their work exists in the grey region between art and photojournalism. At great personal and professional risk, they photographed impoverished people during the Depression, citizens at Japanese internment camps, African Americans in the South, Native Americans in the West, and women with children. Actively trying to expose “the underbelly of racism, poverty, and human waste in the American landscape,” Mieth and Palfi used their facility with images to reveal those lives “battered by circumstance.”

Mieth and Palfi were participants within a long shadow of cultural productions from the start of the 1930s—literature, jazz, photography, musical theater, film, and visual art—that show a vibrant patchwork of Communist and left-leaning ideologies that promoted an egalitarian society through both culture and through social services, especially in New York City. Meanwhile, the apartheid system of white supremacy, most explicit in the Southern states, made the vision of shining diversity a fantasy for many Americans.

Zandy makes a convincing historiographic case as to why these two photographers ought to be paired and interrogated together. She says that the photographs are a “visual memory of Americans”; this memory is in “their language, and reflects their understanding of America as an unfinished story. They engaged visual art as resistance to domination in kinship with the least powerful.” The social laboratory of American life manifested itself often in physical form: the cultural expressions of the words of everyday people, and the images of their faces and the landscapes of their workaday lives, captured by such documentary photographers. These visual records are essentially the physical manifestations of memories, and therefore are good ways to bridge the ideals espoused by the New Deal.

Using close readings of photographs, traditional biography, historical context of their German upbringing, and oral histories with both artists, Zandy's work situates this astounding, and beautiful work in the story of social documentary photography, itself a rich history—especially for women photographers—that

reaches from Dorothea Lange to Helen Stummer. For scholars, the insights Zandy has into documentary photographers like Mieth and Palfi, who emerged either directly or indirectly from the New Deal, give readers an opportunity to be more compassionate and hopeful about the potential of the American experiment.

Unfinished Stories should be in the library of anyone interested in American photography, mid-century artists, and the “pursuit of the myriad interrelationships between art and justice.” Since they “built their personas and hid or disclosed their private lives and interior selves” with their work, social documentary photography serves both as witness, anodyne, and active self-portraiture. This is a terrific and provocative book.

Sean Singer

University of Rutgers–Newark

CELIBACIES: American Modernism and Sexual Life. By Benjamin Kahan. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 2013.

Benjamin Kahan’s book, *Celibacies: American Modernism and Sexual Life*, is an original study that views celibacy no longer as the absence of sex but as a full-fledged sexual category which acquires its letters of nobility not only in our over-sexualized times, but also in retrospect as Kahan harks back to the mid-nineteenth century, arguing that celibacy was a key political and social strategy in US culture from 1840 to the 1960s. Kahn’s somewhat paradoxical thesis forces the reader to reconceptualize celibacy as a different organization of pleasure whose practice turned out to be a weapon of subversion and created a distinct sexual identity.

At the intersection of sexuality, feminist, queer, and Black studies but also literary criticism, Kahan’s study pores over diversified texts from Henry James’s novel *The Bostonians* (1886); and W.H. Auden’s poem “The Sea and the Mirror” (1944); to Valerie Solanas’s *SCUM Manifesto* (1967); and brings together disparate figures such as the “maidenly” Marianne Moore; the Harlem Renaissance religious leader Father Divine (with his celibate interracial communities countering the racist eroticization of black bodies); and Andy Warhol and his Factory (with its “alloerotic” kind of governance and “celibate mode of collaboration”) to consider “celibacy’s relation to Boston marriage, temporality, racialization, queer citizenship and sociality” (27). Likewise, initially building on the work of scholars such as Leo Bersani or Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Kahan uses an eclectic theoretical apparatus that combines sociology, psychoanalysis, and philosophy.

In addition to liberating celibacy from its association with homosexual repression or closetedness, *Celibacies* in a truly innovating way expands the concept rendering it positively connoted and giving it a new lease on life. *Celibacies* could, indeed, be an interesting follow-up reading to Elisabeth Abbott’s *A History of Celibacy* (2001), as Kahan is one of those creative contemporaries who, as Abbott predicted at the end of her book, does reclaim and redefine the phenomenon in a unique way (albeit a scholarly one). However, his final endorsement of Laurent Berlant’s hyperbolic statement, that celibacy “describes an important structure of feeling in our time,” may

not convince readers (142). More convincing though is his determination to “wrestle celibacy back from the political Right,” thus further politicizing the concept (143).

It is precisely this concern that justifies Kahan’s discussion of asexuality and the Asexuality Movement as “the most important heir to the leftist progressive impulses pioneered by celibacy” in his conclusion which appears a bit confusing, for the difference between celibacy and asexuality remains blurred (143). However, the author has managed to aggrandize the concept giving it breadth and depth, a past and a future.

Aristi Trendel

Université du Maine, France

“BUILDING LIKE MOSES WITH JACOBS IN MIND”: Contemporary Planning in New York City. By Scott Larson. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 2013.

Among the questions raised by the November 2013 election of Bill de Blasio as mayor of New York City was: would the ambitious building program of Michael Bloomberg’s three-term administration continue? The progressive candidate’s victory makes uncertain the maintenance of recently transformed public spaces and the completion of in-process projects. Still to be seen is how de Blasio can privilege affordable housing without continuing his predecessor’s incentivizing of private real estate developers.

Within this transitional moment, Scott Larson’s *“Building Like Moses with Jacobs in Mind”: Contemporary Planning in New York City* is a timely study. Larson does not set out to write a comprehensive record of projects undertaken in the previous twelve years, a topic partially tackled by Jayne Merkel’s recent *We Build the City: New York City’s Design + Construction Excellence Program* (2014). Instead, Larson’s text is a narrative about narratives.

Larson’s subject is both the recent history of the Bloomberg administration and the longer history of planning in New York City since the postwar period. He adopts a critical lens towards city administrators’ selective calling-upon of the principles of Robert Moses and Jane Jacobs, manipulating the ideologies of each (often wrongly polarized as incommensurate) in service of advancing a bold agenda. In the context of reevaluations of Jacobs and Moses by urban historians such as Hillary Ballon, Kenneth Jackson, and Christopher Klemek in the last decade, Larson interrogates what it has meant for the Bloomberg administration to invoke the specters of Moses and Jacobs to advance its policy of selective rezoning and class-based urban development.

Larson positions Bloomberg’s legacy as controlling space to maximize capital accumulation and benefit those of greater class privilege. Yet, recognizing Jacobs-inspired community-level resistance to large-scale municipal projects, this “neoliberal building spree” necessitated a “citizen buy-in to see it through” (77). To convince neighborhood populations threatened with displacement (due to eminent domain rulings or gentrification-caused rent increases) of the rightness of these building choices, narratives of imminent dangers posed to the city should redevelopment not take place and equations of good design to civic virtue were advanced. This second

strategy, the administration's use of "an aesthetic imperative" to normalize selective values, reveals an embedded target in Larson's study (134).

Larson's title comes from a phrase oft-repeated in speeches by Amanda Burden, the Director of City Planning for the Bloomberg administration. Arriving at the end of his mostly balanced study of projects both realized and unrealized—the proposed development of the West Side of Manhattan, part of a bid for the 2012 Summer Olympics; the Hudson and Atlantic rail yards in Manhattan and Brooklyn, respectively; and Columbia University's expansion into the Manhattanville section of Harlem—and close reading of neoliberal policies outlined in the Regional Plan Association's *A Region at Risk*, Larson's discussion of Burden shifts tone and vocabulary. In contrast to his otherwise careful sourcing of public statements, conference panels, interviews, academic texts, and exhibitions catalogues, Larson offers several damning critiques of Burden with attribution only to unnamed "staff" and "one architect" (140, 141). Her biography is scrutinized and her "fixation" on unified design is cast as micro-managerial, at best (141).

More productive is Larson's positioning of New York City in light of the 2008 global economic crisis. He unpacks the limited utility of both Moses and Jacobs to present-day city governments. Larson asks his reader to consider not just how Moses and Jacobs insufficiently sell an urban ideal but how focusing on these historical models distracts from engaging with more pressing issues (e.g., ongoing class and racial segregation and insufficient affordable housing) affecting contemporary cities.

Andrew Wasserman

Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY

THEATRICAL LIBERALISM: Jews and Popular Entertainment in America. By Andrea Most. New York: New York University Press. 2013.

"We in the show business have our religion too—on every day—the show must go on," asserts Al Jolson as Jack Robin (née Jackie Rabinowitz) in Warner Brothers' *The Jazz Singer* (1927), the motion-picture industry's first "talkie." As author Andrea Most argues, this "new dogma"—the conviction that "all members of [a theatrical] company are obligated to do what they can to make sure that *the show goes on*"—animated the backstage musicals and romantic comedies created by acculturated Jewish artists in 1920s and 1930s America (11). This sacred tenet that the "show must go on," that the needs of the dramatic community must always trump the desires of the individual artist, is at the heart of Most's titular concept—"a Judaically inflected" ideology she terms theatrical liberalism (77).

Many scholars have reasoned that the overrepresentation of American Jews within the popular entertainment industry reflects their desire to assimilate into the dominant society by eschewing their or their ancestors' immigrant pasts and religious traditions. In fact, in her first book, *Making Americans: Jews and the Broadway Musical* (2004), Most argued that Jews on Broadway attempted "to acculturate by creating a fantasy America, which was distinctly open to and tolerant of people like themselves" (3).

In this, her second book, Most maintains that prior analyses of the American Jewish investment in popular culture as a pathway to assimilation replicate a false dichotomy, rooted in Protestantism, which situates the public/secular in opposition to the private/sacred. This scholarship presumes that the so-called “assimilated” first- and second-generation Jewish Americans active in the development of supposedly “secular” popular entertainment were able to consciously discard all of the beliefs and rituals of their ancestral culture in an effort to become American.

Rather than viewing these mostly “unobservant” American Jews as divorced entirely from Judaic codes and rituals, Most argues that the artists under consideration in *Theatrical Liberalism* have “a clear connection to Judaism” (11). By reconstructing the theater as a sacred space, celebrating theatricality, resisting essentialized identity categories, promoting individual freedom through self-fashioning, and privileging obligation to the theatrical community above individual rights, Most contends that these artists created the uniquely Jewish doctrine of theatrical liberalism (10–11).

As Most contends, theatrical liberalism attempted to reconcile contradictions between Protestant American liberalism, which constructs a dichotomous relationship between a public secular sphere and a private religious sphere, and Judaism, “which has never neatly conformed to this public-private model” (4).

Exploring a variety of texts—such as the biblical narrative of Jacob and Esau, *Show Boat* (1927), *Death of a Salesman* (1949), *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964), *Funny Girl* (1964), Woody Allen’s *Zelig* (1983), Tony Kushner’s *Angels in America* (1993), and an Amichai Lau-Lavie drag performance—Most claims that American Jews have used popular entertainment as a forum for promoting this distinctly Jewish American belief system.

Although Most’s thesis is perhaps overly ambitious and, therefore, difficult to support fully, *Theatrical Liberalism*’s greatest contribution to the existing scholarly conversation regarding Jewish Americans and popular culture is her assertion that the secular/sacred binary, imposed by Protestant ideology, is ineffectual for analyzing the nuanced ways in which Judaic rituals and traditions influenced the allegedly nonreligious sphere of American entertainment. For, as Jewish playwright Samson Raphaelson wrote of the Jewish American performer’s obligation to the theatrical community, “The show must go on . . . It’s like a religion” (40).

Megan E. Williams

Skidmore College

REMEMBERING THE FORGOTTEN WAR: The Enduring Legacies of the U.S.–Mexican War. By Michael Scott Van Wagenen. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press. 2012.

The United States invasion of Mexico in 1846–1848 was key to the development of both countries, among other things taking about half of Mexico’s territory and thus greatly expanding the United States. On both sides of the Río Bravo, the war exacerbated political instability, leading to civil wars in both countries. However, the two countries have dealt with the war differ markedly: in the words of Michael Van Wagenen, “the memory of the U.S.–Mexican War” is “indelibly etched in the

minds of Mexicans and . . . easily overlooked by Americans” (2). *Remembering the Forgotten War* traces the public memory of the war in both countries, from the immediate postwar period to the present. The book’s goal is “to understand how and why Americans and Mexicans have constructed and reconstructed, time and again, the collective memory of the war 160 years after it ended” (4).

A strength of this book is its binational approach, based on extensive research in both countries. (Although, this makes a neat summary nearly impossible.) The chapters alternate between looking at how public memory of the war was constructed during a period on one side of the border and the process on the other. Although in both Mexico and the U.S. the memory of the war has been crafted to reflect contemporary concerns, north of the border, this usually has been the result of private initiatives. In Mexico, since at least the Porfiriato in the late-nineteenth century, the national government has seized upon the war as part of an official patriotic narrative.

The chapters on the United States are the strongest, with a broad examination of the interplay between remembering the war, foreign policy, racial shifts, and cultural history. The chapters on the immediate postwar period (before the Civil War) and the late-nineteenth century (after the Civil War) are fascinating syntheses. Van Wagenen then traces how the view of the war in the U.S. has been connected with the broader question of U.S.–Latin American relations, from World War II, to the Cold War, to the current era of NAFTA and free trade.

The Mexican chapters begin by analyzing how “the years between 1848 and 1866 were marked by political instability and intermittent warfare, preventing Mexicans from widely remembering and commemorating their conflict with the United States” (58). Much of the section on Mexico focuses on the evolving mythology of the *niños héroes* (boy heroes)—six young military cadets who in September 1847, rather than surrender, wrapped themselves in the Mexican flag and jumped from the roof of Chapultepec Castle they were defending. Van Wagenen shows how successive regimes in have converted the heroes into secular saints, making them the cornerstone of the official Mexican view of the national defeat. While fascinating, the section on Mexico tends to reduce that country’s vision of the war to the boy heroes. The section also lacks the nuanced understanding of Mexican society that the part on the U.S. shows and at times seems to underplay the importance of nationalism in Mexican culture and politics.

While one may have criticisms of this or that portion of the book, it is important to keep in mind the difficulty of the task that Van Wagenen set for himself—the material on the war in Mexico and the U.S. are not only in different languages, but often seem to be apples and oranges—and the degree to which he succeeds. There is much rich material that a short review cannot do justice to (such as the role of Mormonism or the San Patricio brigade). *Remembering the Forgotten War* makes fascinating reading; students and scholars of public memory, as well as of the Southwestern U.S. and U.S.–Mexican relations, will find much of this book thought-provoking and useful.

J. A. Zumoff

New Jersey City University